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CIRFS president reports on man-made fibre developments in Europe

05 June 2006

The president of CIRFS Mr Omer Sabanci – the association representing Europe's €13 billion man-made fibres industry – reported to members on the industry's situation and on CIRFS activities at its General Assembly held in Brussels on May 31.

Issues covered in the report included the general economic background; changes in the European industry's output in 2005 and 2006; developments in the industry's main markets; CIRFS initiatives on international trade issues and distortions; CIRFS work on market data; technical and environmental issues; and future prospects for the European man-made fibres industry.

Mr Sabanci's report concluded on an optimistic note, "Realistically, I think that for textile activities we are now seeing a more stable situation than the one which existed in 2005. The immediate effects of the end of the quota system and the surge of imports from China have been absorbed. While it is clear that there have been significant negative effects, it is equally sure that some of the early reactions were exaggerated. A large European textile customer base remains, and is sustainable on the basis of proximity to customers, favourable logistics, use of lower-cost facilities on the edges of Europe for more labour-intensive processes and, in some cases, global investment or alliances. The European fibres industry can take profit from this local usage of fibres, provided that sectors facing global overcapacity and distress selling can find ways of dealing – defensively or proactively – with the situation."

Adidas name change implemented

05 June 2006

The change of the company name of German sporting goods company adidas-Salomon AG to adidas AG has been entered in the commercial register. After the completion of the divestiture of the Salomon segment in October 2005, the name change was agreed at the company's Annual General Meeting on May 11 with an approval rate of 99.99%. Company shares will be listed under the new name from June 6.

Polartec to launch fabric made from corn

05 June 2006

In committing to the use of more recycled and renewable materials to produce fabric products Polartec has launched twelve new 'green' styles in its range.

The latest product is PLA (Polylactic acid) fleece made from corn. This is a renewable source which biodegrades and uses 68% less fossil fuel during production than traditional synthetic fibre.

Trident launches new ink jet inks

05 June 2006

Trident has launched a new set of FabricFast Ultra Pigment Ink Jet Inks with binders. The water-based ink is said to be significantly improved from the previous FabricFast Pigment inks, providing more brilliant colours and enhanced wash fastness on untreated fabrics, including cotton and natural fibres. Colours available are cyan light, magenta light, grey, as well as spot colours orange, blue, red and green.

Unlike dye-based inks, these FabricFast Ultra inks do not require steamers to bind the ink to the fabric and can be cured through simple heat fixation. This streamlines the curing process and enables better job to job consistency without the colour differences experienced from the variability of the steaming process.

These inks are for printing directly onto a broad range of untreated fabrics with wide format printers such as Mimaki, Mutoh, Roland, Stork or Epson printers. They are also available for the direct-to-garment printing market.

Quiksilver launches QuiksilverEQPT

06 June 2006

Designer, producer and distributor of branded apparel, sports equipment, footwear and accessories Quiksilver has launched a new collection of boardriding performance wear entitled QuiksilverEQPT.

The new range of shirts, shorts, jackets and trousers is specifically designed for board riders that are facing increasing physical demands and risk of injury.

The collection contains QuikDry technology which transports sweat away from the body, keeping riders cool and dry; a QuikFresh anti-microbial finish; and a UV

coating, QuikBlock, that provides UPF 50 protection.

Jute Technology Mission approved

06 June 2006

The Indian Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved the Jute Technology Mission (JTM) at a cost of Rs355.55 crore ($77.4 million). The Jute Technology Mission will benefit jute growers and workers engaged in the industry, as well as entrepreneurs and others employed in associated activities in the jute sector. It aims to assist in the modernisation of the industry and enable the country to reap the benefits of enhanced levels of jute diversification.

The jute sector occupies an important place in India's economy, particularly in the eastern region, providing direct employment to about 260,000 workers, and supporting the livelihood of around four million farm families.

New shoe fitting service from Bureau Veritas

06 June 2006

Consumer product testing, inspections and auditing service company Bureau Veritas Consumer Products Services (BVCPS) has introduced a new shoe-fitting package for importers and retailers. The service is said to ensure correctly fitting shoes through solutions such as basic and intensive shoe fitting training and professional fit assessments with user-friendly reports.

BVCPS can assess lasts for correct length, width, joint and instep girth as well as creating prototype shoe models specific to customer requirements. This could both enhance customer satisfaction, and ensure that retailers do not lose out on sales by correcting faults before shoe models are produced in bulk.

Buckeye receives Supplier Excellence Award

06 June 2006

Manufacturer and marketer of specialty fibres and nonwoven materials Buckeye Technologies Inc. has received the 2005 Supplier Excellence Award from the Eastman Chemical Company for its Memphis Cotton Cellulose Plant.

The award is given annually to the top 3% of its best suppliers whose performance meets strict and demanding criteria.

The Memphis plant performance in 2005 was reportedly exceptional in making on-time deliveries and additionally, Buckeye developed innovative new products to enhance Eastman Chemical's results.

Positive outlook for Lotto in 2006

06 June 2006

Sports company Lotto Sport Italia S.p.A. closed 2005 satisfactorily, despite a recession in the Italian market. With total sales of €257 million, the company managed to make up for the low performance in the domestic market through its export markets.

The most significant event was the launch of Zhero Gravity, the first lace-less football shoe. The start of high-end leisure footwear and apparel collection Lotto Leggenda was also an important factor.

The company also signed new commercial agreements including two joint ventures in China and the USA and new distribution agreements in Taiwan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam and Australia.

Avery Dennison adds DNA option to ComfortTag heat transfers

06 June 2006

Avery Dennison's ComfortTag heat transfers used in apparel, footwear and linens can now be sourced with one of several new ink-based, covert (non-visible) security technologies that defend against counterfeiting and diversion. The technologies include an option whereby security ink is loaded with a DNA component.

The covert technology has been introduced to support the growing trend among brand owners to migrate from woven and printed labels to tagless labelling.

Coppersole socks with Cupron technology launched

07 June 2006

Renfro has launched a new line, Coppersole socks, whaich are said to offer relief to those afflicted with burning, itchy or cracked feet. The new socks use Cupron's patented copper compound fabric technology that is said to eliminate 99.9% of bacteria and fungi that attack socks without washing out.

According to Cupron, wearing the socks regularly has been clinically proven to improve the appearance of feet and prevent bad odours.

Cupron integrates patented copper compound technology into products that span the healthcare, medical and apparel industries.

Suryajyoti Spinning expands

07 June 2006

Indian yarn producer Suryajyoti Spinning Mills Ltd. has completed the initial phase of its earlier announced expansion plan.

The company now has 7,056 spindles at its facility in Makthal, increasing its capacity to 62,416 spindles in total.

The company will now begin the next phase of expansion with the establishment of a new facility in Andhra Pradesh.

Suryajyoti Spinning produces cotton, polyester, and viscose blend yarns in count ranges of Ne 20 - Ne 40.

Vulkan to distribute Sorbothane insoles

07 June 2006

UK-based sports supports company Vulkan (part of the Mobilis Healthcare Group) has become the sole distributor for European insole brand Sorbothane. Vulkan will distribute the product throughout Europe, Africa, the Middle East and the former Russian States.

Sorbothane has been manufactured in the UK for over 20 years and provides protection to the human body in sports, daily life or for specific medical conditions.

Anatomically designed to give optimum support and cushioning whilst remaining comfortable and long lasting, the insole's molecular structure is said to absorb 94.7% of all shock waves caused by running or walking.

12th Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics

07 June 2006

The 12th edition of Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics is to take place at the Shanghai New International Expo Centre from October 25-28.

Major fibre companies including Lenzing, Invista, Hyosung and Yihua Unifi, as well as chemical companies such as Dow and BASF will promote their fibre and yarn products, and present new developments in style and function.

'Xtreme' sheep to advance Australian wool industry

07 June 2006

Scientists from the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI) and the University of Adelaide are looking for 'xtreme' sheep with unusual wool to provide genetic information that could lead to superior wool quality.

These lambs are usually culled because they may have uneven wool, strange fibres, clumps of wool that fall out, bare patches, no wool, unusual crimp, extra-lustrous wool, or even highly wrinkled skin. However University of Adelaide's Professor Phil Hynd stated, "These lambs, typically viewed as worthless, are in fact highly valuable to the industry, because one of the most efficient ways to identify the genes that impact on certain wool traits is to study animals that have rare or extreme features."

"When something goes really wrong with the genes, it is the most powerful indicator about where to look to identify the genes that can – paradoxically – make things go really right."

Experts are hoping that, as a result of testing, Australian merino wool could become stretchier, less scratchy, shinier and easier to spin, helping it to compete more successfully against synthetic fibres.

Dr Hynd said that it was estimated that, among the national merino flock, about 100 'xtreme' lambs will born this autumn.

"Currently the wool industry is making small, incremental improvements to wool quality – about 1% a year. The development of studying unusual sheep could lead to dramatic improvements in genetic gain and secure a healthy future for the Australian wool industry." Australia's wool industry is currently worth $2.8 billion.

G-III Apparel Group confirms Q1 losses

07 June 2006

Leading manufacturer and distributor of outerwear and sportswear G-III Apparel Group, Ltd. has reported operating results for the first quarter of fiscal 2007.

For the three-month period ended April 30, G-III reported net sales of $14.4 million and a net loss of $8.9 million compared with net sales of $13.8 million and a net loss of $4.7 million during the comparable period last year.

As expected, seasonal losses in the first quarter were higher than last year, primarily due to the inclusion of the results of companies acquired in July 2005, as well as higher interest expenses and depreciation and amortisation costs relating to these acquisitions.

For the second quarter ending July 31, the company is forecasting net sales of approximately $60 million compared with $54.6 million in 2005.

Adidas wins court battle over Wimbledon

07 June 2006

The British High Court has ruled that the famous adidas 3-stripes will be permitted on tennis apparel at this year's Wimbledon tennis tournament after adidas successfully challenged a new interpretation of the dress code by grand slam organisers and The International Tennis Federation (ITF).

Adidas levelled its charges against the ITF and the organisers of the four Grand Slam tournaments—the Lawn Tennis Association, the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, Tennis Australia, the Fédération Française de Tennis and the US Tennis Association. It claimed that the brand's three stripes are not a standard logo following a decision made by the tennis associations to limit the size permitted for logos.

One of adidas' legal representatives said, "As a strong supporter of the sport of tennis for many decades, adidas would have been greatly prejudiced by the proposed interpretation of the dress rule. Adidas was very confident of its legal position and it was only with great reluctance and as a last resort following a long period of negotiations and discussions with both the ITF and the Grand Slam Committee to resolve the issue that it resorted to legal proceedings."

New Burlington cotton complex in Vietnam

08 June 2006

International Textile Group, Inc. (ITG) has stated that its Burlington WorldWide division plans to build a cotton manufacturing complex in DaNang, Vietnam. The complex will be a joint venture called Burlington Phong Phu Supply Chain City, with WL Ross & Co—a ubsidiary of ITG holding —holding a 60% stake and 40% held by Vietnamese textile and garment enterprise Phong Phu Corporation. The investment will exceed $80 million.

Supply Chain City will offer apparel customers products ranging from fabric to finished garments. Capabilities will include weaving, dyeing and finishing operations as well as garment sewing and wet processing.

It is expected to be operational within the next 18 months with a dyeing and finishing capacity of 60 million yards. The complex will employ more than 1,500 people.

Chairman of ITG, Wilbur Ross, said, "Vietnam is becoming an increasingly important resource for garment production. Its pending membership in the World Trade Organisation will be critical to fully realise the future contributions of this country. We are pleased by last week's US trade agreement with Vietnam and urge the continued progress towards the country's entry into the WTO."

Haggar names new CMO

08 June 2006

Marketer of men's casual and dress apparel and women's sportswear Haggar Clothing Co. has appointed Edward Jones III to the position of chief merchandising officer of men's and women's wear where he will be responsible for all merchandising and design operations.

He will continue his role as president and creative director of women's wear and will continue to report to Jim Lewis, Haggar president and CEO.

Prior to joining Haggar, Mr Jones was CEO and chairman of the board of GM Design Group Ltd. He is a member of the board of directors of the Foundation for Fashion Institute of Technology and of the American Apparel and Footwear Association, as well as being a member of the board of advisors for The Fashion Group International.

Nike donates apparel and footwear for South African marathon

08 June 2006

Member of the Executive Committee for Sport and Recreation in South Africa, Amichand Rajbansi, has confirmed that his department will help to fund disadvantaged runners taking part in the Comrades Marathon in Durban.

In partnership with KwaZulu-Natal Athletics and Nike SA, the department plans to establish a Comrades Athlete's Village at the Coastlands Holiday Resort in Durban from June 14 – 16, catering for 300 athletes.

Every runner entering the village will receive a free pair of running shoes and running apparel courtesy of Nike SA.

YKK launches awards for design students

08 June 2006

YKK is again joining forces with International Talent Support (ITS), to run this year's ITS#Accessories award that provides a platform for fashion and design students and graduates from all over the world.

Last year's award went to Demna Gvasalia, who created

an outfit made entirely from YKK fastening products.

The total prize money amounts to €20.000 and will be divided into two awards: Accessories Collection of the Year – €10.000, and YKK Accessory Award – €10.000.

AAFA urges US Congress to renew import ban against Burma

08 June 2006

President and CEO of the American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA), Kevin Burke, has urged the US Congress to quickly renew import restrictions against the ruling military junta in Burma because of its continued violations of human rights. He also urged the Bush administration to do more to encourage other countries to impose similar sanctions against Burma's military rulers.

In letters to key members of the House and Senate, Mr Burke urged Congress to extend the import ban contained in the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003, which will expire July 31. He also applauded the government for putting the issue of Burma before the international community.

"Unfortunately, while the international community, led by the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the United Nations, has universally condemned the deplorable human and labour rights situation in Burma, the United States has been the only one to exercise true leadership by imposing tough sanctions."

Beijing landlords agree to crack down on counterfeit goods

08 June 2006

EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson and Vice minister of the Chinese Ministry of Commerce Ma Xiuhong attended the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Beijing retail markets and foreign brand owners in the sportswear and fashion industries to join the fight against the sale of counterfeit goods in Beijing retail markets. Representatives from the Beijing Municipal government and the Beijing Intellectual Property Office were also present. The agreement is an attempt to head off further litigation against Beijing retail market landlords through a voluntary agreement to crack down on intellectual property theft and piracy.

Speaking at the ceremony, Mandelson said: "The protection of intellectual property goes to the heart of our economic relations. That is why this initiative is highly significant and should be an important step to maintain confidence in these markets: I hope we can build further on this foundation."

Commenting on the agreement on behalf of the participating brand owners, trademark counsel for Louis Vuitton, Nathalie Moulle Berteaux said: "Counterfeiting in China of famous foreign brands has grown in the last few years in parallel with China's tremendous economic development. Today's agreement is a private sector solution to the harm caused by counterfeiting and will hopefully result in significant changes in Beijing markets, in time for the 2008 Olympics."

The agreement sets out a new framework for trademark owners and landlords to cooperate in the fight against sales and offers for sales of counterfeit goods under a proposed "Two-Strike Rule". Upon receipt of evidence of first violation by a particular vendor, landlords will agree to suspend the operations of the vendor for a certain period. Following a second report of the sale of counterfeits of any of the participating brands by the same vendor, that vendor's lease would be terminated and the vendor ejected from the market.

The landlords of major Beijing retail markets such as Silk Street, Hongqiao and others have also agreed to work with the brand owners to develop a new standard rental agreement which clarifies the obligations of vendors to respect intellectual property rights and sets out the potential consequences for counterfeiting in greater detail.

Canadian dollar affects results at ADS

09 June 2006

Canadian technical textiles manufacturer ADS Inc. has recorded its financial results for the first quarter, ended April 30, which shows that sales during this period totalled $11.6 million, a decrease of $820,000 or 6.6% compared with the first quarter of the preceding year.

The company estimates that the appreciation of the Canadian dollar had a negative impact of approximately $400,000 on sales this quarter.

During the quarter the company recorded a net loss of $116,000, compared with net earnings of $330,000 for the same three-month period a year earlier.

Texon unveils latest insoling material

09 June 2006

Texon International launched a new nonwoven insoling material at the 2006 Shoes and Leather Exhibition (May 30 – June 2).

Texon Sprint is a nonwoven material using a new "hook-bonded" method of manufacturing, specially developed for Strobel lasting. The process, engineered to avoid adding thread and weight to the nonwoven base, takes the fibres directly from the nonwoven material to form a stitch, which becomes an integral part of the three

dimensional structure of the product.

Made from needled polyester fibre, blended and heat-treated, Texon Sprint material is permeable to both air and moisture, making it ideal for use in casual and sports footwear.

Thanks to its high abrasion resistance and good tear strength, Texon Sprint can also be used as a vamp lining.

United Golfers launches golf shoe with rotating sole

09 June 2006

United Golfers has launched the Free Release golf shoe which is fitted with a sole that rotates up to 20 degrees. The turning mechanism shifts the strain exerted by the golf swing on the hip, knee and ankle joints almost completely onto the shoe. The effectiveness of the technology has been verified by a study at the University of Tubingen supervised by Professor Veit Wank and Professor Frank Schiebl, with the support of PGA professional Peter Eisenhuth. The tests conducted proved that the Free Release shoe can, for example, reduce the 530 Nm of stress exerted on the ankle by up to 99%.

The new footwear is good for muscles, tendons and joints - and golfers do not just benefit from better health, by stabilising the body's centre of gravity, players stand firmer, improving their game as a result.

The "stress transfer principle" has seen similar success in winter sports, where the hourglass shape of the carving ski largely eradicates the traditional weight-shift-and-turn action. Now this kind of ski dominates the market, and has practically displaced all other types.

BASF appoints new head of Performance Polymers Division

09 June 2006

Dr Harald Lauke was recently appointed as head of German specialty chemicals company BASF's Performance Polymers Operating Division. He is succeeding Raimar Jahn, who will become head of BASF Coatings AG, Münster, Germany, in July.

Dr Lauke joined BASF in 1986 as a research chemist in the Plastics Laboratory. He has then held various positions within Engineering Plastics before taking over, in 1996, as managing director of Comparex Sistemas Informáticos S.A., Spain. Two years later he was transferred to Singapore as director regional marketing, Engineering Plastics. In 2001, he was promoted to group vice president, Performance Polymers Asia Pacific and in 2002 took on the role of president of BASF South East Asia. In 2004 he became president responsible for Functions and Market Efficiency Asia Pacific, based in Singapore.

China extends anti-dumping investigation on imported resin

09 June 2006

China's Ministry of Commerce is to extend an anti-dumping investigation into imports of polybutylene terephthalate resin, produced in Japan and Taiwan for three months until September 6.

Sources within the ministry's Fair Trade Bureau stated that that the delay in making a decision was due to the complexity of the case.

Polybutylene terephthalate resin is mainly used in textiles, automobile construction, and instruments and machinery.

Domestic importers have been required to submit cash deposits to mainland customs authorities since March 22. If the preliminary judgment is confirmed by a final investigation, importers will forfeit their deposits to offset the damages caused to domestic producers.