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FOREWORD

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International Electronics
Recycling Congress

Welcome to Salzburg – the hometown of Amadeus Mozart and "Red Bull"

In the name of the Steering Committee I welcome you to Salzburg for the 14th International Electronics Recycling Congress.

On one hand we see that our industry is facing the implementation and enforcement of uniform, clear global standards.

On the other hand we see, or better we should ask: "What has gone wrong after more than 12 years of the WEEE directive and its revision?"

From the viewpoint of the recycling industry, the WEEE set reliable standards and consequently formed a good basis for investment. In the meantime, a whole secondary industry has arisen with recycling systems and the creation of one treatment standard after the other (on top of the WEEE standard).

The recycling industry has grown from being a niche

business to full industrialisation, made investments and needed the growing WEEE material stream to amortise and develop its business.

In the past, the leverage for financing was the positive value of the WEEE waste stream. This added value made it possible to finance the whole collecting, logistics and recycling value chain and, in addition, some indirect activities like recycling and collecting systems, creating new standards.

Moreover, the recycling industry took over a part of the producers' responsibility.

Looking to the future, we see that WEEE materials are likely to become less valuable and contain less (precious) metals, but still offer a variety of polymers. The vast majority of obsolete WEEE already has a negative value, considering the cost of collection and recycling. In addition, the recycling process will become much more difficult and costly because of the continuing

end towards size reduction and miniaturization.

The recycling industry is currently facing numerous challenges:

Are the WEEE Directive and the recycling industry on the right track?

How do we increase the volume collected for the WEEE material stream?

Why are we exporting more and more WEEE to substandard treatment regions? How can we stop this and who can enforce it?

What needs to be done to make investments in new technologies and new treatment standards financially viable?

Can the recycling industry survive with the old business model of real recycling, simple trading and exporting – or does the industry need to re-invent itself?

If the manufacturing industry also needs to tackle some serious challenges:

- How do we increase producer responsibility?
- How do we create real ECO Design and could it be a serious game-changer?
- Improved use of recycled plastics
- Finding the way towards the "circular economy"

In other words: the industrialization of the whole WEEE industry governed by worldwide, clear, lean and effective processes and standards has already begun. In the future we will see that this value chain will be expanded on both sides towards reuse, refurbishment, services and raw materials.

In our industry we need common knowledge about market developments and technologies, raw materials, commodity prices and legal requirements for collection, transportation and recycling. We also need to consider the constant changes in the electronics products we are talking about.

IERC 2015 provides you with an ideal platform to discuss these issues. It is a growing, innovative, neutral and highly effective platform for meeting both clients and competitors, listening to market trends and the news of the speakers, holding discussions with authorities, seeing the latest products the exhibitors have to offer – and making business in a relaxed atmosphere.

I look forward to meeting you in beautiful Salzburg – A town full of pioneers and success stories.