



Press release
CP-2012-22-R

14 June 2012
07:00 CET

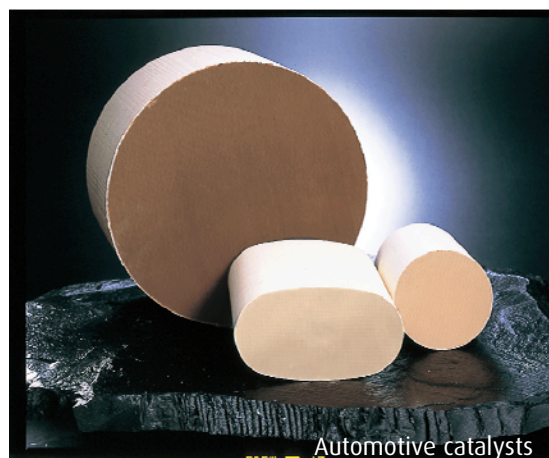
Umicore and Nippon Shokubai form automotive catalyst joint venture

Osaka, 14 June. In the presence of HRH Prince Philip of Belgium, materials technology company Umicore and Japanese chemicals company Nippon Shokubai have announced the creation of a new joint venture in the field of catalysts for reducing vehicle emissions. The venture, *Umicore Shokubai*, will focus on providing automotive catalyst systems for Japanese manufacturers of light and heavy duty vehicles around the world. Umicore and Nippon Shokubai have been producing automotive catalysts together since the early 1990s. The new joint venture is owned 60% by Umicore and 40% by Nippon Shokubai. The joint venture is expected to be incorporated in the third quarter of 2012 subject to the standard regulatory approvals.

Umicore Shokubai will have its manufacturing and R&D centre in Himeji, Japan. It will deploy its technology to Japanese customers globally by using Umicore's production and commercial infrastructure in North and South America, Europe and China.

The joint venture will profit from Nippon Shokubai's reputation as a renowned and respected Japanese company with international reach and its established relationships with Japanese OEMs. Umicore provides extensive product and process know-how, a global manufacturing footprint, a world-wide sales & marketing and applied technology network.

Umicore Shokubai has the intention to invest in a new automotive catalyst Technical R&D Centre to be built in Tokoname City, Aichi Prefecture, Japan. This technical R&D centre will have state of the art equipment and improved capabilities and capacity to enable Umicore Shokubai to serve its customers in Japan and elsewhere. The investment has qualified for subsidies from the Japanese government as well as local incentives from the Aichi Prefecture.



Marc Grynberg, CEO Umicore commented: "Growing our catalyst business with Japanese automotive producers is a key element of our Vision 2015 strategy. This single global organization will enable us to better serve the needs of our Japanese customers and to play an even more significant role in their on-going success around the world."

Umicore Group Communications

Naamloze vennootschap/Société Anonyme
Broekstraat 31 Rue du Marais
B-1000 Brussels
Belgium

phone +32 2 227 71 11
fax +32 2 227 79 00
e-mail info@umicore.com
web www.umicore.com

VAT BE0401 574 852
Company number 0401574852
Registered office Broekstraat 31 Rue du Marais
B-1000 Brussels



Masanori Ikeda, Executive President of Nippon Shokubai added: "Providing automotive catalysts for emission control is in line with our corporate philosophy of 'techno amenity'. This involves providing affluence and comfort to people and society, with our unique technology. The new organization can grow further by providing technologies and products to a global customer base".

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Naamloze vennootschap/Société Anonyme
Broekstraat 31 Rue du Marais
B-1000 Brussels
Belgium

phone +32 2 227 71 11
fax +32 2 227 79 00
e-mail info@umicore.com
web www.umicore.com

VAT BE0401 574 852
Company number 0401574852
Registered office Broekstraat 31 Rue du Marais
B-1000 Brussels

For more information

Investor Relations

Geoffroy Raskin +32 2 227 71 47 geoffroy.raskin@umicore.com

Evelien Goovaerts +32 2 227 78 38 evelien.goovaerts@umicore.com

Media Relations

Elcke Verduyck +32 2 227 71 29 elcke.verduyck@umicore.com

Investor Relations, Media Relations (Nippon Shokubai Co.,Ltd.):

Investor & Public Relations Dept. +81-3-3506-7477 shokubai@n.shokubai.co.jp

Umicore profile

Umicore is a global materials technology group. It focuses on application areas where its expertise in materials science, chemistry and metallurgy makes a real difference. Its activities are centred on four business areas: Catalysis, Energy Materials, Performance Materials and Recycling. Each business area is divided into market-focused business units offering materials and solutions that are at the cutting edge of new technological developments and essential to everyday life.

Umicore generates the majority of its revenues and dedicates most of its R&D efforts to clean technologies, such as emission control catalysts, materials for rechargeable batteries and photovoltaics, fuel cells, and recycling. Umicore's overriding goal of sustainable value creation is based on an ambition to develop, produce and recycle materials in a way that fulfils its mission: materials for a better life.

The Umicore Group has industrial operations on all continents and serves a global customer base; it generated a turnover of € 14.5 billion (€ 2.3 billion excluding metal) in 2011 and currently employs some 14,600 people.

Nippon Shokubai profile

Since 1941, NIPPON SHOKUBAI has grown its business through unique catalyst technology.

NIPPON SHOKUBAI is a global chemical company with the following motto: "Providing affluence and comfort to people and society, with our unique technology".

NIPPON SHOKUBAI traditionally has supplied ethylene oxide, acrylic acid, automotive catalysts, process catalysts and many more products to its customer base. Today NIPPON SHOKUBAI has the number one position worldwide in superabsorbent polymers.

The NIPPON SHOKUBAI Group generated net sales of 320,704 Mio JPY in 2011 and currently employs 3,779 people.