SMS group

PRESS RELEASE

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Exlabesa expands Aluminium recycling capacities with additional Continuous Homogenizing Plant from Hertwich Engineering

- CO_2 reduction by recycling post-consumer aluminium scrap
- Expansion of recycling capacity by a further 30,000 tons of aluminium per year

Exlabesa, global leader in the extrusion of bespoke industrial components for the most demanding market segments , is expanding production at its aluminium recycling plant in the province of A Coruña (Spain), once again relying on technology from Hertwich Engineering, an SMS group company. Hertwich is supplying a continuous homogenization furnace with an air cooling station, a long-billet stacker and semi-automatic PET strapping that will complement the second melting furnace already installed, specially dedicated to recycled aluminium produced from post-consumer scrap.

Exlabesa had already commissioned a second continuous homogenization plant at the site in 2018 and later also a multi-chamber melting furnace, both of which had been supplied by Hertwich. With the expansion now agreed, the capacity for continuous homogenization at the plant in north-western Spain will increase by 30,000 to around 80,000 metric tons per year.

The state-of-the-art melting furnace, which was recently put into operation, is specifically focused on producing recycled billets sourced from post-consumer aluminium scrap that has completed its lifecycle. The subsequent expansion of the casthouse with the new continuous homogenization from Hertwich as an important component will once again significantly increase the capacity for the processing of production scrap. This helps to make Exlabesa less dependent on primary aluminium purchases and thus conserve resources. These investments not only demonstrate Exlabesa's commitment to sustainability and CO2 reduction, promoting a cleaner and more efficient industry based on the principles of the circular economy, but also consolidate Exlabesa's position to meet the increasing demand for this type of product with one of the most advanced foundries in the world.

"Finding solutions that are individually tailored to the needs of customers is one of Hertwich Engineering's strengths," says Managing Director Gerold Keune. "Our expansion of continuous homogenization at the Exlabesa plant fits perfectly into the existing production environment. And last but not least, it is an investment

in the sustainability of aluminium production. This endeavor also underscores our commitment to long-term cooperation and partnership. We believe in forging strong alliances with our clients, built on trust, and shared goals."

The new system is designed for aluminium billets with a diameter of 178 to 406 millimetres and a length of 7.0 metres and for all the alloys of the extensive Exlabesa's portfolio. A major advantage of Hertwich's continuous system compared to chamber homogenization is the uniform treatment of the billets: In the homogenization furnace, billets cast from melted aluminum scrap undergo continuous heat treatment at temperatures up to 590 degrees Celsius. The precise temperature control when heating and keeping the heat in the furnace ensures a uniform microstructure of the billets before they enter the air-cooling station. This process guarantees high billet quality with optimal metallurgical properties, simultaneously reducing the energy consumption required for billet homogenization. At the end of the production line, the billets are stacked and strapped with plastic straps.

Hertwich Engineering, a company of the SMS group is renowned for its future-oriented, energy saving technologies and outstanding service in aluminium casthouse. The company is active worldwide with design, supply, construction and commissioning of special machinery and equipment for the Aluminium industry. Hertwich is competent for supplying complete Al-casthouse on a turnkey basis (one-stop-shopping). The product range comprises melting equipment for aluminium scrap, conti and batch homogenizing plants, sawing plants, horizontal and vertical casting machines and quality inspection stations, etc. To stay ahead Hertwich relies on its own R&D and proprietary know-how. For 50 years, the advanced technology has revolutionized the industry and the company maintains its worldwide lead.