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SIKA FURTHER EXPANDING PRODUCTION IN FRANCE AND POSITIONING ITSELF FOR INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

Sika has started production of shotcrete admixtures at its main plant at Gournay-en-Bray, north west of Paris. The set accelerator marketed under the Sigunit® brand is used primarily in tunnel construction. The market potential in France and beyond is considerable – in western Europe alone, tenders have been issued for tunnel construction projects with a combined length of 900 kilometers, with these projects set to come on stream over the next few years.

A crucial factor in shotcrete as it is applied in mining and tunneling is high early strength development. Admixtures in the form of a set accelerator ensure that the shotcrete bonds to rock and concrete, thus facilitating overhead spraying.

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS OF CHF 750 BILLION IN EUROPE ALONE

Europe alone is currently planning infrastructure investment programs worth some CHF 750 billion, with tunnel construction included in these programs. Thanks to the many years of experience acquired in demanding large-scale projects such as the Gotthard tunnel and the Brenner base tunnel plus a high-performance portfolio of products, Sika can guarantee the durability of its technologies.

Ivo Schaedler, Regional Manager EMEA: "The infrastructure construction market is generally characterized by a high level of resilience in crises. Even in 2020 capital spending remains strong. With the commissioning of the new facilities at the Gournay-en-Bray plant, our aim is to tap into business potential in France and in north and western Europe and facilitate challenging shotcrete work in mining and tunneling projects with our specialty products. At the same time, we are strengthening our supply chain and competitiveness thanks to a sizeable reduction in logistics costs."

STATE INVESTMENT DRIVING GROWTH

COVID-19 has sparked a contraction in France's construction sector this year. A recovery is forecast for 2021, with growth of more than 4%. An important driver of this growth will be the

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government stimulus program worth the equivalent of an estimated CHF 105 billion. This program will include investment in the country's rail infrastructure and in extensive building renovations. Europe's biggest transport project is already in the implementation phase with the "Grand Paris Express", a network comprising six automatic metro lines in the Greater Paris region. More than CHF 37 billion in investment will be channeled into the project by 2030.

SIKA AG CORPORATE PROFILE

Sika is a specialty chemicals company with a leading position in the development and production of systems and products for bonding, sealing, damping, reinforcing, and protecting in the building sector and motor vehicle industry. Sika has subsidiaries in 100 countries around the world and manufactures in over 300 factories. Its more than 25,000 employees generated annual sales of CHF 8.1 billion in 2019. At the end of 2019, Sika won the Swiss Technology Award for an innovative new adhesive technology.