

Pramac signs contract with Oerlikon Solar for first turnkey thin-film solar module factory in Switzerland

Solar made in Switzerland

Lugano/TI, February 13, 2008 – *With the contract signing between Oerlikon Solar and Pramac SpA, the cornerstone has been laid for the first turnkey factory for thin-film silicon solar modules in Switzerland. Oerlikon Solar will deliver the turnkey production plant within the current year – the state-of-the-art Pramac production facility, is scheduled to ramp-up in early 2009. The annual capacity will be 30 MWp (megawatt peak) – with expansions in the coming years already in plan. “With Oerlikon’s worldwide leading technology, we are sure of gaining an important market share in the fast-growing European thin-film photovoltaic market”, says Dr. Paolo Campinoti, CEO of Pramac Group.*

With the contract signing and the construction of the first Swiss thin-film solar module factory, Pramac is focusing on one of the fastest-growing markets worldwide. Thanks to Oerlikon’s innovative thin-film PV technology, solar modules can now be produced about 30 percent less expensive than conventional wafer-based technology; experts predict that grid parity will be reached on a larger scale by 2010, i.e. the point when solar energy will be able to be fed into the mains supply networks at competitive prices. “We are very pleased that Pramac, an Italian company, has chosen a Swiss location for their production line. This is a significant milestone for the Swiss industrial thin-film solar module production on a grand scale“, said Jeannine Sargent, CEO of Oerlikon Solar. With the initial capacity of 30 MWp, Pramac will be in a position to produce more photovoltaic surface in just one year than the total PV area of Switzerland installed so far.

Page 2 **Pramac creates attractive jobs**

The first thin-film silicon solar module factory in Switzerland will be built on a 30.000 m² site near Locarno, in the Italian-speaking part of Switzerland. Pramac will be an attractive employer in the region with approximately 140 new jobs being created. Several ancillary supply companies will also benefit from the new factory. "The excellent infrastructure and active support of the regional authorities have greatly facilitated our choice for the first Pramac production location", says Campinoti.

250.000 modules per year

Pramac envisages an annual production of approx. 250,000 solar modules for the first stage of expansion of the Swiss solar module factory. Campinoti: "Given the market development which has been forecast by specialists - and which we had indeed already anticipated - we aim to rapidly expand the existing capacity in the next few years".

A billion-dollar industry in the making

Worldwide, the photovoltaic industry is reacting to the promising potential of thin-film technology. Many companies are investing more and more in the development and expansion in the solar industry. The German market alone, which leads the solar market in Europe, has invested over two billion euro in recent years in this propitious market, and one-quarter of this has already gone into thin-film technology (source: BSW-Solar, Berlin).

For further information, please contact:

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Page 3 **About Pramac**

Pramac is a leading company in the sector of the production and distribution of electrical generation systems and is also active in the sector of handling equipment. The Group is active globally with four production facilities, of which one in Italy (in Casole d'Elsa, Siena) and three abroad (Spain, France and China). It operates a distribution network comprised of 17 commercial branches and employs about 750 people at the Group level. It has recently signed a joint venture agreement with the Prosolia Group for the distribution and installation of photovoltaic panels.

About Oerlikon Solar

Oerlikon Solar offers cost-effective, field proven turnkey solutions for the mass production of thin-film silicon solar modules. These fully automated, modular end-to-end manufacturing solutions are focused on reducing device cost and maximizing productivity. They are available as modular end-to-end solutions with metrology and upgradeability in throughput and process technology.

Oerlikon Solar has developed a unique and innovative technology based on its leadership in thin film technology and in close cooperation with its customers. An in-house pilot line allows producing, testing and optimizing the solar modules in full production size.

Headquartered in Truebbach, Switzerland, Oerlikon Solar maintains an R&D lab in Europe, as well as global customer support and training through sales and service centers in the United States, Europe and Asia.