

**Media Release**

## **Oerlikon Balzers opens first automotive competence centre in Europe**

**Balzers, Liechtenstein, 22 September 2015 – In a Grand Opening Ceremony with numerous guests of honour and customers, Oerlikon Balzers opened their first European competence centre for coatings in the automotive sector.**

The new plant in Veľká Ida near the major Slovakian city of Košice is part of the Oerlikon Balzers overall strategy for the automotive market: “We have been active and growing steadily in this market since 1998. Our revenue in this market segment will continue to grow,” explains Dr. Roland Herb, CEO of the Oerlikon Surface Solutions Segment of which Oerlikon Balzers is a part.

At the plant in Veľká Ida, Oerlikon Balzers is pooling the European service activities for the German and European automotive industry at a central site in Europe. “We will serve all well-known automobile manufacturers and suppliers in Europe from Veľká Ida. The town itself offers a well developed industrial area, while the region has a high level of skilled labour potential, good transport connections and local educational opportunities,” says Bernd Fischer, Head of Oerlikon Balzers.

### **Pioneering Role: State-of-the-art Facilities**

Veľká Ida is positioned within the corporation as the largest and most modern production site to date: In addition to ultra-modern coating systems that are designed and built by Oerlikon Balzers, there are also fully automatic test systems as well as batch loaders for components plus state-of-the-art stripping technology for the maintenance of fixtures and system components. All of these systems represent the latest state of development. Moreover, there is an IT-supported high-bay warehouse for unprocessed parts and finished products. Production has already begun with the first 37 employees, meaning the start-up of the plant is right on schedule. In total, over 100 jobs are planned. A second level of expansion is also already under consideration.

In addition to Veľká Ida, Oerlikon Balzers is working on two further automotive competence centres in the USA and China as well. The new plant in Slovakia will assume a pioneering role in this process: To reduce planning costs, the further automotive sites will be of identical construction.

### **Reduction of Friction and Wear Through Coatings**

Reputable automobile manufacturers and suppliers worldwide rely on the surface solutions provided by Oerlikon Balzers. “Whether the engine or power train, oil pumps or brakes, headlights or wheels, body or interior – in modern motor vehicles, there is almost nothing in which coating solutions from Oerlikon Balzers don’t play a role either during production or operation,” says Bernd Fischer.

The decisive challenges for automotive coatings include friction, wear, and the requirements for absolute precision demanded by manufacturers. After all, less friction results in greater performance and reduced emissions; less wear means that components can be subjected to greater loads while benefiting from longer service lives, higher reliability, and improved safety; and the ability to meet extremely strict tolerance requirements is a guaranteed way to deliver greater efficiency.

Bernd Fischer explains: “In practice, this means that uncoated engine components would last just about one day. With our coating solutions, however, they last the entire life of the car! Innovative coating technologies such as these are an investment in the future because efficient engines mean less fuel and fewer resources are consumed – and this is a very important aspect of our work.”



From left to right: Ulrich Urban - Project Manager & Managing Director in Slovakia, Bernd Fischer - Head of Oerlikon Balzers, Etienne van der Muren - Controlling & Managing Director in Slovakia.



The newly constructed plant of Oerlikon Balzers in Velká Ida.



View into the production area with three of the state-of-the-art coating systems of Oerlikon Balzers.

For further information please contact:

Alessandra Doëll  
Head of Communications, Oerlikon Balzers  
T +423 388 7500  
F +423 388 5419  
[alessandra.doell@oerlikon.com](mailto:alessandra.doell@oerlikon.com)  
[www.oerlikon.com/balzers](http://www.oerlikon.com/balzers)

**About Oerlikon Balzers**

Oerlikon Balzers is one of the world's leading suppliers of surface technologies that significantly improve the performance and durability of precision components as well as tools for the metal and plastics processing industries. These coatings, developed under the brand names BALINIT and BALIQ, are extremely thin and exceptionally hard and significantly reduce friction and wear. Under the technology brand ePD, the company develops integrated services and solutions for the metallization of plastic parts yielding a chrome look. Oerlikon Balzers has a dynamically evolving network of currently 107 coating centres in 35 countries of Europe, North and South America and Asia. Together with Oerlikon Metco, Oerlikon Balzers is part of the Surface Solutions Segment of the Swiss Oerlikon Group (SIX: OERL).

**About Surface Solutions**

The Oerlikon Surface Solutions Segment comprises the two brands Oerlikon Balzers and Oerlikon Metco. Oerlikon Balzers is one of the world's leading suppliers of surface technologies that significantly improve the performance and durability of precision components as well as tools for the metal and plastics processing industries. These coatings are extremely thin, exceptionally hard and significantly reduce friction and wear. Under the technology brand ePD, the company develops integrated services and solutions for the metallization of plastic parts yielding a chrome look. Oerlikon Metco refines surfaces using innovative coatings and systems. Customers benefit from a unique variety of surface technologies, coating solutions, systems, materials, services and specialized processing services as well as components. The innovative solutions improve the performance and increase the efficiency and reliability of components and products. Oerlikon Metco serves customers from the areas of aviation, energy production, automotive technology, oil and gas as well as other specialized industrial markets. The Surface Solutions Segment has a dynamically evolving network of currently more than 145 branches with over 140 coating centres in 36 countries of Europe, North and South America, Asia and Australia with a total of over 6,000 employees. The Surface Solutions Segment is part of the Swiss Oerlikon Group (SIX: OERL).