

## CARMEUSE GROUP Interim Report as of September 2009

1. Net turnover reaches € 709.1 million, compared to € 924.7 million for the same period 2008, reflecting the sharp deterioration of the economic environment.
2. EBITDA amounts to € 159.9 million, an organic deterioration of 22 % when compared to September 2008 but ahead of the Group estimates.

### OPERATIONS

Carmeuse's business remains mainly connected with the evolution of the construction and steel sectors where low capacity utilization rates, particularly in the steel sector, impacted the Group's results. While it remains unclear how these sectors will perform in the medium to long run, steel segment has shown some positive trend during this last quarter, supported by the end of a destocking cycle.

#### Europe

Western Europe : decrease of the net turnover – compared to last year – driven by lower volumes sold (both in crude and burnt). Despite some reduction in costs, the operating result suffered from the decreased activity.

Central and Eastern Europe, Turkey: low volumes in the steel and building & construction operations lead to a 25% decreased turnover compared to September 2008.

Compared to 2008, the operating result of both the Central and Eastern Europe area and Turkey deteriorated as a consequence of lower sold volumes. Ebitda ended however slightly ahead of initial estimates thanks to strong monitoring of fuel and fixed costs.

Final European region's result was also supported by sales of excess CO<sup>2</sup> emission rights, most part of said sales having occurred during the first quarter of the year.

#### North America

Driven by market conditions which see soft construction segment as well as sluggish steel activities, the net turnover reduced by some 24% compared to a year ago. All products categories marked a reduction in volumes, the sands operations – mainly depending on the gas and oil drillings – being mostly hit as a consequence of extremely low gas prices.

## GROUP FINANCING

At the end of September, the Group successfully closed restatements of certain of its financing agreements - that were threatened by breach of financial covenants due to deteriorated results. The amended agreements (that received unanimous consent of all participating banks) now secure the Group liquidity for the coming years.

Compared to end of June of this year, the Group Consolidated Net Debt somewhat reduced at € 826.0 million.

By end of September 2009, the Net Consolidated Interests Charges ended up at € 29.5 million - far below the charges recorded in 2008 - driven by current very low interests rates in the financial markets, supported by the reduction of the debt level as a consequence of the € 100 million capital increase and thanks to the active management of the Group debt charges.

## RESULT BEFORE TAXES

As of September 2009, the result before taxes is negative at € 8.6 million (showing an improvement of € 1.7 million since end of June) compared to a positive result reached during same period of 2008. Higher depreciation (in line with previous years Capex programs) and provisions recorded during those nine first months, coupled with downturn of the operational activity level, have driven this figure.

## PERSPECTIVES AND OUTLOOK

Recovery of the economic environment is anticipated to be slow and progressive while forecasts on activity remain challenging to perform.

Carmeuse's key markets – building & construction and steel – have been and are still badly hurt but internal measures implemented by the Group on plants and headquarters rationalization, Capex programs, costs and working capital monitoring support the confidence of the management to place Carmeuse on best position when the recovery of the economy will materialize.

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*The Carmeuse Group is a leading global producer of lime, with almost 150 years of experience in the extraction and processing of high calcium limestone and dolomitic stone into lime and lime-related products for industrial and commercial customer.*

*Lime is used in multiple aspects of our everyday life (steel, construction, agro-food, paper, chemicals, plastics, carpets, paints, pollution control, water treatment.) .*

*Carmeuse is present in about 90 locations across Western Europe (Italy, Belgium, France and the Netherlands), Central and Eastern Europe (Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Bosnia and Turkey), North America (the United States and Canada) and Africa (Ghana).*

*Total consolidated group net turnover amounted to 1.2 billion Euros in 2008.*