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PRESS RELEASE - PERS BERICHT - COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE

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Winners announcement of the – Golden Bridge Export Awards 2011 in Great Britain

The prestigious, fifteenth 'GOLDEN BRIDGE EXPORT AWARD 2011' presented by the Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain (BLCC) for unprecedented achievements in exporting to the UK has been won by Desso Sports Systems from Dendermonde. Dredging International from Zwijndrecht won in the "Best Newcomer" Category due to its spectacular UK export growth. Buzon Pedestal International from Braine-l'Alleud was proclaimed Best Exporting SME to the United Kingdom.

Award for an international sport pitch specialist

The prestigious award was handed over by H.E. Johan Verbeke, Ambassador of Belgium in the United Kingdom to Desso Sports Systems during a Gala Ceremony on the 16th November in London.

The company is internationally renowned for its innovative artificial grass pitches for football, hockey and rugby, and for its hybrid Desso Grassmaster pitches whereby 100 % natural grass is reinforced by 20 million artificial fibres.

Guaranteed success in the English Premier Football League

Desso Sports Systems has become one of the market leaders in the UK for sports pitches. This is both on a school or council level as well as at the absolute top level of football, hockey and rugby. No less than 17 out of 20 Premier League clubs use Desso pitches, of which 10 play on the hybrid Desso GrassMaster-pitches in their stadium. Arsenal FC's pitch is considered by both specialists and players as one of the best football pitches in the world.

Wembley can also claim again to have a perfect pitch, courtesy of Desso. After the opening of the new Wembley stadium in 2007, there were many problems with the stadium pitch due to its double function as a home base for football and an events location.

Since the installation of the Desso GrassMaster-system in the Wembley stadium in 2010, the English "Home of Football" once again has an excellent pitch and image. During a full season with top games such as the FA Cup games, the Champions League Final and a series of live concerts including performances by Take That, the pitch remained in perfect condition.

Belgian expertise in a niche market

BLCC Chairman Michel Vanhoonacker: 'I have been privileged to follow Desso Sports Systems for the last 5 years in the UK due to our involvement in the Belgian Sports Technology Club. The company is a typical example of how Belgian expertise can solve problems, discretely but convincingly, and hence create long term business in the British market. This, together with the professionalism and creativity of Desso Sports Systems, has truly impressed the Golden Bridge Jury. We look forward to following the continuation of this success, not only in the UK but worldwide.'

Desso Sports Systems considers this prestigious award as recognition for its export strategy based on innovative solutions and on the expansion of its local network in the sportsworld. With the Olympic Games around the corner, the attention on sports facilities in the UK is at its highest ever. The award will stimulate further UK growth for the company and Desso hopes it will also help to develop brand awareness in the UK.

Best Newcomer

The Best Newcomer Award was won by Dredging International NV. This award is only given to companies who perform exceedingly well within a period of 2 years on the UK market. The award was handed over by H.E. Alphonse Berns, Ambassador of Luxembourg in the UK, to Mr. Hubert Fiers. Dredging International NV increased its UK turnover from £300,000 to £77 million between 2008 and 2010 by developing a consistent and long term strategy for Great Britain. This resulted in a series of mega contracts being won including the London Gateway Deep Sea Container Terminal. Few have done it before.

Michel Vanhoonacker, BLCC Chairman commented: 'Dredging International has already been for many years a key international player in dredging solutions, but the UK was not considered as a target market. The tactic of 'hit and run' was finally replaced by a sophisticated 'early involvement' and long term strategy resulting in a spectacular growth curve. Note also that DEC - DEME Environmental Contractors - which like Dredging International, is also part of the DEME group, won the Golden Bridge Award in 2007.'

SME winner

In the SME category, the award was handed over by H.E. Jonathan Brenton, British Ambassador in Belgium, to Buzon Pedestal International SA from Braine-l'Alleud. Since 1987, BUZON has been Europe's leading manufacturer of screw jack polypropylene pedestals. This Belgian SME exports no less than 92% of its production to over 56 countries and has a market share of 12% in a very competitive UK market.

Michel Vanhoonacker, BLCC Chairman said: 'It was immediately clear for the Jury that the enthusiasm of Laurent Buzon and Mike Wilderink, the UK agent for Buzon, is the basis for the commercial success of Buzon both in the UK and worldwide. Their belief in the product is contagious and has convinced many a developer of prestigious UK projects to choose this 'Made in Belgium' product. These include Canterbury University, the Excel Exhibition Centre in London and the Athletes Village in the Olympic Park. Probably not the cheapest but definitely the best solution for which product development is a never ending process.'

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The Golden Bridge Export Award 2011 finalists in alphabetical order are:

Auriga International SA / www.auriga-int.com
Buzon Pedestal International SA / www.buzon-world.com
Decomo SA / www.decomo.be
Desso Sports Systems NV / www.dessosports.com
Dredging International NV / www.dredging.com
Theuma NV / www.theuma.be

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"The Golden Bridge Export Award"

The award is an initiative of the Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain. The purpose of the event is to encourage exporting efforts to the UK and at the same time to give Belgian and Luxembourg products and services a higher profile abroad. Its great success has shown the need to provide Belgian and Luxembourg companies with a platform to prove their achievements on the British market.

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