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China: €75m invested for two steel producers

press release

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Air Liquide in China

Air Liquide employs **2,500 people** in China, with operations in **key industrial areas including**

"Beijing/Tianjin/Liaoning/Shandong" in the **north**, "Shanghai/Jiangsu/ Zhejiang/Anhui" in the **east**, and expanding to "Sichuan/Hubei/Shaanxi" and "Guangdong" in the **west and south**, as well as a major **Engineering facility** in Hangzhou.

Air Liquide returned to China in the 1970s to supply air separation units and began to set up gas operations in 1990.

The Large Industries business line of Air Liquide

proposes **gas and energy solutions** to the world's industrial companies to improve the efficiency of their processes and help them achieve greater respect for the environment. Its main markets are: **refining and natural gas, chemicals, metals and energy.**

2008 revenue was **€3.675 billion.**

Air Liquide has signed long-term contracts with two steel producers in China and will invest **€75 million** overall to meet the needs of these new customers. This investment strengthens the Group's leading position in the Chinese steel market.

China is the largest steel maker worldwide with a production that rose **14% to a record** 568 million tonnes **in 2009** - nearly half the world's production. As China is now focusing on better utilizing its steel-making capacities, oxygen enhances productivity.

The first supply contract will provide **oxygen and nitrogen** to **Bohai Steel Group** in Tangshan, Heibei Province (near Tianjin) from a large **2,200 tonnes per day Air Separation Unit**. Under the terms of the second contract signed with **Jianbang Group** in Linfen City, Shanxi Province, Air Liquide will invest in an **800 tonnes per day oxygen unit**.

Both units will use the **latest high-reliability and low-energy technologies from Air Liquide Hangzhou, Air Liquide's engineering center in China**. They are scheduled to start up in the **second quarter of 2011**.

Jean-Marc de Royere, Senior Vice-President Asia-Pacific, a member of the Executive Committee, declared: **"We thank Tangshan Bohai Steel Group and Shanxi Jianbang Group for their trust. Those successes illustrate Air Liquide's ability to meet customer requirements in China for safety, reliability, low-energy and short construction periods. Emerging Economies are a growth driver of Air Liquide."**

Air Liquide is the world leader in gases for industry, health and the environment, and is present in over **75 countries** with **43,000 employees**. Oxygen, nitrogen, hydrogen and rare gases have been at the core of Air Liquide's activities since its creation in 1902. Using these molecules, Air Liquide continuously reinvents its business, anticipating the needs of current and future markets. The Group innovates to enable progress, to achieve dynamic growth and a consistent performance.

Innovative technologies that curb polluting emissions, lower industry's energy use, recover and reuse natural resources or develop the energies of tomorrow, such as hydrogen, biofuels or photovoltaic energy... Oxygen for hospitals, homecare, fighting nosocomial infections... Air Liquide combines many products and technologies to develop valuable applications and services not only for its customers but also for society.

A partner for the long term, Air Liquide relies on employee commitment, customer trust and shareholder support to pursue its vision of sustainable, competitive growth. The **diversity** of Air Liquide's teams, businesses, markets and geographic presence provides a solid and sustainable base for its development and strengthens its ability to push back its own limits, conquer new territories and build its future.

Air Liquide explores the best that air can offer to preserve life, staying true to its sustainable development approach. In 2008, the Group's revenues amounted to **€13.1 billion**, of which almost 80% were earned outside France. Air Liquide is listed on the Paris Euronext stock exchange (compartment A) and is a member of the CAC 40 and Dow Jones Euro Stoxx 50 indexes.