

Opening of the world's largest trade fair for PV production equipment**Booming industry at Stuttgart's convention center**

Manufacturers of production machinery for the solar industry are displaying their products this week at the Photovoltaic Technology Show, the world's largest industry gathering.

Stuttgart, Germany, April 27, 2010. Baden-Württemberg's regional capital, Stuttgart, will host the world's largest trade fair for PV production equipment from April 27 to 29. The Photovoltaic Technology Show is convening for the sixth time. Last year, the event met in Munich. Around 350 international exhibitors will present their innovations at the Stuttgart convention center and approximately 15,000 visitors are expected to attend. The trade fair is accompanied by six conferences, a comprehensive program with discussions panels, company visits, as well as the 10 GW party on the evening of April 28.

PHOTON Europe GmbH, the organizer of the Photovoltaic Technology Show, decided to switch venues from Munich to Stuttgart this year, moving the event closer to the region that many exhibitors call home: for years, Baden-Württemberg has been a production and innovation hub for the solar industry's mechanical engineering branch. Michael Schmela, editor-in-chief of PHOTON International, states, "Solar module production is increasingly shifting to Asia. However, the lion's share of production machinery is still made in Germany. Therefore, when it comes to efficiency and quality, Asian brands can compete well with European products." In 2009, a year marked by economic crisis, most machinery manufacturers got off easy. After all, in 2009, the quantity of cells and modules produced increased by around 56 percent over last year. As a result, demand for machinery also increased. "Last year, we saw production reach 12.3 GW; this year it's likely to total more than 20 GW," says Schmela.

In Stuttgart, the solar industry will fill more than 20,000 m² of exhibition space with machinery and consumables, along the entire value-added chain: that includes reactors for silicon production, furnaces, wafer saws and complete production lines. Exhibitors will also present deposition systems for thin-film modules and machinery for processing solar glass panes.

Stuttgart will be transformed into an industry meeting place this week thanks to the six conferences convening in conjunction with the trade fair. Thousands are expected to participate. As in previous years, PHOTON has organized a silicon conference, a conference for solar investors and two conferences on production equipment. New to the roster of events is an inverter conference. At this event, presenters will discuss the causes of the current inverter scarcity and measures that could be taken to alleviate this shortage. Another event being held is PHOTON's 4th Solar Electric Utility Conference on April 29: decision makers from the solar and energy industries will discuss how large quantities of solar electricity should be integrated into the existing energy supply system. Above all, Germany is in desperate need of looking at this issue: nearly 4 GW of solar power were installed in Germany in 2009 alone, more than double the number of new PV systems installed in 2008. "This year, it could be as much as 8 GW," says Christoph Podewils, deputy editor-in-chief at German-language magazine PHOTON – Das Solarstrom-Magazin.

More trade fair information:

www.photon-expo.com

Additional information and questions (for press only):

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