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**PRESS RELEASE**

Düsseldorf, July 22, 2015

80 percent natural gas savings, lower emissions, higher productivity and flexibility

**SMS group modernizes walking beam furnace of ArcelorMittal Asturias**

In February 2015, SMS Meer SpA, Italy, was awarded a new contract by ArcelorMittal Asturias, Spain, for the revamping of the 150-ton/hour walking beam furnace that feeds the wire rod mill.

The aim of the project is to reduce the plant's operative costs in order to increase competitiveness. The project mainly consists in redesigning the combustion equipment, which presently runs with 100 percent natural gas, by introducing the possibility of also combusting blast furnace gas. The new combustion equipment is to provide the flexibility to use a mixed fuel of variable percentages of natural gas and blast furnace gas, with the latter being preheated by a new recuperator. Thus, the new system will be able to save approximately 80 percent of current natural gas consumption.

The technical approach has been jointly developed by SMS and ArcelorMittal engineers during several months of close collaboration, balancing the various needs of saving fuel, decreasing pollutants emission and accomplishing the complete revamping job in a very short time. According to the challenging schedule of this turn-key job,

the furnace will be fully operational again in September 2015, after just one month of mill stoppage.

The project will also provide the opportunity to completely update the furnace combustion system to the latest of European safety regulations (complying with European Safety Norm EN 746/2:2010). With the new equipment any grade will be able to be reheated without any limitations. The dimensions of the billets are 150 x 150 millimeters and 180 x 180 millimeters from 12,000 to 15,200 millimeters.

The above described system will be constantly managed by Prometheus<sup>TM</sup>, the advanced combustion optimization system recently developed by SMS. This system allows targeted improvements of the metallurgical properties, for example by increasing temperature uniformity and minimizing negative effects such as steel decarburization or high scale formation. Prometheus<sup>TM</sup> will also help to reduce fuel consumption by adopting heating strategies that minimize the temperature set points and yet guarantee attainment of the required temperature of the final stock target.

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With a revamped furnace by SMS ArcelorMittal Asturias will be able to save natural gas and lower emissions as well as increase productivity and flexibility.

New:

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