PRESS INFORMATION **Embargoed until 1 May 2002**

WORLD MARKET FOR TECHNICAL TEXTILES 50% BIGGER THAN PREVIOUSLY ESTIMATED

In a recent report published by David Rigby Associates (DRA) the world market for technical textiles and industrial nonwovens is estimated to have been 16.7mn. tonnes in 2000 which is almost 50% greater than the 11.3mn. tonnes forecast in DRA's 1997 report on the same market. This is the result of more technical textile products being included, particularly in agricultural, building, clothing and sports-related applications, the recognition of more jute products and an improved understanding of the market situation in China.

The report forecasts that the world market for technical textiles and industrial nonwovens will increase by 3.5% per year in volume terms to reach 23.8 mn. tonnes with a value of $126 bn. by 2010. However, growth between 2000 and 2002 is estimated at only 2.1% due to world economic conditions.

The largest application areas by value are transport, industrial and sports-related products. The fastest growing sectors up to 2004 are building/construction, geotextiles, medical/hygiene and products used in industry.

By 2010, man-made fibres will have increased their share of usage in the sector from 77% to 81%. The main loser will be cotton. The use of woodpulp will grow strongly from a low base.

Up to 2010, nonwovens will increase their share of fabric usage by weight from 31% to 39% largely at the expense of woven fabrics, whose share will decrease from 60% to 53%. There will be a stronger than average growth in loose fibre applications including fibrefill, while twisted products such as ropes, braids and nets will grow more slowly overall.

Market growth will be strongest in Asia, which will account for 45% of the market by weight in 2010 compared with 23% for Europe and 29% for the Americas.

The report gives analyses and forecasts by year from 2000 to 2004 and by five-year periods from 1995 to 2010 for some combinations of the following variables:
11 application areas (eg Mobiltech), 50 end-uses (eg protection), 4 fibre types (eg synthetic), 6 fibre forms (eg multi-filament yarn), 5 final textile forms (eg woven fabric) and 13 countries/regions. The forecasts are derived from DRA's Technical Textiles Consumption Model.

David Rigby, Chairman of DRA, said: "We are providing much more detailed forecasts on end-uses and markets than in our 1997 report. This will be of particular benefit to companies in the technical textiles and nonwovens industries and their final customers. But for the first time we are also giving forecasts for the different types of fibres, yarns and final textile products used in the sector, which will help producers of chemicals, fibres and machinery to target better this important and growing branch of textiles".

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