

Iron & Steel world leaders at home in Italy

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The AIST Italy Steel Forum 2014 was held 9-10 October at Tenova Pomini - Castellanza

The Association for Iron & Steel Technology (AIST), a non-profit organization and worldwide leader for the dissemination of technology advancements in the iron and steel industry, chose Tenova Pomini for the third consecutive year as the host venue of the AIST Italy Steel Forum. The 2014 edition was held on the October 9th and 10th, and highlighted important economic and technical issues for the iron and steel industry.

More than 150 delegates representing major players in the iron and steel industry were hosted in the conference center of Tenova Pomini, where **Mauro Medici**, managing director of Pomini and I2S, introduced the works, together with **Ronald Ashburn**, executive director of AIST.

In the welcome speech, **Gianfelice Rocca**, Chairman of the Techint Group and president of Assolombarda, gave an overview of the global scenario of the current steel supply and demand situation, with a particular focus on the recent history, characterized by serious incidents that the underestimation of the importance of environment and safety has caused with some steel producers. He specified that *"today the communities' mindset has become more sensible, putting under pressure states and entrepreneurs: environmental and safety responsibilities are now non-negotiable first priorities and mandatory for a sustainable long term economic growth"*.

The mature steel market is moving in this direction, and many steel producers decided to invest in environment and safety with the support of Tenova breakthrough technologies. And *"we, as Techint Group and as Tenova – continued Rocca – aim to become sustainable in the long term focusing on HSE matters, for the respect of our employees, customers and communities in which we operate"*.

Other two speeches, given by **Antonio Gozzi**, CEO Duferco Group and president of Federacciai, and **Piero Nardi**, extraordinary commissioner of Lucchini, focused on the Italian situation and the opportunities/perspectives for integrated steelmaking. In the panel discussion that followed, influential voices of the world steel industry debated on the transformation in iron production, sharing their experiences and visions for using the "newfound" resources, previously unattainable energy sources such as shale gas.

The agenda of the second day was particularly interesting: the morning opened with the Industry Leader Town Hall Forum, in which a panel of corporate executives debated the key business issues impacting the global steel industry. Among them, **R. Joseph**

Stratman, executive vice president of Nucor Corporation; **George Babcoke**, senior vice president – European operations and global safety and president – U. S. Steel Košice; **Eric De Coninck**, general manager, business development & new technologies ArcelorMittal Innovation. The main topics of the discussion were: the importance of cooperating with universities to create new methods for the limitation and reutilization of emissions; the actions that the European community should take in order to avoid the penalty of the European business versus the rest of the world; and again the importance of safety compliance.

The day continued with a tour of the **Tenova Pomini workshop** and a visit to the **Arvedi Acciaierie** steel plant in Cremona hosted by Cavalier Giovanni Arvedi. Here the participants also visited the city's Violin Museum and were entertained by a very special private violin concert.

Francesco Memoli, Vice President Steelmaking of Tenova Core Inc., who supported the AIST for the organization of the forum, was particularly satisfied by the event, not only for the increase in participation – plus 50% compared to the previous year – but *"especially for the great value coming from the sharing of experiences and points of view that the whole forum offered. The visit to the Arvedi Acciaierie has been a kind of novelty for the some Italian steelmakers, who for the first time were able to visit this plant"*.

*"This event – commented **Andrea Rocca**, managing director Tenova Steelmaking and Strip Processing - has been so special because we hosted at our home the most important customers and partners, including **Mario Longhi**, CEO US Steel, in a very friendly atmosphere that enabled open dialogue and mutual familiarity"*.

This 2014 edition has been endorsed by AIM, the Italian Metallurgical Association, as another sign of the cooperation and collaboration needed by every player in this industry, *"that became vital in a very challenging global context made of 'two speeds' worlds"* – echoes **Mauro Bianchi Ferri**, business development in the metals area for Tenova.

The Chairman of the Techint Group left on the table an open question for all steelmakers, addressing the long-term sustainability of their business: *"In 20 years' time, do you expect your plant to be where it is today?"*.