

Press release

28 March 2003

Maintenance shutdown brought forward at Umicore's Balen zinc smelter

Umicore has embarked on a 15-day maintenance programme in the leaching and electro-winning section of its Balen zinc smelter. The decision was taken to implement this measure at the beginning of 2003 given the low zinc price and the continued depressed state of the economy. The maintenance programme, which will involve an upgrade of the overall efficiency of the Balen plant, is running according to plan. Start-up is foreseen for early April.

Meanwhile, Umicore has purchased 12.000 tonnes of zinc externally to compensate for the production standstill and to ensure that it continues to serve its customers with specialty zinc alloys.

For more information:

n.v. Umicore s.a.:

Press: Mrs Moniek DELVOU - Tel. +32 2 227 70 63 * +32 475 26 64 95 – moniek.delvou@umicore.com

Investor Relations : Mrs Isabelle MICHOTTE - Tel. +32 2 227 71 47 – isabelle.michotte@umicore.com

n.v. Umicore s.a.

Corporate Communication

Broekstraat 31 Rue du Marais
B-1000 Brussels, Belgium
www.umicore.com

Phone +32 2 227 70 63
Fax +32 2 227 79 03
e-mail info@umicore.com

BTW BE401 574 852

Bank 210-0053806-23 - TRB 85382

Registered Office: Broekstraat 31 Rue du Marais, B-1000 Brussels

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PROFILE

Umicore is an international metals and materials group. Its activities are centred on four business areas :
Advanced Materials, Copper, Precious Metals and Zinc. Each business area is divided into market-
focused business units.

Umicore focuses on application areas where it knows its expertise in materials science and metallurgy
can make a real difference, be it in products that are essential to everyday life or those at the cutting edge
of exciting, new technological developments. Umicore's overriding goal of sustainable value creation is
based on this ambition to develop, produce and recycle metals in a way that fulfils its mission: materials
for a better life.

The Umicore Group has industrial operations on all continents and serves a global customer base; it
generated a turnover of EUR 3.2 billion in 2002 and currently employs some 9,000 people.
