

## Press Release

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### VDMA Photovoltaic Equipment:

#### Asia orders are processed

- **Investments by the solar industry in thin film technology contribute disproportionately to success**
- **Record export rate of 81 percent**
- **Incoming orders declined after a strong start in 2017**

Frankfurt, 4 January 2018 - The market for solar equipment has calmed down after the start in 2017 was characterized by strong investments. Solar equipment manufacturers' third-quarter revenue fell 13 percent from the second quarter of 2017. The order books of the solar equipment manufacturers are still well filled, in the third quarter 2017 a ratio of orders to delivered systems ("book-to-bill") of 1,6 was reached.

"The so far high investment activity of the solar cell manufacturers in the expansion of existing and new production capacities is decreasing, the production is still busy. However, the low prices have a negative impact on sales. New orders came increasingly from PERC and Black Silicon equipment of the crystalline Silicon as well as from the thin film technology sector. The full order books are a clear sign that there is a global unbraked confidence in technology and machines made in Germany. This secures jobs in the solar industry in Germany", Dr. Peter Fath, Managing Director of RCT Solutions GmbH and Chairman of VDMA Photovoltaic Equipment explained.

## **Asia is the largest business**

The export ratio of German photovoltaic equipment suppliers reached the record level of 87 percent between August and September. The core business continued to be in east Asia, the share of total turnover originating from there amounted to 81 percent in the third quarter of 2017. Asia's sales were as follows: the largest share was made with China (72 percent), followed by Taiwan (3 percent) as well as India 1 percent. The rest of Asia which includes Malaysia and Vietnam recorded 5 percent. Germany remained second behind Asia with a sales volume of 10 percent while America accounted 5 percent of sales. Europe achieved only 4 percent of sales. The strongest sales segment in the third quarter 2017 for German PV manufacturers was again the production equipment for cells (57 percent), followed by Production solutions for thin-film PV (35 percent). Although the production of modules on thin-film technology, including the CIGS (Copper-Indium-Gallium-Selenide) technology and CdTe technology (cadmium telluride), is less than 10 percent on the world market, the high share shows that especially in this segment many production solutions are purchased from Germany. Machinery for polysilicon, Ingot and wafer production as well as equipment for the crystalline backend - module production – accounted for 4 percent of sales.

## **Order intake slightly down**

Order intake declined by 2 percent in the third quarter of 2017 compared to the second quarter. The regional allocation again had an Asian focus with 80 percent of all orders, followed by Germany with 12 percent and Europe with 8 percent. "The extremely high order intake in the beginning of 2017 leaves still thick order books that will be processed in the coming months. The high proportion, especially for equipment for thin-film modules, indicates that German production equipment is in demand", emphasized Dr. Jutta Trube, Managing Director of VDMA Photovoltaic Equipment.

### **About Photovoltaic Equipment**

Currently, approximately 100 VDMA member companies are active in the photovoltaic sector. The topic started in 2007 as a co-operation between the following VDMA divisions: Electronics Production (Productronics), Glass Technology, Energy, Organic Electronics, Robotics and Automation, Laser and Photonics, Surface Treatment,

Vacuum Technology and Displays. With the foundation of the enlarged platform Photovoltaic Equipment on March 30, 2010, activities for members have been extended and the visibility of the industry has been increased.

**About VDMA**

VDMA represents nearly 3,200 mostly medium-sized companies in the mechanical and plant engineering sector. With over one million employees and sales amounting to approximately 220 billion euros (2016), the sector is the largest industrial employer in Germany and one of the leading German industrial sectors.