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Grupa Azoty opens R&D Centre

Today, in the presence of government officials headed by Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki, Grupa Azoty opened its new Research and Development Centre in Tarnów. Constructed over 14 months, the Centre will accommodate research facilities, supporting the delivery of innovative solutions. Its effective use by Grupa Azoty will allow it to build competitive advantages and boost the flow of innovation into its business.

"It is a great joy to see Polish companies open R&D facilities like this one – which are modern, innovative and support the development of Polish products of the future. I hope that the drive towards innovation will finally transform the Polish chemical industry of the 21st century into one producing, researching and manufacturing the most innovative chemical products in the world," said Mateusz Morawiecki, Prime Minister of Poland.

"One of the main objectives sought by Grupa Azoty when starting the project was to increase its HR potential in the area of research, development and innovation. It is because state-of-the-art facilities and world-class equipment are not nearly enough. What is needed on top of them is the intellectual potential of people who will staff these facilities. Today, we can say with confidence that this objective has been achieved. Grupa Azoty has built a team of excellent professionals, including a large number of people with academic degrees who have worked or cooperated with the best Polish universities. The Research and Development Centre in Tarnów is important for the future of Poland's economy, but will also provide a development stimulus to the entire region of Lesser Poland. It will undoubtedly spur the creation of highly specialised jobs in Tarnów," said Jadwiga Emilewicz, Minister of Entrepreneurship and Technology.

"The opening of the R&D Centre today is Grupa Azoty's major step towards innovation, clearly defined in our Strategy. It is also in line with the government's "Strategy for Responsible Development until 2020", a key vision in shaping the future of Poland's economy. What we do is in tune with the words of Mr Morawiecki, who said that by bringing together business with the world of science, research and implementation we can achieve a new quality and make the entire economy more profitable," said Wojciech Wardacki, President of the Management Board of Grupa Azoty. *"Consolidation within the Grupa Azoty Group is bringing benefits in many areas, including*

research, development and innovation. This is why we are building our presence organically also in the R&D area, *running projects at the corporate Group level and in individual companies. Currently, we have 66 research projects and 26 development projects under way across the Group, of which almost 40% are located in Tarnów,*" he added.

A unique feature of the R&D Centre is its pilot-plant hall, where the technologies developed in laboratories may be tested in real-life conditions. The technologies and processes implemented in the pilot-plant space are expected to help Grupa Azoty diversify its offering towards high-margin, fine speciality products in the near future. In accordance with the research agenda, in 2016–2023 the new R&D infrastructure will support research work into advanced materials, modern fertilizer products and pro-environmental solutions.

During the 590 Congress held in Rzeszów in November 2017, Grupa Azoty launched its Idea4Azoty acceleration programme, closely related to the newly opened Research and Development Centre. Their combination will encourage further development of the city and region by attracting scientists and inventors, who will arrive in Tarnów to put their bold and innovative ideas into practice relying on Grupa Azoty's comprehensive support, including funding.

The Grupa Azoty Group is the undisputed leader of the fertilizer and chemical market in Poland and one of its key players in Europe. It is the second largest EU-based manufacturer of nitrogen and compound fertilizers, and its other products, including melamine, caprolactam, polyamide, oxo alcohols, plasticisers and titanium white, enjoy an equally strong standing in the chemical sector, with a wide range of applications in various industries. In May 2017, the Group unveiled its updated strategy until 2020. The key development areas include completion of the Group's consolidation, reinforcing its leadership in agricultural solutions on the European market, strengthening the second operating pillar through expansion of the non-fertilizer business, as well as generating and implementing innovations to accelerate growth in the chemical sector.

Key facts about the Research and Development Centre

Structure:

a. laboratories (46 laboratory rooms), including:

- Non-Organic Products Laboratory (29 laboratory rooms and specialist units; main specialist units: FTiR, DSC-TG, ASA, UV-VIS, X-Ray, electron microscope),
- Organic Products Laboratory (17 laboratory rooms and specialist units; main specialist units: ICP, gas chromatography, liquid chromatography),
- auxiliary infrastructure (a samples archives, extended storage space).

b. pilot-plant hall (consisting of a single-storey section with an internal area of approximately 1,500 m² and a height of 8 m, where pre-commercial production systems may be installed, as well as a two-storey technical and storage section).