



information

Paris, October 3, 2006

Press Release

ALUX: let there be light! ***Launch of an offer dedicated to photovoltaics, LEDs and optical fibers***

The limited availability of fossil fuels and increasing environmental concerns favour the development of **solar energy**, which is **clean and renewable**. This market is now expanding rapidly: the photovoltaics* industry, which makes it possible to use this energy, has a growth rate of over 30% per annum. Other industries are also working on the use and/or production of light: the LED** industry, using technologies that are particularly economical in energy, and the optical fiber*** industry, driven by the high speed transmission of digital information.

Nitrogen, oxygen, hydrogen, argon, helium and several other gases known as *specialty gases*, are essential for the manufacture of solar cells, LEDs and optical fibers. **Air Liquide has significantly reinforced its global position** in these markets, and has recently signed important gas supply contracts in Germany, France, the Netherlands, China and the United States.

The rapid expansion of these markets demands flexible and upgradeable solutions, meeting safety, cost and reliability imperatives. In this context, **Air Liquide is launching ALUX, a dedicated range of turnkey solutions** (gas, equipment and associated services) **aimed at the "light industries"**.

As **François Darchis**, a member of the Air Liquide Executive Committee, explains: **"Thanks to ALUX, Air Liquide is innovating to support the growth of its customers in the "light industries", such as photovoltaics, LEDs and optical fibers. This new range is fully in line with our sustainable development approach: we are delighted to contribute to the use of energy-saving and environmentally friendly solutions"**.

* Photovoltaics technology transforms sunlight into electricity, using "solar cells". The photovoltaics industry manufactures these cells and assembles them in solar panels.

** LEDs are light emitting diodes that transform electricity into light. Lights based on LEDs consume 25% less electricity than fluorescent lights, and last approximately ten times longer.

*** Optical fibres allow the high speed transmission of digital information, in the form of light.

Present in 72 countries, **Air Liquide is the world leader in industrial and medical gases and related services**. The Group offers **innovative solutions** based on constantly enhanced **technologies**. These solutions, which are consistent with Air Liquide's commitment to **sustainable development**, help to protect life and enable our customers to manufacture many indispensable everyday products. Founded in 1902, Air Liquide has nearly 36,000 employees. The Group has successfully developed a long-term relationship with its shareholders built on **trust and transparency** and guided by the principles of **corporate governance**. Since the publication of its first consolidated financial statements in 1971, Air Liquide has posted **strong and steady earnings growth**. Sales in 2005 totaled 10,435 million euros, with sales outside France accounting for almost 80%. Air Liquide is listed on the Paris stock exchange and is a component of the CAC 40 and Eurostoxx 50 indices (ISIN code FR 0000120073).

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