

Press release

Marmaray tunnel in Istanbul opens / Goldschmidt Thermit ensures smooth connection of the railway networks of Asia and Europe

Leipzig, October 9, 2013: The Marmaray tunnel in Istanbul will be officially opened on October 29, 2013, by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the Turkish Prime Minister. This historical tunnel project under the Bosphorus will directly connect the railway networks of Asia and Europe for the first time. The infrastructure project consists of the 13.6 kilometer tunnel and also the development and modernization of 63 kilometers of existing railway lines, three new railway stations underground and the modernization of 37 further railway stations. Initially two tracks will connect the light rail and one track will connect the main line traffic between the cities of Gebze on the Asian side and Halkalı on the European side of the strait. Due to the high risk of earthquakes, the tunnel project is subject to strict safety regulations. The Marmaray tunnel has to withstand earthquakes which measure up to 9 on the Richter scale.

In the course of the project the Goldschmidt Thermit Group with headquarters in Leipzig, Germany, ensured a smooth connection of the tracks at depths up to 56 meters below the Marmara sea. The Turkish company Yapiray Demiryolu Sistemerli Sanayi ve Ticaret A. Ş. commissioned with the execution of welding work on the tracks relied on many years of positive experience with Thermit® consumables and equipment from Elektro-Thermit GmbH & CO. KG located in Halle an der Saale, a company of the Goldschmidt Thermit Group. The Turkish welding specialists were trained and supported by the technical service department of Elektro-Thermit. The Thermit used comes from the company's own production in Halle an der Saale.

"The Marmaray tunnel brings Europe and Asia closer together. This improves the traffic infrastructure between two continents and also at the historical location of the Bosphorus helps to build a bridge between different cultures", explains Dr. Hans-Jürgen Mundinger, Chairman of the Management Board of Goldschmidt Thermit Group. "We are proud that this important project has also been realized with our products and expertise", emphasizes Dr. Jörg Keichel, Managing Director of Elektro-Thermit. "The Thermit process is unique in its precision and flexibility. The local traffic between the two parts of Istanbul and the long-distance traffic between Europe and Asia will roll on our welds. The high quality of our Thermit welding materials guarantees the highest safety and enables the highest level of comfort for travelers."

The final welding in the Marmaray tunnel was made June 27, 2013. The first train already ran through the tunnel approximately one month later, on August 4, 2013. Since then the project company comprising the Spanish construction company Obrascón Huarte Lain (OHL) and the British company Invensys Rail has been making preparations for the official opening October 29, 2013, on the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Republic of Turkey. Final completion of the project is planned to be in June 2015.

A detailed article on the activity of the Goldschmidt Thermit Group in the Marmaray project and photos of the final welding in the Marmaray tunnel are available at the press office.

About the Goldschmidt Thermit Group

The Goldschmidt Thermit Group is a worldwide leader in the area of joint welding and the servicing and maintenance of rail systems. The roots of the company go back to the invention of the Thermit® process by Prof. Hans Goldschmidt at the end of the 19th century. Today the Goldschmidt Thermit Group consists of over 20 medium-sized individual companies which serve the international growth market for rail infrastructure. The company has approx. 1000 employees and maintains an international network of production and service locations. In 2012 the group achieved a consolidated turnover of more than 110 million euros.

Further information is available in the internet at www.goldschmidt-thermit.com .

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