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## Showa Shell Solar Establishes European Base in Germany

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Berlin/Tokyo (ots) - Japanese solar company Showa Shell Solar has announced a new investment in Germany. Along with the company's renaming to Solar Frontier, the CIS (copper-indium-selenium) photovoltaic module manufacturer will open its first European office in Munich in 2010. Germany Trade & Invest supported the company with its investment plans.

Aiming to ramp up production to reach a sales goal of 1 million kilowatts worldwide in 2012, the Munich office, alongside a new American counterpart in California, will play an integral role in achieving this mark. The company's production figures will increase by more than ten times its current level, strengthened by an additional plant that will begin production in mid-2011.

Solar Frontier CEO Shigeaki Kameda: "The German priority on both economic and ecological criteria precisely matches Solar Frontier's top design and production mandates. Germany is also the world's largest market, so we have three very critical reasons to invest here: the German priority on economy, the German priority on ecology, and the German market size. We therefore expect to fulfill very strong demand."

Solar Frontier's decision to invest in Germany also serves it well for access to growing photovoltaic markets across Europe. Germany is home to approximately half the solar modules in operation worldwide, based on recent industry estimates. This market continues to grow as 2009 installations exceeded expectations, likely surpassing 3.0 GW.

Germany is home to the largest solar cluster in the world that encompasses a wide range of manufacturers, suppliers, and research institutes. Together, these innovators create a synergy that has added photovoltaics to the long tradition of the "Made in Germany" label, a symbol for high quality and innovation.

Solar Frontier manufactures proprietary thin-film modules that substitute silicon with the key ingredients copper, indium, and selenium. The company benefits from competitive material prices compared to conventional silicon wafer-based modules. The thin-film modules are expected to reach a 14.2 percent efficiency level by 2011. Solar Frontier was assisted by Germany Trade & Invest and Invest in Bavaria, the economic development agency for the federal state of Bavaria. Germany Trade & Invest is currently showcasing the latest opportunities available in the world's largest solar market at this year's PV Expo (East Hall 4, Stand no. 26-22), taking place March 3 - 5 in Tokyo, Japan.

Germany Trade & Invest is the foreign trade and inward investment promotion agency of the Federal Republic of Germany. The organization advises foreign companies looking to expand their business activities to the German market. It provides information on foreign trade to German companies that seek to enter foreign markets.

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