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- A new storage compound for Groupe CAT in Lorraine  
- Ireland Short Sea Shipping Company of the Year

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Porsche investors back $6.5 billion share sale  
(Source: Automotive News Europe, 01st December 2010) Porsche SE investors approved plans for a $5 billion stock sale to reduce the sports-car maker’s debt as it prepares to combine with Volkswagen AG. Shareholders voted in favour of raising the funds, half of which will come from the Porsche and Piech families, who control the common stock. Of preferred shareholders voting, 88% supported the measure. Porsche agreed to combine with VW in August 2009 after a failed attempt by Porsche to gain control of VW. Proceeds from Porsche’s share sale, which the company aims to complete by May 30, will be used to help pay back a €2.5 billion bank loan expiring at the end of June. Porsche racked up more than €10 billion of debt in its unsuccessful attempt to control VW. Volkswagen now owns 49.9% of Porsche’s carmaking operations. Costs linked to Porsche’s purchase of VW stock in the takeover bid led to two consecutive years of net losses.

Fiat will build light vans for Opel  
(Source: Automotive News Europe, 30th November 2010) Fiat has signed a deal to supply GM's Opel/Vauxhall unit with at least 250,000 units of a new light van range. The vehicles will succeed Opel's Combo model, which reaches the end of its life cycle in the fourth quarter of 2011, and will be built on Fiat's existing platform for its Doblo van. The vans will be sold by Opel and Vauxhall dealers in Europe and other markets outside North America starting in 2012. Opel said the Doblo-based vans will retain the Combo name and the range will include a number of derivatives, including cargo vans, passenger vehicles and chassis cabs. Opel designers in Ruesselsheim are involved in the development of the new models in cooperation with Fiat's engineering and design group in Turin. The vans will be built alongside the Doblo at a plant Fiat jointly operates with Koc Holding SA under the Tofas venture in Bursa, Turkey. The Combo is currently built at Opel's factory in Zaragoza, Spain, along with the Corsa subcompact and Meriva small minivan. The factory built 29,904 Combos last year, down from 56,934 in 2008, according to Opel data. The deal to supply the Combo, the first of this kind between Fiat and Opel, is one of many accords global carmakers are signing to rationalize production in the face of diminishing demand in mature markets. Under the terms of the deal, Fiat will start supplying 6,000 vehicles to Opel in December 2011 with a view to hiking production to “at least 250,000 units,” Fiat said. Opel will build a range of vans based on the Fiat Doblo, shown. Fiat currently produces more than 100,000 Doblo vans a year at the Turkish plant. Buoyant sales of light commercial vehicles were one of the drivers of forecast-beating third-quarter results at Fiat, which is Europe's sixth-largest carmaker.

Porsche to make smaller, cheaper SUV  
(Source: Automotive News Europe, 30th November 2010) Porsche's supervisory board signed off on developing a smaller, cheaper SUV, which will be aimed at younger customers who can't afford the Cayenne SUV. According to Bernhard Maier, Head of Sales and Marketing at Porsche AG, the alternatives are to develop the Cajun in-house, share a platform with another Volkswagen Group brand or use a partner. Maier would not confirm reports that the Cajun will go into production in 2013 using the same platform as the Audi Q5 and sharing its components. Maier said the smaller SUV would be a way for Porsche to increase revenues and “follow the growth plan of the company.” VW aims to almost double Porsche sales to 150,000 vehicles by 2014 and increase cooperation between the two carmakers. Porsche will develop future platforms for VW group sports cars and luxury sedans, Porsche announced plans to spend €150 million to strengthen its research center near Stuttgart to expand its lineup from 38 model variants across four vehicle lines. The carmaker's deliveries, including the €55,430 Cayenne and €75,900 Panamera sedan, rose 8.8% in the last fiscal year to 81,850 vehicles. Porsche, which reported first-quarter net income of €155 million compared with a loss of €431 million a year earlier, is in the process of merging with VW, Europe's largest carmaker.
EV sales to reach 20% in UK by 2016
(Source: Automotive News Europe, 30th November 2010) EVs will make up 20% of UK auto sales by 2016 as drivers take advantage of government subsidies and lower fuel costs. This would mean about one in five of all cars sold in the UK starting in 2016 will be electric. The UK is using subsidies to promote electric vehicles to reduce CO₂ emissions. The Nissan Leaf and Mitsubishi’s i-MiEV will be the first two EVs to go on sale in the UK. The i-MiEV arrives this month and Leaf deliveries start in early 2011. The cars will cost about £29,000 and can be charged using a regular household plug. In 2009, there were 31 million cars in the UK, according to the UK Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, or SMMT. The average daily distance travelled by British drivers is 40km and the length of a single journey is 8.6 miles. European emissions standards taking effect in 2014 that require carmakers to cut nitrogen-oxide emissions for diesel engines by 56% may boost demand for hybrid and electric motors. Few diesel cars now comply with the new, Euro 6 regulations. The Euro 6 rules may help raise the share of hybrid and electric vehicles across Europe to 13% by 2020 from about 0.1% today, according to IHS. European carmakers including BMW AG, PSA/Peugeot-Citroen SA and Daimler AG are developing electric and hybrid vehicles to help meet tighter environmental regulations and expand their product lineups to boost sales.

VW wins EU approval for Karmann purchase
(Source: Automotive News Europe, 30th November 2010) Volkswagen has been given approval by the European Union for its planned purchase of various auto businesses belonging to bankrupt German company Wilhelm Karmann GmbH. The deal will give VW control of Karmann’s divisions for car and components development, contract manufacturing, plant engineering and the development and production of equipment and tools. Karmann filed for bankruptcy protection last year after new orders dried up. The coachbuilder and roof specialist is most famous for building the VW Beetle-based coupe dubbed the Karmann Ghia. VW has already outlined plans to begin producing cars at Karmann’s factory in Osnabrueck in VW’s home state of Lower Saxony. The company will begin production of a Golf convertible in the spring of next year, creating a total of 1,800 jobs by the end of 2011.

To sell or not to sell Alfa?
(Source: Automotive News Europe, 01st December 2010) Fiat CEO Sergio Marchionne’s self-confidence has helped him tackle problems that lesser executives would duck, but he finally may have met his match. In a very public test of Marchionne’s faith in his own turnaround strategy, in September Volkswagen Chairman Ferdinand Piech bluntly announced that he wants to buy Alfa Romeo. Piech was suggesting that VW could transform Fiat’s perennial money-losing brand into a real money-maker. Marchionne subsequently declared that he’d prefer to keep Alfa Romeo. Fiat and VW have been discussing the sale of Alfa for the past four months. Marchionne has not yet decided whether to sell the brand. And it’s not just a matter of price. By selling Alfa Romeo, Fiat would be better positioned to survive the next two years, which promise to be the most difficult stretch of its turnaround. But if Fiat can survive without selling Alfa Romeo – and if it can successfully restructure that premium brand – then Alfa Romeo would play a key role in Fiat’s resurgence. So far, Alfa Romeo has been Marchionne’s biggest failure. The brand has not turned a profit in any of the past six years, and possibly for the past decade. Sales this year will barely surpass 120,000 units, nowhere near its goal of 300,000 units. In April, Marchionne announced a plan to boost Alfa sales to 500,000 units by 2014. But analysts are sceptical.

Plan for re-launch of Mirafiori plant
(Source: Samar, 11th November 2010) Fiat plans to establish a joint venture between Chrysler and Fiat to bring a new platform to the Italian company’s plant at Mirafiori from the US for production of larger segment passenger cars and SUVs for the Jeep and Alfa Romeo brands. Models produced by the new company at Mirafiori will also be exported outside the European Union. More than half of production will be for...
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international markets, particularly North America. These will be flagship models for Jeep and Alfa Romeo. More than €1 billion in investment is planned, to be split between Fiat and Chrysler in proportion to volumes produced for each brand. Bringing this new platform to Mirafiori will result in potential production of more than 1,000 vehicles per day, or some 250,000-280,000 vehicles per year, resulting in full utilization of the current workforce and opening the way for potential new jobs. The Fiat CEO expressed his intention to initiate the project immediately, as rapid implementation would enable the plant to be reconfigured in time for the launch of the future Jeep and Alfa Romeo models, planned for the 3rd/4th quarter of 2012.

Suzuki starts shipments to Austria

(Source: Automotive Logistics, 01st – 07th December 2010) Suzuki has started shipments of vehicles to the Austrian market from Japan with an expected annual movement of 4,000 vehicles. The Japanese carmaker is using operator K-Line to move the vehicles to Bremerhaven in Germany where they are unloaded and processed by BLG Logistics and Lagermax before shipment on to Straßwalchen in Austria by the two logistics providers. The first shipment, which included Kizashi, Vitaro, Swift and Jimny models manufactured in Japan, was delivered aboard the K-Line’s ro-ro carrier Pacific Highway. On arrival at Bremerhaven the vehicles receive a wax-based underbody and cavity protection treatment at BLG’s dedicated facility. They are then transported to the Lagermax compound in Straßwalchen as part of a cooperative agreement between BLG and Lagermax. BLG and Suzuki signed a contract regarding the construction of body cavity and underbody protection halls at Bremerhaven and Kelheim at the end of 2009 and BLG was recently awarded the contract to handle and perform initial technical processing.

IRU/EU Presidency Road Transport Conference

(Source: ECG and IRU, 1st December 2010) ECG participates at the 1st IRU/EU Presidency Road Transport Conference and Ministerial Meeting on “Efficient, Safe and Sustainable Road Transport for the Future” held in Brussels on 1st December. The event brought together some 400 political, transport and trade leaders from all 27 EU Member States to discuss a common approach to implementing better road transport priorities and policies in Europe. Opening the conference, IRU President, Janusz Lacny said that it is only through cooperation and a true public private partnership that we will be able to have more efficient, safe, and sustainable road transport for the future. Siim Kallas, Vice President of the European Commission responsible for transport also participated, and said that the White Paper on the future of transport will have a strong Internal Market focus, stating that “personally, he is in favour of abolishing cabotage rules”. He also anticipated that the tachograph regulation will revise by the summer of 2011, and reiterated his focus on road safety, infrastructure and innovation. The Ministerial meeting, held in parallel to the conference, resulted in the signing of a Ministerial Declaration to coordinate efforts to: work in partnership with the commercial road transport industry; achieve further at source reductions of its environmental footprint; coordinate national and regional transport policies to develop and maintain high quality infrastructure while aiming to remove existing barriers to the free movement of people and goods; integrate the different transport modes into a highly efficient and competitive European transport system, pursue a well balanced social policy for commercial road transport; and promote harmonised and business friendly enforcement of all EU road transport rules. Conference participants adopted a
Upcoming events

- CLECAT Freight Forwarders annual conference on “Building Bridges” in the supply in Brussels, Belgium on 30th November 2010
- 1st December 2010 IRU event
- 2-3rd December 2010 Transport Council
- 7th December 2010, Italian PermRep Christmas event in Brussels, Belgium
- Supporting the Europe 2020 strategy objectives/Funding issues event on 8-9th December 2010
- Mobility for prosperity in Europe Steering Group Meeting, 10th December 2010 in Brussels, Belgium
- European Parliament Committee meetings from 6-9th December 2010
- European Road Federation forum on 14th December 2010
- European Parliament Plenary sessions from 13-16th December 2010
- 20th December 2010 Environment Council

Declaration concluding that constructive cooperation in public-private partnerships should allow for the implementation of: transport policies that enable market-driven free modal choice; a well directed and funded infrastructure policy; more secure commercial road transport through the provision of information about the location of secure parking areas; a single EU-wide enforcement space to fight crime; innovative technologies and practices as well as vocational training.

France & Italy car sales hit by double-digit declines
(Source: Automotive News Europe, 02nd December 2010) Economic woes and the end of scrappage schemes threatened a bleak start to 2011 for Europe’s car markets. While austerity measures and economic concerns will likely hit spending power and consumer confidence in Europe during the coming months, the end of scrapping incentives had a more immediate impact on November automobile sales. Italy, France and Spain reported sales declines while in Belgium, which never had a scrapping scheme, car sales rose 15.4% last month. Italian car sales fell 21% year-on-year in November. Italian car sales were unlikely to reach pre-crisis levels until 2014. Italian foreign carmakers association UNRAE said in a statement that orders reached 160,000 in November, more than 20% down from a year earlier. Sales got a boost late last year as drivers flocked to showrooms before scrapping bonuses ran out, and this comparison effect exacerbated difficult market conditions. UNRAE predicted full-year sales of 1.95 million units in Italy, compared with 2.16 million in 2009. In France the decline is not as bad as expected. In fact, industry association CCFA said French car sales for November dropped 10.8%, less than expected. A €500 scrapping scheme is still in place in France, while carmakers including domestic rivals PSA/Peugeot Citroen SA and Renault SA are proposing generous money-back offers to drivers. The imminent end of the scheme helped car sales post a limited fall against a strong November 2009. Last November, just before the scrapping scheme was cut from its initial €1,000, sales surged 48.4% from a weak November 2008. In the first 11 months 2,023,410 passenger cars were registered, a 2.4% dip on the same period of 2009.

Toyota slips in Europe
(Source: Automotive News Europe, 29th November 2010) Toyota became the top-selling carmaker in the world four years ago, but in Europe so far this year it’s not even the No. 1 Asian company. Hyundai, including Kia, has zipped past Toyota in Europe through October. Hyundai-Kia boosted European sales 4% in the first ten months to 521,369 vehicles, according to the European Automobile Manufacturers’ Association, which counts sales in 28 countries. Toyota, including Lexus, plunged 17% to 511,754, its reputation battered by global quality and safety issues. Hyundai and Kia accounted for 4.5% of the market through October, an increase of 0.4% from a year earlier. Toyota declined to 4.4% in the same period, down from 5%. In Europe, Hyundai-Kia is doing it with help from several vehicles, including the Hyundai ix35 SUV and the Hyundai i30 and Kia cee’d compacts.

Peugeot wants Spain to step up EV initiatives
(Source: Hybrid and Electric Vehicles, 02nd December 2010) Peugeot Spain’s Co-General Manager, Antonio Gonzalez has requested the government of Spain to ramp up its initiatives towards the electric power train market. The move reflects on the automaker’s plan to manufacture a new undisclosed EV at its Vigo plant. Peugeot expects to launch the iOn, based on the Mitsubishi i-MiEV, by the end of this year with an “all-inclusive” mobility offer. The automaker plans to market the iOn mainly to local government, local authorities and public services, leasing companies, car sharing companies and the fleet of large corporations. So far, Peugeot has signed 15 letters of intent with three public transport companies, six leasing companies and six energy companies. The majority of these deals will take place in European countries. In October 2010, the Spanish government announced a plan to set aside a budget of €168m for the next year to boost electric car sales in the region. According to Gonzalez, nearly €80m has been earmarked for facilitating direct subsidies to buyers while €70m would be spent in establishing a network of charging points. Another €17.5m has been apportioned for marketing initiatives of
Ford secures the future of its Genk assembly plant

(Source: Automotive News Europe, 02nd December 2010) Ford has signed a four-year agreement with Belgian unions to secure the future of its Genk assembly plant. The agreement will allow the continued production of cars in the CD segment at the facility. These include the Mondeo mid-sized sedan and station wagon, S-Max crossover and the Galaxy large minivan. All three cars have undergone face-lifts in 2010. Production capacity will be maintained at 225,000 units a year. The decision also guarantees that the 4,700 workers at the plant will have jobs for the next four years. Ford wanted to quash worries in the country that they could be winding down production at the plant. The agreement also secures the future of Ford's proving ground in Lommel. This facility will continue as its primary vehicle proving ground in Europe, and there will be further investment in Lommel's infrastructure, Ford said.

Spain November car registrations fall 26%

(Source: Automotive News Europe, 01st December 2010) According to Car manufacturers association ANFAC sales fell by 26% in Spain in November from a year earlier, the fifth month of double-digit declines following the end of government subsidies. Car sales fell 37.6% in October year-on-year. Government subsidies to help people buy new cars ran out at the start of July, coinciding with an increase in value-added tax.

Plans unveiled for traffic offences to cross EU borders

(Source: EUBusiness.com, 01st December 2010) Motorists who commit traffic offences when driving in another European Union country will be prosecuted by that country under new plans announced by the European Commission. However, drivers who pick up parking fines while abroad, almost never followed-up, will not be pursued under plans to share vehicle registration data across European Union member states borders. According to EU Transport Commissioner Siim Kallas, a foreign driver is three times more likely to commit an offence than a resident driver, highlighting the link with figures showing that 100 people die every day on Europe's roads. He continued saying that many people seem to think that when they go abroad the rules no longer apply to them. His message is that they do apply and now we are going to apply them. Justice Ministers will consider proposals for sharing information across the 27 EU states to target offences including what the commission called the four "big killers" behind 75% of road fatalities. The commission said foreign drivers account for some 5% of traffic but around 15% of speeding offences. Eight offences are targeted: speeding; failing to stop at traffic lights; failing to wear seatbelts; drink driving; driving under influence of drugs; failing to wear safety helmets; illegal use of an emergency lane; and illegal use of a mobile phone while driving. The draft law will only deal with financial penalties, the commission adding that "penalty points linked with a driving licence and withdrawing of a driving licence are not dealt with." If the national governments give the green light, a legislative proposal must be approved by lawmakers in the European Parliament before becoming law, with a two-year period for states to implement the changes.

Fiat and GM must be feeling a little déjà vu

(Source: Automotive News Europe, 30th November 2010) Fiat's deal to supply General Motors's Opel/Vauxhall with at least 250,000 units of a new light van range has some interesting background that must have executives at both companies experiencing a little déjà vu. The Opel/Vauxhall Combo replacement will be based on Fiat's Compact platform, which was originally called SCCS (short for Small Common Components and Systems) when Fiat and GM started co-developing it in Turin in 2002. The platform, which was part of the former partners' strategic alliance, underpins the Fiat Grande Punto, launched in 2005, and...
Opel/Vauxhall Corsa that arrived in 2006. In addition, about a year ago Fiat was bidding to take over Opel from a struggling GM, which decided to keep control of its European unit. Fiat wanted control of Opel to boost its global scale and because it sought GM's more modern compact and mid-sized platforms. With the deal announced this week, Opel gets a bigger, more flexible vehicle to replace its Corsa-based Combo. It gets the van quickly and will spend a fraction of what it would have cost to do the van alone. Fiat wins by boosting output of its platform 25 percent to about 1.3 million units.

**Poland: winter weather to give boost to SUV sales**

(Source: Samar, 02nd December 2010) According to figures by Samar, Poland's segment of new SUV/off-road models saw demand rise by over 32% year-to-October. Customer interest in 4x4s is likely to grow further as the winter weather tightens its grip across the country. The country's segment of new SUV/off-road models saw a combined 30,558 units get sold in the January-October period, thus soaring by some 32.4% year-over-year. As a result, the SUV/off-road sector accounted for roughly 11.6% of the total number of new cars sold in Poland during the period, up from the 8.7% tally reported for the same period of 2009. Overall, the most-sold model in Poland's SUV/off-road market was the Mitsubishi Outlander, which sold over 2,600 units in the January-October period. Struggling to cope with the tough winter weather, cost-conscious Polish motorists looking for a robust SUV model will certainly consider buying what is arguably the best money-for-value model in the segment at the moment, the Dacia Duster, whose entry-level 4x4 model starts at just PLN 49,900.

**German car output set to rise 5% next year**

(Source: Automotive News Europe, 02nd December 2010) The German auto industry's output is set to rise 5% to almost 5.8 million vehicles next year, as the sector recovers from the phasing out of last year's government scrapping scheme. German car exports will probably rise 5% to 4.4 million units next year, the German Auto Industry Association said. The domestic market looks set to see 3.1 million new-car registrations in 2011, up 6.2% from the 2.92 million vehicles likely to be registered this year.

**Toyota to fix 650,000 Prius for overheating risk**

(Source: Automotive News Europe, 30th November 2010) Toyota will cover the cost of repairs to 650,000 Prius cars that have a coolant pump problem that could cause the hybrid to overheat and lose power. The repair campaign covers Prius cars for the model years 2004 to 2007. Toyota said the design of the electric water pump let air bubbles enter the system, slowing coolant circulation and allowing the hybrid's components to heat up. The heating up of the components could trigger a warning light. If left unattended, the Prius could overheat and drop into a "fail-safe" mode where engine power would be reduced. The repair campaign comes at the end of a year in which the automaker has struggled to distance itself from a damaging series of recalls and concerns about its quality management. Since last November, Toyota has recalled about 14 million vehicles worldwide, including about 11 million in the US.

**REST OF THE WORLD**

**China as Rolls-Royce's biggest market**

(Source: Automotive News Europe, 30th November 2010) China will become Rolls-Royce's biggest market, surpassing the U.S., as early as next year. The British ultra luxury brand plans to sell 800 cars in China in 2011 as it aims to raise sales eightfold in two years in the world's largest auto market. Rolls-Royce sold about a third of its cars in the U.S. in 2009. The automaker delivered almost 500 cars in China in the first 10 months of 2010, compared with about 100 for the whole of last year. Rolls-Royce includes Hong Kong in its China sales. The exclusive marque is selling more of its Phantom and Ghost sedans in China as rising incomes in the world's fastest growing major economy boost sales of luxury cars.
China has 875,000 millionaires, 6.1% more than last year, the Chinese market in general is showing only one direction, that's exceptional growth, and it's going to be ongoing for quite a while.

**Cambria mulls pay-out**

(Source: Financial Times, 29th November 2010) Cambria Automobiles is expecting to pay a dividend this year after lifting revenues 53% in the 12 months to August 31. According to Mark Lavery, Chief Executive, he was expecting to lift the annual revenues to £1bn without raising further funds. The company, which was founded in 2006 to buy underperforming assets and turn them round, was introduced to Aim in April at 50p a share. However the shares, which have a free float of only 15%, have fallen to 33½p. The lack of liquidity reflects the fact that Mr Lavery and the board have just over 50% and Promethean, the private equity backer with a stake of 33% is locked in until 2012. Pre-tax profits were £2.6m, up from £2m. However after excluding the £1.5m cost of the flotation, pre-tax profits were £4.2m. Fairfax, the company’s broker, is forecasting a rise to pre-tax profits of £5.2m in the current financial year. It now has 25 dealerships and 37 franchises, selling brands ranging from Fiat to Aston Martin. Mr Lavery said the range of business protected the company from any vulnerability to sales volatility ahead of model changes planned by a single manufacturer. The number of new cars sold rose from 5,804 to more than 9,000, helped by the government’s scrappage scheme. The number of second-hand cars sold rose from 10,465 to 14,034, and service hours increased from 231,000 to 273,000. Mr Lavery said that after sales contributed 45% to gross profits, and used cars 32%. Basic earnings per share rose from 1.61p to 1.95p.

**Alliance looks at Russia’s Far East**

(Source: Automotive Logistics, 01”-07” December 2010) Logistics considerations are playing a significant part in Renault-Nissan’s considerations for a new plant in the Far East region of Russia, which may be built in the Primorye Territory on the border of China and North Korea. The vicinity to Japan would mean delivery of materials by sea in a quick and cost-effective manner for the Alliance. The Alliance is also considering the launch of production at the IZH-Avto plant in Izhevsk. The plans are designed to achieve a 40% market share for Renault-Nissan in Russia by providing additional production capacity. Nissan recently announced it would purchase 10% of shares in Russian carmaker Avtovaz, on top of the Alliance’s 25% stake in the company. A common organisation named Avtovaz Renault-Nissan Quality and Supplier Development (ARNQSD) has been formed to increase the percentage of locally sourced parts for the three partners.

**Ford adding 100 China dealers as sales climb**

(Source: Automotive News Europe, 29th November 2010) Ford is adding 100 dealers in China this year, mostly in smaller cities in inland provinces where new car demand is surging. The move, more aggressive than a previously announced plan, will bring the number of Ford dealers in China to 340 by the end of the year, up from an original target of 310. The company plans to introduce four new models in China over the next few years, including the Ford Edge crossover next month. The automaker is expanding in China and India where rising disposable incomes and economic growth are spurring demand for automobiles. Ford expects 70% of its growth in the next 10 years to come from the Asia-Pacific region and Africa. Ford and its joint venture Changan Ford Mazda Automobile are building a new plant in the south-western Chinese city of Chongqing and also plan to set up a new engine plant there. In India, the automaker invested $500 million this year to double production capacity and started selling a new small car. Ford's sales in China this year through October rose 39% to 468,754 vehicles. The company expects record sales this year in China, the overall Asia-Pacific region and Africa. Car sales in China rose at the fastest pace in six months in October, while in India, passenger vehicle sales rose 38% to a record. GM is also increasing its China dealerships. The U.S. automaker and its partner SAIC will appoint more than 100 dealers by the first half of next year to distribute the new Baojun brand cars.

**VW to invest $14 billion in China**

(Source: Automotive News Europe, 30th November 2010) Volkswagen plans to invest $14.06 billion in its Chinese operations before 2015, an investment intended to maintain its status as China's largest international automaker and an indication of its intention to become the world's largest automaker by 2018. VW plans to invest €51.6 billion in its global automotive operations over the next five years. VW's China investment will be funded entirely from cash flow generated by the automaker's Chinese joint ventures. Currently, VW maintains two joint ventures with Shanghai Automotive Industry and the FAW. In the first nine months of this year, VW's group sales in China totalled 1.4 million units, compared with GM's sales of 798,000. This year VW outlined a four-year, €6 billion plan to build two new Chinese assembly plants, double its production to 3 million units and add new models. Volkswagen is also starting to build its Skoda cars in China.
Prokhorov aims to build EVs with French partner
(Source: Automotive News Europe, 29th November) Russian billionaire Mikhail Prokhorov aims to sell 10,000 EVs a year in Russia. Prokhorov told French daily La Tribune that he would unveil three electric car models next month and launch production in 2012. He said he will cooperate with French investor Vincent Bollore on EVs. Prokhorov said the cars would be initially for Russian market. It (the vehicle) will be priced at around $10,000.

GM's Korean unit agrees to repay $1 billion of debt
(Source: Automotive News Europe, 01st December) GM's Daewoo Auto & Technology unit will fully repay a $1 billion revolving credit facility led by Korea Development Bank, reducing the company's borrowing costs. GM Daewoo will also continue talks with Korea Development Bank relating to technology agreements and an equity rights issue. The full repayment reflects GM Daewoo's strong financial performance this year. Korea Development Bank has extended the credit facility seven times since May. GM Daewoo sold 680,305 vehicles in the first 11 months of 2010, 33% more than a year earlier. The units sold included exports of 568,888.

Nov. sales jump 17% as market gains strength
(Source: Automotive News, 01st December 2010) U.S. car and truck sales jumped 17% last month, raising hopes the industry will end 2010 on a high note while creating momentum for the New Year. LVs sales rose to 873,407 units in November. The industry's sales total has now topped 2009's full-year mark of 10.43 million. For the second consecutive month, US sales reached an annual selling rate of 12.26 million units. New or redesigned models also helped sales at VW, Nissan, Hyundai and other automakers. At Ford, new car and truck demand jumped 20% from a year earlier. GM's total sales rose 12%; its four surviving brands were up 21%. Chrysler said November new vehicle demand rose 17%. A 58% surge at Jeep and robust Ram truck sales helped the automaker offset double-digit declines at the Chrysler and Dodge brands. Ford plans to increase first-quarter production in North America by 11% to 635,000 units, compared with the first quarter of 2010. Ford also expects average transaction prices to increase in coming months. GM officials today predicted that a gradual economic recovery and pent-up consumer demand would continue to power a rebound in the new-vehicle market. The Hyundai Group, including Kia, reported a November sales increase of 46%. Demand rose 21% at American Honda. Nissan posted a 27% gain, while November sales rose 49% at Porsche and 22% at Jaguar Land Rover. But Toyota said combined sales of Toyota, Lexus and Scion models slipped 3% last month to 129,317 units. Toyota's results illustrate the difficulties the company still faces in winning back U.S. consumers, more than a year after starting recalls that rocked its reputation for quality and safety. Ford's 20% gain factored November 2009 sales from Volvo. Without the Swedish unit that Ford has since sold, the year-over-year increase in November for the Ford, Mercury and Lincoln brands was 24%. At GM, Buick led the way with a 36% increase, and GMC advanced 30%. Cadillac gained 21% and Chevrolet was up 18%.Through November, those brands have sold nearly 103,014. VW reported a 24.2% increase in sales. Jetta sedan sales climbed 49%.

Renault revives Algeria plant plans
(Source: Automotive News Europe, 26th December 2010) Renault is in talks to build a plant in Algeria, reviving a stalled plan to tap growing demand. The French carmaker plans to produce 75,000 cars a year starting in 2012 for the North African country, Algerian Industry and Investment Promotion Minister Mohamed Benmeradi said. Renault operates a car plant in neighbouring Morocco and is building a second production complex there. Algeria imported 67,791 vehicles in the first half of this year, according to official figures. Renault sold 56,089 vehicles in Algeria in 2009 and has a 23.5% market share. Algeria, in an attempt to improve its trade balance, has imposed tough restrictions on vehicle imports including a ban on consumer credit for buying cars. As part of a shift toward economic nationalism, it has introduced a 49% ceiling on foreign ownership of businesses registered there.

Hyundai, Kia lead South Korean automakers'
(Source: Automotive News, 01st December 2010) Hyundai and Kia led a 17th straight gain in monthly global sales in November as new models helped boost volumes outside of the country. Hyundai sold 314,569 vehicles last month, 1.4% more than a year earlier. Sales outside South Korea rose 5.5%, while sales at home fell 13% partly because a strike at a plant in Ulsan reduced deliveries to dealers. Kia boosted sales 33% to 222,116 units. Industry wide sales for the country's five automakers, which also include Ssangyong, GM Daewoo and Renault Samsung, increased 14% to 633,758 vehicles in November. Domestic sales fell 3.4%, while overseas sales grew 20%. Hyundai rose 3.8% to close at 179,000 won, while Kia gained 3.2% to 50,500 won.
PRESS RELEASES

A new storage compound for Groupe CAT in Lorraine
(Source: Groupe CAT Press Release, 30th November 2010) Groupe CAT has just inaugurated a new storage compound for its centre in Lorraine (Meurthe-et-Moselle). The event took place on Thursday, 18th November with Groupe CAT CEO Alejandro FORBES in attendance. Thursday 18th November, Groupe CAT inaugurated the launch of its brand new storage compound located in Saint-Ail region (Meurthe-et-Moselle, France). Groupe CAT CEO Alejandro FORBES, Jacky HAUTIER (Deputy Principal of Meurthe-et-Moselle) and Daniel NEZ, Mayor of Saint-Ail, proudly unveiled the results of their mutual work. The centre is one of numerous compounds Groupe CAT owns in France. Nonetheless, the new site is the first to be 100% owned by the group. For Groupe CAT, the strategic decision to acquire new sites means it can offer services to additional customers in the region. Eleven more hectares have been added to the storage areas already held by the Renault factory in Batilly. The new compound (which is already being used for several customers) has an overall storage capacity of 4,300 spaces. This high capacity offers sufficient storage to fulfill customer requirements over multiple brands. Being located at the centre of Europe, Batilly provides a strategic location for vehicle flows arriving from the East. It enables Groupe CAT to offer optimised solutions for the vehicle flows throughout the continent. Furthermore, the augmentation at the Saint Ail centre will create additional jobs in the local region, as well as developing the economy within the vehicles logistics sector.

Groupe CAT had a turnover of €936,670 M in 2009 and employs approximately 3,000 people globally. Groupe CAT is now one of the European leaders in transport and automotive logistics, providing finished vehicle logistics and related value-added services to customers, as well as a full cargo logistics service for vehicle spare parts, motorcycles and industrial products. In 2009, Groupe CAT delivered in excess of 2.1 million new cars and approximately 30 million spare parts and automotive components. For further information please contact: Frédéric VAGLIO / Carole WEILL. Phone: +33 1 47 12 81 20 / - 34. Address: 49, quai Alphonse Le Gallo - 92107 Boulogne-Billancourt cedex. E-mail: frederick.vaglio@groupecat.com / carole.weill@groupecat.com. Website: www.groupecat.com

Ireland Short Sea Shipping Company of the Year
(Source: CLdN Press Release, 30th November 2010) Ireland Short Sea Shipping Company of the Year being awarded by the Irish Exporters Association and sponsored by the Irish Maritime Development office, which recognizes the strategically important role of short sea shipping to the Irish economy, named the Luxembourg based CLdN RoRo SA as the 2010 winner. This was against stiff completion from other entries, namely Eucon Shipping and Transport Ltd., Samskip MCL, and Stena Line. CLdN RoRo SA commenced their services to Dublin, Ireland in November 2009, offering for the first time, direct RoRo services between the continental Ports of Zeebrugge and Rotterdam, with twice weekly sailings from each port. The concept was developed around the introduction on new, purpose built RoRo vessels which combine the most up to date and efficient handling methods, with very fast Port turnaround times. This coupled with most modern fuel efficient engines has provided for a very stable, reliable and green alternative to the present options or land bridge solution.

These new vessels combine Containers, trailers, trade cars and High and Heavy cargoes with utmost efficiency. The Zeebrugge service is supported by C2C Lines (joint venture between ECS and Cobelfret) taking a slot charter on this route. A long term agreement was signed with Burke Shipping Group, to provide Terminal services in the Port of Dublin and to this effect a new Pontoon was installed at Ocean Pier to serve the new vessels. The service has grown from strength to strength throughout 2010, despite the economical situation prevailing in Ireland at the moment and has gained ground in all areas which CLdN has focused upon. For further information please contact: Michel Cigrang, Managing Director CLdN SA (michel.cigrang@cldn.com). Gary Walker, Managing Director CLdN SA (Gary.WALKER@cldn.com)