

PRESS RELEASE – 20 December 2022

## 29<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting of the World Ceramic Tiles Forum in Indonesia



The 29th World Ceramic Tiles Forum (WCTF) was hosted from and 11 to 13 December in Bali, Indonesia, by ASAKI, the Indonesia association of ceramic manufacturers. The meetings were held in conjunction with the ISO/TC189 meetings successfully held from 7 to 10 December. This edition of the Forum was attended by representatives from Australia, Brazil, China, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Spain, Ukraine and the USA. The WCTF was honoured by the presence of HE. Mr. Bapak Ignatius Warsito, Director General for Chemical, Pharmacy, & Textile Industry at the Industry Ministry of Indonesia, who opened the WCTF.

The Forum provided an opportunity to discuss **global trends in the production and consumption of ceramic tiles**. Worldwide production in ceramic tiles increased by roughly 3% in 2021 compared to 2020. After decreasing in 2018 and 2019, world production in wall & floor tiles remained stable in 2020 and increased in 2021 to exceed 14 billion sq.mt, twice the production level recorded in 2006 when the WCTF started monitoring world production. In addition to the global level, each country attending the WCTF offered insight into national general trends and regulatory framework affecting ceramic tiles and the construction sector.



The WCTF discussed further the **implementation of the revised customs Harmonised System (HS) custom codes for ceramic tiles** which entered into force in 2017. WCTF guidelines on the 2017 HS

codes are available upon request. A total of 107 countries have now fully implemented the revised HS code 6907 on ceramic tiles.

Held in conjunction with ISO/TC189, the Forum looked closely at latest developments in international standardisation. In this area, **the WCTF welcomed the steps taken by TC 189 to ensure that large ceramic tiles (slabs/panels) are well covered by the scope of ISO standard 13006** on ceramic tiles being currently revised. WCTF members also exchanged information on multilateral and bilateral free trade negotiations, technical barriers to trade taking the form of mandatory certification, export licensing, etc. The WCTF also explored in details developments in health and safety and climate & energy in the context of the current energy crisis. In that respect, **WCTF members highlighted the severe impact of the war in Ukraine on energy prices which are particularly affecting European manufacturing countries.** With energy prices having increased by up to 10 times compared to 2021, the energy crisis undermines investments and the competitiveness of the ceramic tiles sector. The WCTF also discussed the status of carbon reduction schemes/legislations in various countries, more particularly in the EU and in China, and also exchanged on the potential impact of the US Inflation Reduction Act on the ceramic tiles sector.

Lastly, the WCTF highlighted the growing importance of the embodied carbon indicator, notably in the USA and the EU, where the European Commission has launched the development of a Whole Life Carbon Roadmap for buildings. **The development of fair and scientific carbon accounting methodologies and tools considering the whole life cycle are clearly identified among the key priorities of the WCTF.** Accordingly, the WCTF welcomed the launch by ISO TC 189 of a new work item to develop a standard on carbon accounting for ceramic tiles.

The WCTF was particularly honoured by the **presence of Mr Sergii Voitenko, President of the Ukrainian Association of Ceramics**, who kindly shared with the WCTF members a report on the current situation in Ukraine for the country in general and more particularly for the ceramic industry, its employees and their families. The Ukrainian Association of Ceramics thanked the international community for its support and shared information about its charity foundation “WeAreFamily” raising funds for **rebuilding the homes of Ukrainians: <http://wearefamily.com.ua/en/>**. The WCTF expressed the highest admiration and solidarity for the people of Ukraine.

The 29<sup>th</sup> WCTF was a great success and was the first in person meeting since 2019, as a result of Covid-19 pandemic. We look forward to the next meeting of the WCTF. The date and location of the WCTF 2023 will be announced shortly on the WCTF website (<http://www.worldceramictiles.org/>). The annual WCTF meeting is traditionally organised in conjunction with the ISO TC 189 meeting.

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***ABOUT THE WCTF:** The WCTF was created in 1994 and is the annual meeting of the ceramic tiles manufacturers worldwide. The WCTF is a platform open to all ceramic tiles manufacturers in the world. Any producer or association of ceramic tiles producers wishing to participate is invited to contact the WCTF secretariat.*