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June 4, 2008

ZEON Corporation (President: Naozumi Furukawa, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo) held a ceremony on June 4 to commemorate the completion of the Integrated Production Center (IPC) at the Mizushima Plant (Kurashiki, Okayama Prefecture).

Since 2006, ZEON has been introducing the Daicel's new method of production innovation approach at the manufacturing worksite. The IPC, which serves as an integrated manufacturing base, began operations in April 2008.

The IPC is housed in a steel-framed, three-story RC building spanning 2,300 m². A central control room is located on the first floor, a staff room on the second floor and a machinery room and spare rooms on the third floor. Total construction costs, including the control systems, amount to approximately 3 billion yen. In order to protect the centralized manufacturing functions and its overall robustness and reliability, the IPC building can withstand a level-7 earthquake (on Japanese Scale) and is incorporated with countermeasures against tsunami and ground liquidation. The IPC has an ample capacity with redundancy in both the electrical power supply and information systems.

In the first stage of production innovation, with the adoption of the Daicel method, we improved basic infrastructure by establishing common terminology to be used throughout the Mizushima Plant and unified the rules. We also sought to establish the overall stability of the worksite by halving the workload each year. In the second stage, we standardized the expertise of veteran operators into a formal knowledge base that everyone can access. In the third stage, we developed an intelligent, integrated production system based on the learnings gained in the first and second stages. We believe this approach will ensure that the technology and skills of veteran operators will be handed down for generations to come, as well as support us in our commitment to establish a more stable and safer plant.

The production innovations we have implemented do not mean just to construct the IPC building and installing a packaged system in it, but to aimed at achieving an evolution in personnel and organization as well as in production and information systems. We will get a step ahead reforming our corporate culture and developing

human resources in a framework of continuous, self-directive quality improvement at the workplace. At the same time, we intend to reduce production costs and enhance productivity through these production innovations.

Above is the first phase of this process, we have applied innovations to approximately half of the plant areas. In the second phase, we plan to complete the changes by April 2010 in order to integrate the IPC with all our practical manufacturing functions, including production and facility management.

 **For further information**

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