ZARAGOZA LOGISTICS INVESTMENT GROWS FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

PLAZA Logistics Park Phase 1 at Full Occupation: 5000 New Jobs To Be Created by 70 Companies; MIT-Zaragoza Program Officially Launched

19th January 2004: The state-of-the-art PLAZA logistics park in Zaragoza, Spain, has announced full occupation of first stage build to coincide with the official European launch of the MIT-Zaragoza International Logistics Program in Madrid, today. Over 70 companies have now committed to taking up space within PLAZA, creating over 5,000 jobs in the region. Many of Europe’s leading companies, including representatives from fashion, automotive, technology and logistics industries, will move to the park, with some of Europe’s best-known names opting to base significant operations there.

A joint initiative between the Government of Aragón and industry, PLAZA – Plataforma Logística de ZARAGOZA – was established as a new centre for European logistics. Offering outstanding transportation connections via land, air and rail to all corners of the globe, the Zaragoza site offers outstanding facilities for companies wishing to establish an effective European logistics headquarters operation. PLAZA offers its occupants high quality facilities and services, as well as collaboration with the MIT-Zaragoza Logistics Program, a unique academia: industry collaboration that offers on-the-spot access to the latest academic research and ideas. PLAZA, measuring 12,063,674 square meters, will be capable of moving over 5 million tons of goods per year. The site has been developed with the full support of the Government of Aragón and the City Government of Zaragoza as well as the main Aragonese savings and loan institutions: Ibercaja and Caja de la Inmaculada.

Companies already committed to PLAZA include Inditex (main retail brand Zara, fashion), Volvo (automotive), Imaginariunm (toys), Memory Set (hi-tech), Galerias Primero (food), Salgar (kitchen/bathroom), DHL Express (logistics), Azkar (transportation) and Global3 (energy).

PLAZA is also the site of the Zaragoza Logistics Center (ZLC), a new departure for the industry in Europe, and the first time a leading academic institution has partnered with industry to create a top-flight academic logistics research Program within a business park. The Zaragoza Logistics Center (ZLC), a partnership between the Government of Aragón and the University of Zaragoza, will host the new research and education partnership with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Center for Transportation and Logistics at a new headquarters operation based in PLAZA.

The MIT-Zaragoza Logistics Program is now ready to deliver on initial Program objectives, marking a new departure for logistics research: academics on the Program will be able to use the real-life business case studies of the PLAZA as the ‘Laboratory’ for research development. Industry and academia will therefore, for the first time, work side-by-side to experiment with new logistics processes and concepts, enabling the results of university research to be quickly and effectively moved into practical business use.
Ricardo Garcia, Director of PLAZA, comments: “PLAZA is the result of a bold initiative funded by the Government of Aragón and industrial leaders. The aim was to create a state-of-the-art logistics park to exploit Zaragoza’s strategic location as a gateway to worldwide business opportunities. The fact that over 70 companies have already opted to join this venture in the first stage of build is a vindication of our vision, and demonstrates that Zaragoza will play a key role in future European and global logistics activities. The location of the MIT-Zaragoza Logistics Program within the PLAZA is a key factor to why these companies have chosen Zaragoza as their location. We look forward to seeing the fruits of this unique industry:academia collaboration in years to come, and hope that our occupants will be able to realise real business advantage from their close liaison with cutting-edge academic research into the logistics arena.”

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About the Zaragoza Logistics Center
The Zaragoza Logistics Center (ZLC), a partnership between the Government of Aragón and the University of Zaragoza, aims to become an internationally renowned centre of excellence for logistics research and education. With its advanced research Center embedded in the living laboratory of PLAZA, Zaragoza’s state-of-the-art logistics park, the ZLC will serve as a model for closer cooperation between industry and academia in funding research and using the fruit of the academic research to rapidly reap commercial benefits. To rapidly disseminate concepts and technologies, the ZLC will offer graduate and executive education in logistics, taught in English, to students from around the world. The offerings include a Master of Engineering in Logistics degree (ZLOG), a doctorate degree and a set of executive education courses leading to certificates in various logistics-related disciplines. The curricula will be based on MIT’s top-rated graduate Programs in logistics; the first courses will be offered in the fall of 2004. For more information, see www.zaragozalogistics.com

About PLAZA
A joint initiative between the Government of Aragón and industry, PLAZA is the result of a multi-million Euro investment in Zaragoza to create a state-of-the-art logistics park. The 11-million square-meter development includes specialised infrastructure for areas such as distribution centres, intermodal transportation, customs clearance and hazardous materials and bulk shipment handling, supported with commercial, educational and sports & leisure facilities. The logistics park is well located with regards to both transport and commerce connections, with easy access to road, water air and rail connections to Spain, the rest of Europe, and the world. For more information, see www.plazadosmil.com

About Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
The Massachusetts Institute of Technology is one of the world’s pre-eminent research universities, dedicated to advancing knowledge and educating students in science, technology, and other areas of scholarship that will best serve the nation and the world in the 21st century. It is known for rigorous academic Programs, cutting-edge research, a diverse campus community, and its longstanding commitment to working with the public and private sectors to bring new knowledge to bear on the world’s great challenges.

The Institute has more than 900 faculty and 10,000 undergraduate and graduate students. It is organized into five Schools — Architecture and Planning, Engineering, Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, Management, and Science — and the Whitaker College of Health Sciences and Technology. Within these are 27 degree-granting departments, Programs, and divisions. In addition, a great deal of research and teaching takes place in interdisciplinary Programs, laboratories and Centers whose work extends beyond traditional departmental boundaries. Forty-seven alumni, faculty, researchers and staff have won Nobel Prizes. For more information on MIT, see http://web.mit.edu/

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