CHICAGO, Oct. 25, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- Executives of leading photovoltaic (PV) technology makers in Taiwan – the second largest manufacturer of PV cells in the world – announced a variety of new developments this week at a press conference at the Solar Power International 2013 exhibition in Chicago. The event was organized by the Bureau of Foreign Trade of the Ministry of Economic Affairs of Taiwan and implemented by the Taiwan External Trade Development Council.

Speaking at the conference, Mr. Baushan Ger, Director General of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Chicago, observed that the global solar industry has jumped from 50 gigawatts of solar capacity to just over 100 gigawatts in the past 2-1/2 years due to rising concern about environmental issues such as greenhouse gas emissions and the finite nature of petroleum supplies. An additional 100 gigawatt increase is expected worldwide by 2015, nearly doubling capacity again.

"Both Taiwan and the USA play important roles in the global solar power market," Mr. Ger noted. "The USA is the world's fourth largest solar market. Taiwan, meanwhile, possesses abundant capabilities to manufacture high quality solar cells as well as a complete supply chain, including materials and components, solar cells, panels as well as system installation. We look forward to seeing more cooperation between our two sides in the solar sector."

Company announcements included:

LOF SOLAR – the inventor and global pioneer in high efficiency color solar cells – announced new U Series products featuring efficiency rates of 15-17% in 10 colors including True Steel, Army Green, Golden Brown, Lavender, Tile Red, Stone Elegance, Rebel Green, Custom Engraving, Disco Pink and Metallic Gold. The company also showcased existing and pending color PV installations in areas such as balcony railings, building facades and movable louvres as well as roofs, including those at U.S. sites such as the Seattle Tacoma Airport.

MOTECH INDUSTRIES INC. - one of the world's 10 largest solar cell manufacturers and a developer and manufacturer of PV modules, inverters and power systems – unveiled a new Sirius monocrystalline solar cell with a 20.2% average and 20.5% peak conversion efficiency that is scheduled to be available in Q1 2014. Motech modules utilizing 60 Sirius cells will generate a power class up to 280W and be available in Q3 2014, helping to drive down the cost of solar energy by generating more electricity with fewer panels.

NEO SOLAR POWER CORPORATION (NSP) – the largest solar cell manufacturer in Taiwan and the second largest in the world – announced new Super19 multi-crystalline cells with an average 18.9% and maximum 19.4% cell efficiency (ideal for 325W 72-cell panels); Black20 mono-crystalline cells with an average 20.2% and maximum 20.6% cell efficiency (ideal for 335W 72-cell panels); and BiFi high efficiency mono bifacial cells with an average 19.6% cell efficiency enabling 270W front-side and 344W combined front and rear-side power per 60-cell module.

TSMC SOLAR – a leading manufacturer of high-efficiency CIGS (Copper Indium Gallium Selenium) thin-film photovoltaic modules and a wholly-owned subsidiary of Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company, Inc. – revealed that the company expects a third-party bankability report that will support financing of large TSMC-based solar projects in the U.S. The company also cited test data from multiple sites indicating that its technology delivers more energy per installed size (kWh per kW) than crystalline or CdTe modules.

Taiwan's solar industry has been growing steadily since 1987, when Taiwanese firms began investing in solar cell R&D. Today the country has more than 200 PV companies, ranks second in the world in the total production of PV cells, includes three of the world's top 10 PV cell makers, and covers the entire PV value chain from silicon wafers, to silicon and thin-film solar cells, to complete solar PV systems. The growth has been fueled by Taiwan's expertise in manufacturing semiconductors, which share many characteristics with solar cells; industrial clusters of solar power companies that foster business development, productivity and innovation by geographically concentrating related businesses; and a series of investments and initiatives from the Taiwanese government designed to grow the renewable energy sector.

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