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Sumitomo Chemical to Double Lithium-Ion Secondary Battery Separator Production Capacity

Sumitomo Chemical has decided to more than double its production capacity for lithium-ion secondary battery separators which are marketed under the PERVIO™ brand name. The production at its Ohe Works in Niihama, Ehime Pref., Japan will be raised to approximately 1.3 times the current capacity by next spring. In addition, a new plant for PERVIO™ will be built at its subsidiary in South Korea, scheduled to start commercial-scale production in 2017.

There is a growing demand for lithium-ion secondary batteries that offer both still higher capacity and secured safety as electric vehicles and smartphones where they are used are expected to meet such needs as higher functionality, lighter weight and a prolonged period of use. PERVIO™ can be noted for its particular feature capable of contributing to greater safety of batteries in use because of its structure composed of aramid as a heat-resistant layer formed on a polyolefin substrate. PERVIO™ is chiefly mounted on cars through its use in Panasonic's cylindrical lithium-ion secondary batteries.

In recent years, lithium-ion secondary batteries for car mounting use has been in an expanding demand, reflecting automakers' active drive to launch various electric vehicles against the backdrop of consumers' rising awareness towards environmental protection and ever tightening environmental regulations. Responding to the situation, Sumitomo Chemical has thus far increased its production capacity for PERVIO™ in a stepwise manner. Expecting further growth in demand, however, the Company has decided not only to raise the production capacity at the Ohe Works, but to set up a new plant for the product at its subsidiary in South Korea, so that the Company can fortify its stable supply capability by having multiple production bases as well as preparing for possible further expansions in the years ahead.

Sumitomo Chemical positions "Environment and Energy" as one of its core domains in its initiatives to develop next-generation businesses for the Company. In the field of battery-related components and materials, which promote efficient use of energy, Sumitomo Chemical aims to establish a business cluster based on the PERVIO™ products as it continues to develop innovative technologies and strengthen related businesses.