



## Liberty House eyeing steel assets in the UAE - David Dawson



Liberty House is in talks to snap up steel and aluminium assets in the UAE as it looks to expand its Middle East presence.

David Dawson, CEO of Liberty House Industries said: "We are significantly advanced on two particular acquisitions and hope to make some announcement in the next year. We are keen to establish our industrial presence in the Middle East and what we are really doing in many ways is replicating our global strategy."

Dawson said "Liberty House Industries expects its revenue to grow up to 20 per cent next year in the region if the acquisition in the UAE is finalised. Despite some market challenges around the

region, we have shown good growth in 2018 and we are looking at further growth in 2019. The UAE is an area where we can see sustainable growth for the long-term and that is what drives us as an organisation."

The London conglomerate is expanding aggressively in the steel and aluminium business from India to Luxembourg. In November, the company agreed to acquire three steel plants from ArcelorMittal two in Belgium and one in Luxembourg. In October, it agreed to further buy four steel facilities from ArcelorMittal in Romania, Czech Republic, Macedonia and Italy.

In November, the company completed the purchase of a French smelter, Aluminium Dunkerque, which is Europe's biggest producer of lightweight metal from Rio Tinto.

In 2017, Liberty acquired a speciality steel operation from Tata Steel UK. It also has facilities in Australia and the United States. ■

## Turkish steel exports to shrink in 2019

Head of the steel exporters association has claimed that Turkish steel production and exports are seen falling by some 30% in 2019, hit by weak domestic demand, protectionist measures in international markets and an increase in China's steel exports.

The automotive industry market contracted 32% between January and October, white goods sales dropped 17% between January and



November, while the construction sector contracted 5.3% in the third quarter. Steel exports could drop to around 15-16 million tonnes in 2019

from an expected 20.5 million tonnes in 2018.

China is lowering its growth data. This means there will be a contraction in the domestic market, therefore it will increase exports again. China would return to an aggressive export policy in 2019. ■

## Emirates Steel refinances \$ 650 million of debt



Emirates Steel, the largest steel producer in the UAE, has refinanced USD 650 million (AED 2.38 billion) of debt with a new loan and sukuk (Islamic bond). The company owned by Abu Dhabi's Senaat, a state-owned investor in the emirate's industrial sector, raised \$1.3 billion in credit facilities in 2014, due in 2022.

It hired BNP Paribas to coordinate a USD 400 million Sharia-compliant loan financing. Last month, Emirates Steel's parent Senaat issued a USD 300 million sukuk.

The USD 1.3 billion loan had been halved to USD 650 million via scheduled repayments since 2014.

The residual balance was settled in full with funds from the USD 400 million loan and the Senaat sukuk.

The revised debt structure of Emirates Steel is currently an Islamic four-year term loan of USD 400 million and the parent company's USD 300 million sukuk. ■

This section is a compilation from various company press releases, business dailies, trade publications and Industry Websites.