PRESS RELEASE
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LUKOIL OPENS INNOVATIVE BITUMEN DEVELOPMENT CENTER IN NIZHNY NOVGOROD REGION

LUKOIL opened a research center for the development of bituminous materials in Kstovo, Nizhny Novgorod Region, today. The most advanced equipment is capable of modelling transport loads and climate conditions regardless of case complexity. Laboratories of the center offer over 70 techniques to test bitumen and bitumen concrete in road surfacing.

The opening ceremony was attended by the President of LUKOIL, Vagit Alekperov, the Envoy of the RF President to the Volga Federal District, Igor Komarov, senior managers and experts of road construction companies and research institutions, and also media representatives.

"LUKOIL is consistent in its effort to raise the efficiency of its refining facilities. The company introduces new products, bituminous materials of new generation among them. The new research center has a strategic task of becoming a single site for communication between road construction companies and the research community to help them find solutions to the challenges of road construction. New-generation bituminous materials, developed with respect to the climate conditions of Russia's regions, will serve to significantly improve the quality of the country's roads," Mr. Alekperov noted.

"Today, we have attended the opening ceremony of the new research center for the development of bituminous materials to improve the durability of Russia's roads, crucial in our harsh weather conditions. As the President of the Russian Federation emphasizes the importance of the national project *Safe and Quality Motor Roads* in one of his orders, it is essential that there should be visible improvements of the quality of roads in urban and rural areas, and new technologies help achieve the ambitious goals," Mr. Komarov commented.

The same day, Mr. Alekperov also met with the head of the Nizhny Novgorod Region, Gleb Nikitin, and discussed the current status and prospects of cooperation between the company and the region.

"The research center, opened in Kstovo today, will address one of the country's two major challenges – the quality of road surfacing and its durability. However, it is also a milestone event for us, as the new center brings new research and

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educational opportunities for Nizhny Novgorod. We have agreed today that LUKOIL and the new center on the one hand, and the region's research institutions and universities on the other, will put their heads together to do research work. I would like to thank Mr. Alekperov for the company's contribution to the regional development and for the good attitude, attested by the company's investment decisions," Mr. Nikitin concluded.