



## PRESS RELEASE

### **François-Charles Oberthur Fiduciaire and Oberthur Card Systems To provide e-passport to the Kingdom of Belgium**

**Paris, March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2005 – 7 am**

Both Oberthur companies are proud to announce their selection by the Kingdom of Belgium as providers of the first ever ICAO compliant electronic passport in the world. The long-term agreement with the Belgian administration calls for the personalization and delivery of 500,000 e-passports per year.

This success was achieved because of the complimentary expertise of each company in terms of high-security printing, personalization (cards, checks) and smart card-based solutions. This exceptional synergy offers the Belgian administration the best in security, technology and services.

Belgium's determination to be a pioneer in this field has resulted in a very strong focus on products and services. The Belgian Passport had already received the world's most secure passport award from Interpol in 2003. Adding a serigraphic antenna connected to a contactless chip in the back cover of the passport renders it absolutely tamperproof.

Oberthur Card Systems' chip<sup>1</sup> offers an available memory of 64K and can store all the written data located on page 2 of the passport such as civil status, photo and signature. According to the evolution of international standards, the chip will also be able to store other biometric information such as fingerprint, iris scan, etc...

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<sup>1</sup> high security and FIPS140-2 level3-approved microprocessor

“The Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Cooperation for Development Federal public service is very satisfied with the quality of the passports, which were delivered as per the agreed upon schedule. The technical solution used for the Belgian e-passport brings an extremely high level of security and provides an efficient defense against counterfeiting”, declared Rudi Veestraeten, CEO of the Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Cooperation for Development Federal public service.

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### **About Oberthur Card Systems**

With sales of 450,8 million Euros in 2004, Oberthur Card Systems is one of the world's leading providers of card-based solutions, software and applications including SIM and multi-application smart cards as well as services ranging from consulting to personalization.

Innovative products, security expertise and high quality services ensure Oberthur Card Systems' strong positioning in its main target markets:

- Payment & Services: 57% of 2004 revenues. World leader and number one supplier of Visa and MasterCard payment cards
- Mobile Communications: 33% of 2004 revenues, with open and interoperable solutions based on Java™ technology.
- Identity: strong positions in ID projects throughout the world
- Multimedia: leading position in the Pay-TV market with an end-to-end expertise in the value chain: software development, manufacturing and personalization
- Transit: focus in the high-end segment with a microprocessor-based offer

Close to its customers, the company benefits from an industrial and commercial presence across all five continents. Listed on the Euronext Stock Exchange (ISIN: FR0000124133) since July 2000, Oberthur Card Systems is a subsidiary of the François-Charles Oberthur Group.

For more information, visit [www.oberthurcs.com](http://www.oberthurcs.com)

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#### **Oberthur Card Systems**

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