



## **Europcar – Quality Leader Not Only in Europe**

**Berlin/Paris, 11th March 2005** – Every year the top of the tourist industry meet at the ITB in Berlin. Despite a decidedly unfavourable economic climate, Europcar International has sped ahead of its competitors and is once again in a position to present itself as Europe's most profitable car rental company at this important tourist fair. With a total turnover of EUR 1,172 million and a 16 percent increase in pre-tax profits to EUR 83.9 million, the excellent financial figures for 2004 mirror the company's status as market leader in Europe. But there is more to being Number One than just an impressive row of figures.

In 2004 Europcar won the World Travel Award in the category "Europe's Leading Car Rental Company" for the second successive year – an award that clearly reflects Europcar's exceptional standing in the European car rental market. However, what made this year's splendid World Travel Awards ceremony in Barbados so special for Europcar was the honour of receiving the additional title of "World's Leading Leisure Car Rental". Over 150,000 employees from around 80,000 travel agencies throughout the world have given their impartial verdict on Europcar's service quality and customer commitment. "The professional qualification of the jury makes this distinction the best recommendation that a tourist industry product could possibly wish to receive", commented Salvatore Catania, CEO of Europcar International.

The international dimension of the accolade also echoes the broad spread and constant expansion of the Europcar Global Network. A very important step has just been taken in significantly extending its presence in the Asia-Pacific region. The recently concluded "Master" franchise contract covers thirty countries, enabling Europcar to operate stations in the heart of the Asian continent – for example in India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. The presence in Southeast Asia now embraces countries such as South Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia. "Europcar Asia Pacific" is the new name of the operating company that serves this important region.

This agreement also covers Australia and New Zealand. The Europcar brand will be introduced throughout New Zealand by mid-April after Europcar Asia Pacific has acquired the National Car Rental operations in that country. 19 stations in New Zealand and a fleet of 1,000 vehicles will then be sporting the green company colours. The stations will be linked to the Group's reservations and operations management system in Australia. "Most European visitors link Australia and New Zealand, so now we can provide a seamless service that also works for outbound New Zealand travellers to Australia and Europe," said Doug Hunt, CEO of Europcar Asia Pacific.

Europcar's calculated franchise policy has enabled the Group to develop rapidly. In the course of this year, Europcar will be represented in the USA and in China.

Europcar is represented in 143 countries with 2,825 rental stations and operates a fleet of over 200,000 vehicles throughout Europe, Central and South America, Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean, and Asia-Pacific. Further information is available under [www.europcar.com](http://www.europcar.com), at your travel agency, or in your local booking centre.

**Further information and photographic material:**

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