NOVELLUS STRENGTHENS EXECUTIVE TEAM IN JAPAN

Tokyo, Japan, December 6, 2006 Novellus Systems, Inc. (Nasdaq: NVLS) today announced that Mr. Masatoshi Tsuji, 58, has been promoted to chairman of Novellus Systems Japan. Novellus also appointed Dr. Rao Mulpuri, 37, president of Novellus Systems Japan, reporting to Mr. Tsuji.

"Japan is the largest semiconductor equipment market in the world and it continues to grow as demand for consumer electronics shows no sign of abating," said Dr. Tom Caulfield, executive vice president of worldwide sales, marketing, and customer satisfaction. "This change allows us to strengthen our Japanese organization and further develop the international experience of our management team. Mr. Tsuji's seasoned executive ability has played a vital role in Novellus' growth in Japan and will continue to enhance our worldwide perspective on semiconductor business issues. Dr. Mulpuri brings with him a wealth of technical knowledge and customer focus that will be invaluable in his new assignment."

Mr. Tsuji joined Novellus Systems Japan in 1999 as the vice president of sales for the region. He was named president of Novellus Systems Japan in April 2001. Mr. Tsuji was previously with Applied Materials Japan for 15 years. Prior to that, he was with Mitsui & Co., Ltd. Mr. Tsuji graduated from Waseda University, Japan.

Dr. Mulpuri has been with Novellus for more than 10 years, starting as a technologist in the Integrated Metals business unit and holding various positions of increasing responsibility leading up to vice president and general manager of the Integrated Metals business, and recently vice president of corporate business development. He holds a bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from Manipal Institute of Technology, India, and a Ph.D. in Materials Science and Engineering from Boston University. He recently completed the Advanced Management Program at Harvard Business School.

About Novellus:

Novellus Systems, Inc. (NASDAQ: NVLS) is a leading provider of advanced process equipment for the global semiconductor industry. The company's products deliver value to customers by providing innovative technology backed by trusted productivity. An S&P 500 company, Novellus is headquartered in San Jose, Calif. with subsidiary offices across the globe. For more information please visit www.novellus.com.

"Safe Harbor" Statement under the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995:

This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, including the statement regarding Japan's growing semiconductor market. Forward-looking statements are subject to risks and uncertainties that may cause actual results to differ materially from those contemplated by the forward-looking statements. Such risks and uncertainties include, but are not limited to, slower than anticipated growth in Japan's semiconductor market and a decrease in demand for Novellus' products in Japan, as well as other risks indicated in our filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). For more details, please refer to our SEC filings and the amendments thereto, including our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2005, our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the quarters ended April 1, 2006 and July 1, 2006 and September 30, 2006 and our Current Reports on Form 8-K. Forward-looking statements are made and based on information available to us on the date of this press release, and we assume no obligation to update them.

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