

## **HBG Holdings Announces New Board of Directors and Corporate Governance Review**

**Dubai 27 November 2007** – HBG Holdings (“HBG”), the Dubai-based private equity firm, today announced the appointment of a new board of directors as well as the start of a comprehensive corporate governance review.

The new board has been appointed as the company enters the second phase of its development. The firm has recently expanded its capital base by inviting prominent new shareholders from the region and has also announced the second close of its \$200 million (Euros 148 million) pan-regional fund focused on the Middle East and South Asia region.

The new board comprises individuals who have been re-elected as well as prominent new additions, all of whom are distinguished, highly qualified and experienced businessmen from across the Gulf region and beyond.

The board is made up of the following members:

- H.E. Abdallah Y. Al-Mouallimi, Chairman of the Board of Directors, a Saudi businessman who has over 30 years of private sector experience, having held various senior management positions in Saudi Arabia including Vice-Chairman of Olayan Financing Company. He also served in various high profile civic positions including Mayor of Jeddah, Member of Consultative Council of Saudi Arabia and Chairman of the Riyadh and Jeddah Chambers of Commerce.
- Zulfi Hydari, a British citizen and recognised local investor and entrepreneur with significant hands-on experience in acquiring and building profitable businesses. He is Managing Director of HBG Holdings and also serves in other senior positions including as Non-Executive Director of Neutrahealth plc, a listed company on the AIM market of the London Stock Exchange.
- Ziad A. Galadari, a distinguished UAE businessman and founder of Galadari & Associates, one of the largest law firms in the Middle East. He is a Board Member of a number of influential UAE based institutions including Galadari Investments LLC, Dubai World Trade Centre, Dana Gas and Emirates Racing Association amongst others.
- Imtiaz H. Hydari, a British citizen and key player in the private equity space in the Middle East over the last 30 years having been involved in some of the largest and most significant private equity deals during this period including Aramex and Inchcape. He has also served as President and CEO of the Olayan Group in Saudi Arabia and was a co-founder of Abraaj Capital.

- Tawfeeq A. Almoayed, a distinguished Bahraini businessman who has held several high profile executive positions in major regional companies including as First Deputy of BATELCO, Chairman of Gulf Petro-Chemical Industries Co and Board Member of both Bahrain Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Dana Gas.

In addition to the above, Yeshwant Desai and Zahi W. Khouri has been appointed as Advisory Board Members:

- Yeshwant Desai is a British National and a veteran Middle East professional having spent over 40 years in the financial services sector in the region most notably as Chief Executive Officer of BankMuscat in Oman.
- Zahi W. Khouri, an American citizen and leading Middle East businessman who holds a number of executive positions and board memberships including Chairman of National Beverage Company (Coca Cola) in Palestine, Chairman of Palestine Tourism Investment Company (Intercontinental Hotel) and Chairman of USA based Intram Investments.

Commenting on the appointment of the new Board of Directors, H.E. Abdallah Y. Al-Mouallimi, Chairman of HBG Holdings said: "I am pleased to be able to announce such a distinguished and experienced line-up of Board members. Each individual has achieved business success in their own right and I am delighted to welcome them to the Board. Their insights and knowledge of the Middle East and the wider international business arena will be invaluable as we continue to grow and expand our investment activities across the region."

In addition to announcing the new Board, the firm has also commenced a corporate governance review ("CGR") to ensure that HBG adheres to international standards of transparency and governance in all respects. The CGR comes weeks before the firm submits its application to become a member of the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC).

Zulfi Hydari, Managing Director said, "Since the firm's launch in 2004, we have successfully offered investors access to turnaround and restructuring investment opportunities in the region and rapidly established ourselves as a platform for investors seeking access to Middle Eastern growth opportunities. Throughout this period, the issue of governance has always been a top priority and as we interact more with institutional investors from this region and beyond it will be important to ensure that our governance is robust. The corporate governance review will help us to achieve this objective."

HBG launched its recent fund, HBG Investment Holdings Fund I, in February 2007 and achieved first closing in June 2007 and second closing in November 2007. The firm's fundraising has been achieved in record time and at double the original target.

- Ends -

**Notes to Editors:**

HBG Holdings (HBG) is a leading investment firm specializing in private equity and real estate investments in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia. The shareholder base of the firm includes the region's leading private and institutional investors.

The firm pursues investment strategy focused on acquiring controlling interests in companies that provide significant opportunity for operational enhancement, financial restructuring and regional expansion. Its value creation model is unique in that it requires significant post acquisition operational involvement from the firm's management.

The firm has specialist expertise in a range of fields including consumer goods, finance, logistics, petrochemicals, energy and real estate and boasts a team with significant investment and private equity experience in the region.