

HBG denies merger rumors

Leading private equity firm denies rumors of imminent merger with US asset manager

London 15th July 2010 – HBG Holdings (“HBG”), a leading emerging markets private equity firm, has denied rumours suggesting it was in advanced merger talks with a US asset manager.

Michael Toxvaerd, Executive Director of HBG Holdings said, "We have been approached in the past by firms looking to enter the Middle East which I suspect was due to our unique market position. And it's true we are in ongoing collaborative discussions with UK and US asset managers. However there is no substance whatsoever in these merger rumours. It's pure speculation".

The rumors are thought to have been triggered by an HBG client who suggested in a private meeting in London that HBG is a good platform for international firms with Middle East ambitions.

Toxvaerd added, "Our focus today is to use our successful investments on AIM to build further momentum in our Small Cap investment activities and to identify independent fund management teams that can benefit from our strong platform and help us bring new strategies to our clients."

- Ends -

Notes to Editors:

HBG Holdings

HBG Holdings (“HBG”) is a leading private equity investor and fund management business specialized in facilitating the flow of investment capital from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf into private companies with growth potential in the MENASA region and other emerging markets.

The firm successfully generates superior returns by leveraging its expertise in acquiring businesses and

expanding them regionally through organic growth and “bolt-on” acquisitions, often in close partnership with leading regional partners. Its value creation model is unique in that it assumes direct operational involvement from the firm’s management in the post acquisition phase.

The HBG team is impressive in its heritage, having managed some of the region’s largest businesses and played a leading role in its landmark M&A transactions. The team has vast knowledge of the region accumulated over many decades of operating profitable businesses and executing private equity transactions.

Since its establishment in 2004, the firm has rapidly built a client base of leading private and institutional investors from across the six Gulf Co-operation Council countries and has held stakes in various assets across the region.

HBG is regulated by the UK Financial Services Authority and is a member of the Emerging Markets Private Equity Association.

For further information, please contact:

Desiree Zapanta

HBG Holdings

Al Moosa Tower II, Sheikh Zayed Road

Po Box 113341, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Tel: +971 4 331 4133

Fax: +971 4 331 4134

Email: info@hbgholdings.com

www.hbgholdings.com