IMMEDIATE

PRESS STATEMENT – 15 MARCH 2002

IPMA NAMES CHAIRMAN AND NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

IPMA, the International Primary Market Association, announced today the re-election of Robert B Gray as its Chairman. IPMA (Clifford R Dammers, Secretary General) was founded in 1984 as the association which represents international banks active in the underwriting and distribution of international debt and equity securities.

Robert B Gray is Chairman, Debt Financing & Advisory Group of HSBC Investment Bank. He has been a member of the IPMA Executive Committee since 1992, and is a former Chairman of the Market Practices Committee in which capacity he was responsible for establishing operating guidelines for the international medium term note (MTN) market. He was first elected Chairman of IPMA in 2000.

At IPMA's annual dinner Robert Gray welcomed the European Parliament's approval of its Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee report on the proposed prospectus directive. The Parliament called for numerous amendments which will significantly improve the directive. Mr Gray said that IPMA looks forward to working with the Commission, the Council of Ministers and the Parliament on improvements to the directive which will further the development of an integrated pan European capital market.

Today's AGM also received reports from each of IPMA's key committees on what had been a record year in terms of new issue activity in debt: Market Practices (chaired by Paul Hearn) and Legal & Documentation (chaired by Kate Craven and Roger Scotts).

At its Annual General meeting yesterday, IPMA also elected its new Board of Directors shown below.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Banca d'Intermediazione Mobiliare IMI SpA Banco Bilbao Vizcaya Argentaria Banque Bruxelles Lambert SA Banque Bruxelles Lambert SA

Barclays Capital Group

BNP Paribas

CIBC World Markets plc Credit Agricole – Indosuez

Credit Suisse First Boston (Europe) Ltd

Dankse Bank

Deutsche Bank AG Goldman Sachs International Goldman Sachs International HSBC Investment Bank

J.P. Morgan Securities Ltd.

Lehman Brothers International (Europe)

Merrill Lynch International Merrill Lynch International Morgan Stanley Dean Witter Nomura International plc

Raiffeisen Zentralbank Osterreich AG

RBC Capital Markets

Schroder Salomon Smith Barney

Tokyo-Mitsubishi International plc

UBS Warburg

WestLB - Global Financial Markets

Mr Giuseppe Distefano

Mr Vincente Ortueta

Mr Philippe Follebouckt

Mr Jean-Pierre Wellens

Mr Cyrus Ardalan

Mr Paul Hearn

Mr Mark Hardisty

Mr Eric Hottelart

Mr John Romanelli

Mr Peter Holm

Mr Walter Henniges

Mr Roger Scotts

Mr Mark Bamford

Mr Robert Gray

Mr Michael Ridley

Mr Chris Wait

Ms Kate Craven

Mr Paul Richards

Mr Rob Rooney

Mr Brian Lawson

Mr Ernst Rosi

Mr Geraud de Nadaillac

Mr Paul Young

Mr Kokichi Komagata

Mr Manfred Schepers

Mr Tim Richards

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