

## **ICBC (Asia) Centralises Hong Kong Operations with 100,000 sq ft Headquarters at No. 3 Garden Road, Central**

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Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Asia) Limited ("ICBC (Asia)") ( Stock Code : 0349 ) - the Hong Kong subsidiary of The Industrial and Commercial Bank of China ("ICBC"), the largest commercial bank in China - and Great Eagle Holdings Limited (Stock Code : 0041) today announced that ICBC (Asia) has agreed to lease over 100,000 square feet of prime office space at Asia Pacific Finance Tower, No. 3 Garden Road, Central. The lease term is 10 years commencing from 1 st June 2004. Asia Pacific Finance Tower will subsequently be renamed to signify the ICBC (Asia) association.

Mr. Zhu Qi, Chief Executive Officer of ICBC (Asia) commented, "We are pleased to be moving our operations to a premium quality office building in prime Central. This will centralise our various businesses, which are presently located in several locations, under one roof. There will be significant enhancement in operation efficiency as a result. Over the past few years, ICBC (Asia) has become a major market player in the Hong Kong banking sector. The re-naming of Asia Pacific Finance Tower after ICBC will appropriately reflect the growing stature of ICBC (Asia) in the HK Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). This major long-term leasing transaction also underlines the strong commitment of the ICBC Group to the continuing expansion of its businesses in Hong Kong."

Commenting on the ICBC (Asia) transaction, Dr. Lo Ka Shui, Deputy Chairman and Managing Director of Great Eagle Holdings Limited said, "We are very proud to have ICBC (Asia) join our list of prestigious financial institution tenants at 3 Garden Road. This lease represents one of the largest office leasing transactions in Hong Kong in 2004. A significant portion of the space vacated earlier this year by The Hong Kong Monetary Authority has been filled up as a result."

Dr. Lo also saw the move-in by ICBC (Asia) as a clear sign of the growing importance of China-related corporations to the Hong Kong commercial office market: "Hong Kong will continuously remain as China's pre-eminent capital formation centre. As the economic relationship between Hong Kong and the Mainland China becomes closer and closer, more and more China-related corporations will want to establish a physical presence in Hong Kong, thereby generating significant incremental demand for office properties in HKSAR. At the same time, the new supply of Grade-A offices in the next 5 years, especially in the prime areas, will be much lower than the historical average. The supply-demand imbalance will lead to a significant drop in vacancy rates and in turn a major increase in prime office rents in the next several years."

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