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HSBC ACQUIRES SIGNIFICANT EQUITY STAKE IN AME INFO

HSBC Private Equity Middle East Limited & HSBC Private Equity Middle East L.P. (referred to as HSBC Private Equity Middle East) has announced that it has acquired a significant equity stake in AME Info FZ LLC.

AME Info is the leading online regional business resource and business news provider in the Middle East providing a comprehensive online source of information on business and finance in the region.

David Price, Director of HSBC Private Equity Middle East stated, "We are very pleased to be investing in AME Info. It is one of the most recognised business brands in the region and it has a proven track record across the Middle East. Our investment is intended to provide a strong institutional platform for the company's further growth in the region. Investing in AME Info is very much in line with our policy of backing profitable and well managed businesses." He added that although the private equity market in the region remains modest, HSBC is seeing an increasing flow of interesting investment opportunities such as this one.

Klaus Lovgreen, CEO, AME Info commented, "The involvement of HSBC increases our range of opportunities as we now have the support and involvement of one of the world's leading financial institutions as a major shareholder who has extensive experience in the region and is committed to helping us develop further".

AME Info is the 4th investment made by HSBC Private Equity Middle East in the past 9 months.

HSBC Private Equity Middle East Limited is the private equity arm of the HSBC group in the region and is the general partner and investment manager of a US\$118 million fund dedicated to private equity opportunities in the GCC. The fund is the

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largest private equity fund in the GCC and remains the only private equity fund for the region backed by a major international group.

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Notes to Editors

1. AME Info

Founded in 1996, AME Info is the ultimate Middle East business information resource. www.ameinfo.com offers daily updated business and financial news, “the news you choose” news alert service, daily video features, streaming radio, a comprehensive business directory covering 14 Middle East countries, events calendar, business e-mail service and near real-time local stock market updates. The service is used by more than 350,000 companies every month.

For further information please contact: Klaus Lovgreen at klaus@ameinfo.com
For advertising and sponsorship opportunities please contact Lars Nielsen at lars@ameinfo.com

2. HSBC Private Equity Middle East Limited

HSBC Private Equity Middle East Limited is a subsidiary of HSBC Financial Services (Middle East) Limited and benefits from access to the HSBC Group’s extensive investment banking and private equity capabilities. It invests capital provided from both the HSBC Group and its dedicated private equity fund in companies in the region.

3. HSBC Financial Services (Middle East) Limited

HSBC Financial Services (Middle East) Limited is an associate company of HSBC Bank Middle East, and benefits from access to the HSBC Group’s extensive investment banking capabilities. Specialist areas include capital markets, project and export finance, corporate finance, private banking, Islamic banking, private equity and equity brokerage.

4. HSBC Bank Middle East Limited

HSBC is the largest and most widely represented international bank in the Middle East. HSBC Bank Middle East Limited has 29 branches throughout the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, Jordan, Lebanon, and the Palestinian Autonomous Area, including an offshore banking unit in Bahrain. This extensive regional coverage is strengthened by another member of the HSBC Group HSBC Bank Egypt SAE, and by its associated companies, The Saudi British Bank and British Arab Commercial Bank Limited. In addition to its Middle Eastern network, the Bank has a representative office in Tehran, Iran.

5. HSBC Group

HSBC Bank Middle East Limited has been a principal member of the HSBC Group since 1959. Serving over 110 million customers worldwide, the HSBC Group has approximately 9,800 offices in 77 countries and territories in Europe, the Asia-Pacific region, the Americas, the Middle East and Africa. With assets of US\$1,277 billion at 31 December 2004, HSBC is one of the world’s largest banking and financial services organisations. HSBC is marketed worldwide as ‘the world’s local bank’.

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