



中國工商銀行(亞洲)
ICBC (Asia)



華比銀行
Belgian Bank

A wholly-owned subsidiary of ICBC (Asia)

To: Business & Finance Editors

For immediate release

Belgian Bank's China Study Tour Confirms Commitment to Community Education

Hong Kong, 23 August 2004 – Belgian Bank announced the successful completion of its first educational tour to China. The Bank sponsored Hong Kong students and invited customers on a week long visit to Mainland China. The tour, titled “*The World Famous Cities of China – Now and Then*”, was held between 25 July and 1 August 2004 and provided participants with invaluable insights into Beijing, China’s current capital city, and Xian, China’s first capital city. The tour confirms the Bank’s commitment to the ongoing education and development of students in the community, the leaders of tomorrow.

Co-sponsored by The Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Asia) [“ICBC (Asia)”], the parent company of Belgian Bank, the tour was attended by 61 participants, including secondary school students (Form 4 to Form 6), their parents and teachers from selected schools, Belgian Bank customers, as well as representatives from the Bank.

“We are pleased to organize such a learning tour aimed at giving students and customers an in-depth historical and cultural experience of Beijing and Xian,” said Mr. Yu Hong, Chief Executive Officer of Belgian Bank. *“We hope they have all enjoyed a glimpse into China’s past and present, gaining fascinating insights into the country’s rich cultural heritage and modern development.”*

In addition to historical sites in Beijing and Xian, the tour included a visit to the headquarters of Industrial and Commercial Bank of China [ICBC] in Beijing and the city’s Tsinghua University. At ICBC, participants were greeted by the Chairman, Doctor Jiang Jianqing, and learned about the bank’s organization at the same time as seeing banking operations first-hand on-site. At Tsinghua University, they learned about the recent developments in China’s policies, with special emphasis on the economy and technology sectors. There was also an overview provided about the university’s admission policy pertaining to students from Hong Kong and Macau.

Ms. Ho, a customer of the Bank added, “This was my first study tour in the company of mostly students and teachers. I was especially impressed by ICBC’s huge operation in China which certainly reinforces my confidence in the Bank, with whom I have banked for the past few years. Further, it was a privilege to meet Doctor Jiang.”

In Xian, the Hong Kong students had an opportunity to exchange knowledge and experiences with local students from Xian High School on a one-to-one basis. Friendships were established between these students from the two cities during their collaboration in the creation of a large painting to commemorate this special event.

Lee Jun Huen, one of the students, shared that he was moved by the genuine character of the local students. He was impressed by their patriotism and passion towards their own country. Understanding that the local students did not necessarily have ready access to institutes of higher learning, Jun Huen realized how fortunate he was to have this opportunity in Hong Kong. This has inspired him to take his studies more seriously and diligently.

“Belgian Bank prides itself on being an active member of the community and contributing to the education of our next generation of leaders. Our China tour enabled us to further strengthen our relationships with our customers and better understand their ever-changing needs and financial requirements,” concluded Mr. Yu.

A writing and photography competition from the tour has been organized, and the winning entries have already been published.

About Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Asia) Limited

ICBC (Asia) is a full licensed bank incorporated in Hong Kong with its shares listed on The Stock Exchange of Hong Kong Limited (Stock Code: 0349). ICBC (Asia) has 20 branches and one wealth management center in Hong Kong. ICBC (Asia) is principally engaged in banking, financial and financial related services with focus on commercial retail banking business as well as corporate banking business. ICBC (Asia) is the flagship of ICBC Group’s banking business in Hong Kong. ICBC (Asia) became the sixth largest bank (in terms of total assets) among listed banks operating in Hong Kong, after its acquisition of Belgian Bank (formerly Fortis Bank Asia HK). ICBC (Asia) was assigned A2/Prime-1 long-term/short-term deposit ratings and D Bank Financial Strength Rating (BFSR) by Moody’s Investors Service on 16 April 2004.

About Belgian Bank

Belgian Bank, formerly known as Fortis Bank Asia HK, is a wholly-owned subsidiary of ICBC (Asia). Belgian Bank established its first branch in Hong Kong in 1935 and today, it has a network of 22 retail branches and 5 dedicated commercial business centres.

Through its branches in Hong Kong, Belgian Bank provides a wide range of products and services, including general banking, credit card, consumer finance, investment and insurance services. Belgian Bank also puts a strong focus on providing one-stop financial advisory services. Its Personal Banking service offers professional financial planning services to customers through a dedicated team of advisors and investment strategists.

To meet the increasingly sophisticated commercial development and business needs of medium-sized enterprises, Belgian Bank provides a broad spectrum of tailor-made financial solutions which include trade finance services, diamond trade finance, hedging treasury products, factoring, hire purchase/leasing and syndicated loans. Backed by its strong connections in China and Europe, it also offers very convenient cross-border financial solutions to support customers' business expansion in the international market.

- End -