

TRANSLATION



NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The Superintendent of Banks

Pursuant to the provisions of Article 21 of Rule 1-2004 dated 29 December 2004,

ANNOUNCES:

1. That **HSBC BANK (PANAMA), S.A.** and **GRUPO BANISTMO, S.A.** have submitted a request for authorization to carry out a merger by absorption in which **HSBC BANK (PANAMA), S.A.** would be the surviving company;
2. That **HSBC BANK (PANAMA), S.A.** is a corporation established according to the laws of the Republic of Panama, registered in Microjacket 456744, Number 633197 of the Microfilms (Mercantile) Section of the Public Registry of Panama and authorized to engage in the banking business within or from Panama under a General License;
3. That **GRUPO BANISTMO, S.A.** is a corporation established according to the laws of the Republic of Panama and registered in Microjacket 490605, Number 788580 of the Microfilms (Mercantile) Section of the Public Registry of Panama;
4. That **GRUPO BANISTMO, S.A.** is the major shareholder of **PRIMER BANCO DEL ISTMO, S.A.**, a corporation established according to the laws of the Republic of Panama, registered in Microjacket 124625, Roll 12567, Image 0031 of the Microfilms (Mercantile) Section of the Public Registry of Panama and authorized to engage in the banking business within and from Panama under a General License;
5. That as a result of the merger being requested, **HSBC BANK (PANAMA), S.A.** will be the major shareholder of **PRIMER BANCO DEL ISTMO, S.A.** and of **INVERSIONES FINANCIERA BANCOSAL, S.A.**, the holding company for **GRUPO BANISTMO, S.A.**'s banking operations in El Salvador, and of **BANISTMO CAPITAL MARKETS GROUP, INC.**, a corporation established according to the laws of the Republic of Panama, registered in Microjacket 152793, Volume 172, Image 0012 of the Microfilms (Mercantile) Section of the Public Registry of Panama and possessing a trust license to engage in the trust business within or from the Republic of Panama;

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6. That according to the merger plan submitted, a subsequent merger by absorption is contemplated between **HSBC BANK (PANAMA), S.A.** and **PRIMER BANCO DEL ISTMO** in which **HSBC BANK (PANAMA), S.A.** will be the surviving company;
7. That the main Directors, Dignitaries and Executives of **HSBC BANK (PANAMA), S.A.** are:

Name	Position
Alexander Flockhart	Legal Representative/Chairman
Gustavo Hernandez Hernandez	Treasurer
Alan Blair Grieve	Secretary
Joseph Louis Salteiro Ibañez	Executive Vice President and Director
Tony Bloomfield	Director
Matthew John Deakin Charnell	Director
German Osuna Castelan	Director

8. That the main Directors, Dignitaries and Executives of **GRUPO BANISTMO, S.A.** are:

Name	Position
Alexander Flockhart	Legal Representative/Chairman
Alberto Vallarino Clement	Vice Chairman
Joseph Salteiro	Treasurer
Jaime Aleman Healy	Secretary
Jose Raul Arias Garcia de Paredes	Deputy Secretary
Mark Gunton	Director
Matthew Deakin	Director
Ricardo Perez Martinis	Director
Juan Carlos Fabrega Roux	Director

Given in the city of Panama on the twenty-third (23rd) day of February, two thousand seven (2007).

(signed)
Olegario Barrelier
Superintendent

/CN