

## **COMPANY ANNOUNCEMENT**


The following is a company announcement issued by HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c. pursuant to Listing Rules 8.7.4, 8.7.21 and 8.7.23

***Quote:***

In a meeting of 25 July 2008, the Board of Directors of HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c. approved the attached Group and Bank Interim Unaudited Financial Statements for the six-month period ended 30 June 2008. The Board also declared the payment of an ordinary interim dividend of 11.9 euro cents gross per share (7.7 euro cents net of tax).

The Interim Accounts for the period ending 30 June 2008 are available for viewing and download on the Bank's website at [www.hsbc.com.mt](http://www.hsbc.com.mt)

***Unquote***



**Dr. George Brancaleone LL.D.**  
**Company Secretary**

25 July 2008

**HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c.**

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*Registered in Malta number C3177. Registered Office: 233 Republic Street, Valletta VLT 1116  
Regulated by the Malta Financial Services Authority and listed on the Malta Stock Exchange.  
Licensed to conduct Investment Services business by the Malta Financial Services Authority.*

25 July 2008

## **HSBC BANK MALTA p.l.c. FIRST HALF 2008 RESULTS - HIGHLIGHTS**

*The condensed financial statements have been extracted from HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c.'s unaudited group management accounts for the six months period ended 30 June 2008. The condensed financial statements are prepared in accordance with accounting standards adopted for use in the EU for interim financial statements (adopted IAS 34 'Interim Financial Reporting'). The half-yearly results are being published in terms of Chapters 8 and 9 of the Listing Rules of the Listing Authority - Malta Financial Services Authority and the Prevention of Financial Markets Abuse Act 2005.*

*These condensed financial statements have been drawn up in accordance with the accounting policies used in the preparation of the annual audited accounts, except for a change in the basis of accounting for share-based payments, in the case where a subsidiary grants rights to equity instruments of its parent to its employees following the implementation of IFRIC 11 "IFRS 2: Group and Treasury Share Transactions". IFRIC 11 requires equity-settled transactions to be accounted for as a contribution from the parent. This change has been applied retrospectively and comparative figures have been restated accordingly. Related party transactions with other members of the HSBC Group were at a similar level to the comparable period.*

*Figures are presented in euro, the functional currency of HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c. from 1 January 2008. Comparative amounts are also presented in euro.*

### **Review of Performance**

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- Profit before tax of €46.6 million for the six months ended 30 June 2008 – down €12.4 million, or 21.1 per cent, compared with €59.0 million for the same period in 2007.
- Profit attributable to shareholders down 23.1 per cent, or €9.0 million, to €30.1 million, compared with €39.1 million over the comparable period in 2007.
- Earnings per share at 10.3 euro cents, compared to 13.4 euro cents for the same period in 2007.
- Loans and advances to customers of €2,968.9 million at 30 June 2008 – up €146.6 million, or 5.2 per cent, compared with 31 December 2007.
- Core customer deposits of €3,394.5 million at 30 June 2008 – up €18.8 million, compared with 31 December 2007.
- Total assets of €5,100.8 million, up €205.8 million, or 4.2 per cent, compared with 31 December 2007. Total liabilities of €4,828.0 million, up €209.2 million, or 4.5 per cent, compared with 31 December 2007.
- Annualised return on capital employed of 22.0 per cent for the six months ended 30 June 2008, compared to 27.6 per cent in the first half of 2007.



**Commentary by Alan Richards, Director and Chief Executive Officer, HSBC Bank Malta:**

“The first half of 2008 has been challenging and profit before tax for the six months ended 30 June 2008 of €46.6 million is disappointing. This result represents a decline of 21.1 per cent in profit before tax, compared to the same period last year. The prior period did however include significantly stronger revenue flows from pre euro conversion foreign exchange and investment dealing activities. Overall profitability remains strong with a return on equity of 22.0 per cent.

“Increases in loans and advances generated a steady growth in interest receivable. This was off-set by the increase in interest payable on retail deposits and margin compression from heightened competition and euro conversion. Net interest income of €60.8 million represents a decline of 3.9 per cent compared to €63.3 million during the prior year period, which included a significant recovery from previously non-performing loans.

“Fees and commission income of €15.5 million was in line with the first half of 2007, despite reduced levels of business activity during the first quarter of 2008 due to Malta’s adoption of the euro on 1 January 2008 and the general elections. Adopting the euro also affected foreign exchange dealing income which, at €3.7 million, was significantly lower than the €8.5 million earned in the six months to 30 June 2007. Life insurance business generated a profit before tax of €6.4 million, up 5.6 per cent on the same period of the previous year.

“Operating expenses of €42.0 million are 6.1 per cent higher compared to the same period in 2007 with a cost efficiency ratio of 47.2 per cent compared to 40.1 per cent for the same period in 2007. Expense growth in the first half was primarily driven by non-recurring costs related to the euro conversion, increased staff costs and information technology investment.

“The quality of the overall loan book remains good, with loans and advances to customers continuing to increase. There was no deterioration in the quality of credit lending.

“The available-for-sale investments portfolio was marked-down by €7.7 million at the close of the period. The mark-down was charged to revaluation reserve, net of tax effect.

“The bank is financially sound, liquid and has a conservative balance sheet policy with relatively low reliance on funding from the wholesale markets, and minimal investment in corporate securities.

“Whilst local market conditions are likely to be increasingly challenging, HSBC Bank Malta is well placed to support future business growth.”

The Board is declaring an interim gross dividend of 11.9 euro cents per share (7.7 euro cents net of tax). This will be paid on 22 August 2008 to shareholders who are on the bank’s register of shareholders as at 6 August 2008.

*HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c. is a member of the HSBC Group, whose ultimate parent company is HSBC Holdings plc. Headquartered in London, HSBC Holdings plc is one of the largest banking and financial services organisations in the world. The HSBC Group’s international network comprises over 10,000 offices in 83 countries and territories in Europe, the Asia-Pacific region, the Americas, the Middle East and Africa.*

## Income Statements for the period 1 January 2008 to 30 June 2008

	<i>Group</i>		<i>Bank</i>	
	<b>6 mths to 30/06/08</b>	6 mths to 30/06/07	<b>6 mths to 30/06/08</b>	6 mths to 30/06/07
	€000	€000	€000	€000
Interest receivable and similar income				
– on loans and advances, balances with Central Bank of Malta, Treasury Bills and derivatives	<b>111,617</b>	106,820	<b>111,615</b>	106,825
– on debt and other fixed income instruments	<b>11,116</b>	8,479	<b>11,116</b>	8,479
Interest payable	<b>(61,930)</b>	(52,026)	<b>(63,175)</b>	(52,586)
<b>Net interest income</b>	<b>60,803</b>	63,273	<b>59,556</b>	62,718
Fees and commissions receivable	<b>16,855</b>	16,732	<b>13,384</b>	13,261
Fees and commissions payable	<b>(1,347)</b>	(1,109)	<b>(929)</b>	(766)
<b>Net fee and commission income</b>	<b>15,508</b>	15,623	<b>12,455</b>	12,495
Dividend income	<b>69</b>	203	<b>427</b>	382
Trading profits	<b>3,744</b>	8,451	<b>3,744</b>	8,451
Net income from insurance financial instruments designated at fair value through profit or loss	<b>(14,397)</b>	696	-	-
Net gains on sale of available-for-sale financial assets	<b>1,048</b>	2,982	<b>986</b>	2,982
Net earned insurance premiums	<b>32,621</b>	31,065	-	-
Other operating income	<b>18,808</b>	7,260	<b>165</b>	277
<b>Total operating income</b>	<b>118,204</b>	129,553	<b>77,333</b>	87,305
Net insurance claims incurred and movement in policyholders' liabilities	<b>(29,217)</b>	(30,911)	-	-
<b>Net operating income</b>	<b>88,987</b>	98,642	<b>77,333</b>	87,305
Employee compensation and benefits	<b>(24,466)</b>	(23,995)	<b>(23,200)</b>	(22,908)
General and administrative expenses	<b>(14,028)</b>	(12,089)	<b>(13,170)</b>	(11,309)
Depreciation	<b>(2,907)</b>	(3,047)	<b>(2,890)</b>	(3,033)
Amortisation of intangible assets	<b>(622)</b>	(464)	<b>(467)</b>	(336)
<b>Net operating income before impairment reversals and provisions</b>	<b>46,964</b>	59,047	<b>37,606</b>	49,719
Net impairment (provisions)/reversals	<b>(583)</b>	58	<b>(583)</b>	58
Reversals/(provisions) for liabilities and other charges	<b>169</b>	(142)	<b>182</b>	<b>(142)</b>
<b>Profit before tax</b>	<b>46,550</b>	58,963	<b>37,205</b>	49,635
Tax expense	<b>(16,494)</b>	(19,903)	<b>(13,223)</b>	(16,630)
<b>Profit attributable to shareholders of the bank</b>	<b>30,056</b>	39,060	<b>23,982</b>	33,005
<b>Earnings per share</b>	<b>10.3c</b>	13.4c	<b>8.2c</b>	11.3c



## Balance Sheets at 30 June 2008

	<i>Group</i>		<i>Bank</i>	
	<b>30/06/08</b>	31/12/07	<b>30/06/08</b>	31/12/07
	€000	€000	€000	€000
<b>Assets</b>				
Balances with Central Bank of Malta,				
Treasury Bills and cash	<b>217,551</b>	472,136	<b>217,550</b>	472,136
Cheques in course of collection	<b>9,945</b>	3,103	<b>9,945</b>	3,103
Financial assets held for trading	<b>11,067</b>	15,980	<b>11,067</b>	15,980
Financial assets designated at fair value through profit or loss	<b>282,497</b>	275,695	-	-
Financial investments	<b>449,958</b>	456,525	<b>447,892</b>	452,008
Loans and advances to banks	<b>917,609</b>	631,018	<b>917,503</b>	630,936
Loans and advances to customers	<b>2,968,892</b>	2,822,315	<b>2,968,917</b>	2,822,315
Shares in subsidiary companies	-	-	<b>29,541</b>	29,541
Intangible assets	<b>55,296</b>	36,110	<b>2,123</b>	1,363
Property and equipment	<b>72,702</b>	77,820	<b>72,757</b>	77,857
Investment property	<b>12,885</b>	12,885	<b>10,482</b>	10,482
Assets held for sale	<b>9,660</b>	11,922	<b>9,809</b>	12,071
Current tax recoverable	<b>2,269</b>	2,596	<b>1,663</b>	1,887
Deferred tax assets	<b>13,019</b>	11,553	<b>13,013</b>	11,548
Other assets	<b>30,940</b>	25,855	<b>10,101</b>	8,938
Prepayments and accrued income	<b>46,559</b>	39,576	<b>42,584</b>	36,571
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>5,100,849</b>	4,895,089	<b>4,764,947</b>	4,586,736
<b>Liabilities</b>				
Financial liabilities held for trading	<b>10,068</b>	15,043	<b>10,166</b>	15,239
Amounts owed to banks	<b>312,279</b>	87,142	<b>312,279</b>	87,142
Amounts owed to customers	<b>3,990,681</b>	4,039,492	<b>4,065,057</b>	4,107,994
Provision for current tax	<b>13,352</b>	11,043	<b>5,778</b>	4,294
Deferred tax liabilities	<b>14,579</b>	12,361	-	-
Liabilities to customers under investment contracts	<b>17,641</b>	18,947	-	-
Liabilities under insurance contracts issued	<b>316,210</b>	290,943	-	-
Other liabilities	<b>37,035</b>	32,303	<b>33,811</b>	29,294
Accruals and deferred income	<b>57,895</b>	53,147	<b>57,021</b>	52,374
Provisions for liabilities and other charges	<b>245</b>	414	<b>198</b>	380
Subordinated liabilities	<b>57,977</b>	57,962	<b>57,977</b>	57,962
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>4,827,962</b>	4,618,797	<b>4,542,287</b>	4,354,679
<b>Equity</b>				
Called up share capital	<b>87,552</b>	84,976	<b>87,552</b>	84,976
Revaluation and other reserves	<b>16,895</b>	24,614	<b>17,167</b>	24,764
Retained earnings	<b>168,440</b>	166,702	<b>117,941</b>	122,317
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>272,887</b>	276,292	<b>222,660</b>	232,057
<b>Total liabilities and equity</b>	<b>5,100,849</b>	4,895,089	<b>4,764,947</b>	4,586,736
<b>Memorandum items</b>				
Contingent liabilities	<b>134,356</b>	129,972	<b>134,379</b>	129,995
Commitments	<b>1,182,019</b>	1,148,034	<b>1,182,019</b>	1,148,034

The condensed interim financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors on 25 July 2008 and signed on its behalf by:

Albert Mizzi, *Chairman*

Alan Richards, *Chief Executive Officer*

**Statements of Changes in Equity for the period 1 January 2008 to 30 June 2008**

	<i>Called up share capital</i>	<i>Revaluation and other reserves</i>	<i>Retained earnings</i>	<i>Total equity</i>
	<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>
<i>Group</i>				
At 1 January 2007 as previously stated	84,976	25,323	184,062	294,361
Impact of adoption of IFRIC 11	-	(575)	189	(386)
At 1 January 2007 as restated	84,976	24,748	184,251	293,975
Release of net gains on available-for-sale assets transferred to the income statement on disposal	-	(1,442)	(491)	(1,933)
Net fair value adjustments on financial investments	-	(2,499)	-	(2,499)
Income and expenses recognised directly in equity	-	(3,941)	(491)	(4,432)
Profit for the period	-	-	39,060	39,060
Share-based payments	-	-	248	248
Dividends	-	-	(46,839)	(46,839)
At 30 June 2007	84,976	20,807	176,229	282,012
At 1 January 2008	<b>84,976</b>	<b>24,614</b>	<b>166,702</b>	<b>276,292</b>
Release of net gains on available-for-sale assets transferred to the income statement on disposal	-	(703)	-	(703)
Net fair value adjustments on financial investments	-	(5,014)	-	(5,014)
Release of revaluation reserve on disposal of properties	-	(2,002)	2,002	-
Income and expenses recognised directly in equity	-	(7,719)	2,002	(5,717)
Increase in nominal value of paid-up share capital	2,576	-	(2,576)	-
Profit for the period	-	-	30,056	30,056
Share-based payments	-	-	331	331
Dividends	-	-	(28,075)	(28,075)
At 30 June 2008	<b>87,552</b>	<b>16,895</b>	<b>168,440</b>	<b>272,887</b>

**Statements of Changes in Equity for the period 1 January 2008 to 3 June 2008 (continued)**

	<i>Called up share capital</i>	<i>Revaluation and other reserves</i>	<i>Retained earnings</i>	<i>Total equity</i>
	<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>	<b>€000</b>
<i>Bank</i>				
At 1 January 2007 as previously stated	84,976	25,288	145,083	255,347
Impact of adoption of IFRIC 11	-	(540)	179	(361)
At 1 January 2007 as restated	84,976	24,748	145,262	254,986
Release of net gains on available-for-sale assets transferred to the income statement on disposal	-	(1,442)	(491)	(1,933)
Net fair value adjustments on financial investments	-	(2,481)	-	(2,481)
Income and expenses recognised directly in equity	-	(3,923)	(491)	(4,414)
Profit for the period	-	-	33,005	33,005
Share-based payments	-	-	243	243
Dividends	-	-	(46,839)	(46,839)
At 30 June 2007	84,976	20,825	131,180	236,981
At 1 January 2008	<b>84,976</b>	<b>24,764</b>	<b>122,317</b>	<b>232,057</b>
Release of net gains on available-for-sale assets transferred to the income statement on disposal	-	(641)	-	(641)
Net fair value adjustments on financial investments	-	(4,954)	-	(4,954)
Release of revaluation reserve on disposal of properties	-	(2,002)	2,002	-
Income and expenses recognised directly in equity	-	(7,597)	2,002	(5,595)
Increase in nominal value of paid-up share capital	2,576	-	(2,576)	-
Profit for the period	-	-	23,982	23,982
Share-based payments	-	-	291	291
Dividends	-	-	(28,075)	(28,075)
At 30 June 2008	<b>87,552</b>	<b>17,167</b>	<b>117,941</b>	<b>222,660</b>



## Cash Flow Statements for the period 1 January 2008 to 30 June 2008

	<i>Group</i>		<i>Bank</i>	
	<b>6 mths to 30/06/08</b>	6 mths to 30/06/07	<b>6 mths to 30/06/08</b>	6 mths to 30/06/07
	<b>€000</b>	€000	<b>€000</b>	€000
<b>Cash flows used in operating activities</b>				
Interest, commission and premium receipts	<b>158,388</b>	162,290	<b>121,328</b>	126,900
Interest, commission and claims payments	<b>(61,727)</b>	(51,875)	<b>(55,233)</b>	(44,370)
Payments to employees and suppliers	<b>(41,720)</b>	(36,422)	<b>(39,354)</b>	(34,536)
Operating profit before changes in operating assets/liabilities	<b>54,941</b>	73,993	<b>26,741</b>	47,994
(Increase)/decrease in operating assets:				
Trading instruments	<b>(22,287)</b>	(15,365)	<b>(19)</b>	(1,596)
Reserve deposit with Central Bank of Malta	<b>63,891</b>	18,155	<b>63,891</b>	18,155
Loans and advances to customers and banks	<b>(365,607)</b>	(112,511)	<b>(365,633)</b>	(112,511)
Treasury bills	<b>5,236</b>	(87,515)	<b>5,236</b>	(87,515)
Other receivables	<b>(7,398)</b>	(4,808)	<b>(6,675)</b>	(5,027)
Increase/(decrease) in operating liabilities:				
Customer accounts and amounts owed to Banks	<b>(45,183)</b>	94,316	<b>(39,407)</b>	103,436
Other payables	<b>1,545</b>	15,610	<b>3,186</b>	16,577
Net cash used in operating activities before tax	<b>(314,862)</b>	(18,125)	<b>(312,680)</b>	(20,487)
Tax paid	<b>(9,998)</b>	(4,111)	<b>(10,057)</b>	(4,242)
Net cash used in operating activities	<b>(324,860)</b>	(22,236)	<b>(322,737)</b>	(24,729)
<b>Cash flows from/(used in) investing activities</b>				
Dividends received	<b>55</b>	147	<b>282</b>	263
Interest received from financial investments	<b>11,424</b>	8,097	<b>11,424</b>	8,097
Proceeds from sale and maturity of financial investments	<b>26,118</b>	151,481	<b>23,726</b>	151,481
Proceeds on sale of property and equipment and intangible assets	<b>4,291</b>	56	<b>4,285</b>	56
Purchase of financial investments	<b>(33,123)</b>	(230,254)	<b>(33,115)</b>	(227,925)
Purchase of property and equipment, and intangible assets	<b>(3,126)</b>	(1,966)	<b>(3,111)</b>	(1,876)
Net cash from/(used in) investing activities	<b>5,639</b>	(72,439)	<b>3,491</b>	(69,904)
<b>Cash flows (used in)/from financing activities</b>				
Dividends paid	<b>(28,075)</b>	(46,839)	<b>(28,075)</b>	(46,839)
Issue of subordinated loan stock	<b>-</b>	58,234	<b>-</b>	58,234
Net cash (used in)/from financing activities	<b>(28,075)</b>	11,395	<b>(28,075)</b>	11,395
<b>Decrease in cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>(347,296)</b>	(83,280)	<b>(347,321)</b>	(83,238)
Effect of exchange rate changes on cash and cash equivalents	<b>(23,295)</b>	(4,063)	<b>(23,295)</b>	(4,063)
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents	<b>(324,001)</b>	(79,217)	<b>(324,026)</b>	(79,175)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of period	<b>(347,296)</b>	(83,280)	<b>(347,321)</b>	(83,238)
	<b>604,205</b>	369,315	<b>604,122</b>	369,273
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of period</b>	<b>256,909</b>	286,035	<b>256,801</b>	286,035



## Segmental Information

### a Class of business

	<i>Personal Financial Services</i>		<i>Commercial Banking</i>		<i>Global Banking and Markets</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<b>6 mths to 30/06/08</b>	6 mths to 30/06/07	<b>6 mths to 30/06/08</b>	6 mths to 30/06/07	<b>6 mths to 30/06/08</b>	6 mths to 30/06/07	<b>6 mths to 30/06/08</b>	6 mths to 30/06/07
	€000	€000	€000	€000	€000	€000	€000	€000
<i>Group</i>								
<b>Profit before tax</b>								
Segment operating income	<b>46,155</b>	48,309	<b>32,692</b>	35,993	<b>10,140</b>	14,340	<b>88,987</b>	98,642
Segment impairment allowances	<b>(146)</b>	(536)	<b>(437)</b>	594	-	-	<b>(583)</b>	58
Common costs							<b>(41,854)</b>	(39,737)
<b>Profit before tax</b>							<b>46,550</b>	58,963
	<b>30/06/08</b>	31/12/07	<b>30/06/08</b>	31/12/07	<b>30/06/08</b>	31/12/07	<b>30/06/08</b>	31/12/07
	€000	€000	€000	€000	€000	€000	€000	€000
<b>Assets</b>								
Segment total assets	<b>1,893,297</b>	1,786,452	<b>1,602,865</b>	1,549,844	<b>1,604,687</b>	1,558,793	<b>5,100,849</b>	4,895,089
Average total assets	<b>1,840,773</b>	1,685,162	<b>1,570,583</b>	1,527,964	<b>1,580,714</b>	1,425,844	<b>4,992,070</b>	4,638,970
Total equity	<b>104,615</b>	104,295	<b>147,349</b>	147,468	<b>20,923</b>	24,529	<b>272,887</b>	276,292

### b Geographical segments

The group's activities are carried out within Malta. There are no identifiable geographical segments or other material concentrations.

### Statement pursuant to Listing Rule 9.44k.3 issued by the Listing Authority

I confirm that to the best of my knowledge:

- the condensed interim financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30 June 2008, financial performance and cash flows for the period then ended, in accordance with accounting standards adopted for use in the EU for interim financial statements (adopted IAS 34 'Interim Financial Reporting'); and
- the commentary includes a fair review of the information required in terms of Listing Rule 9.44k.2.

Alan Richards, *Chief Executive Officer*