

For Immediate Release**BEA Named Winner of the 2009 Best SME's Partner Award**

Hong Kong, 18th May, 2009 – The Bank of East Asia (“BEA”) today announces that it has won the 2009 Best SME’s Partner Award organised by The Hong Kong Chamber of Small and Medium Business Ltd. (“HKCSMB”), a non-profit organisation established to represent and protect the interests of small and medium-sized enterprises (“SMEs”) in Hong Kong.

BEA has been chosen as the award winner for the second consecutive year in recognition of its dedication to SMEs in Hong Kong. Mr. William Chu, General Manager & Head of Corporate Banking Division, accepted the award on behalf of the Bank at the “13th Anniversary of HKCSMB and 2009 Awards Ceremony of the Best SME Awards” held at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre earlier.

“SMEs are an essential component of our local economy,” says Mr. Chu. “We at BEA recognise the importance of SMEs, and we have always been committed to helping them grow and prosper through the provision of comprehensive banking services. We are truly honoured to receive this recognition from the industry, and we shall continue to dedicate ourselves to helping local SMEs achieve their business goals,” he adds.

BEA designs flexible, tailor-made packages for its business clients based on individual requirements and financial objectives. BEA’s comprehensive commercial banking services include trade finance, machinery finance, electronic banking, MPF, and general insurance services. For more information on BEA’s corporate banking services, please call (852) 2211 1338 or visit any BEA branch.

About The Bank of East Asia

Incorporated in Hong Kong in 1918, BEA is dedicated to providing comprehensive retail and commercial banking services to its customers in Hong Kong, Greater China, and overseas. BEA is the largest independent local bank in Hong Kong, with total consolidated assets of HK\$415.3 billion (US\$53.58 billion) as of 31st December, 2008. The Bank is listed on the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong and is one of the constituent stocks of the Hang Seng Index.



With more than 240 outlets worldwide, BEA operates an extensive international network covering Hong Kong and Greater China, the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, the British Virgin Islands, and Southeast Asia. For more information on BEA, please visit any BEA branch or the Bank's homepage at www.hkbea.com.

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BEA – Serving customers through one of Hong Kong's largest banking networks, with over 130 branches and SupremeGold Centres around town



Caption:

Pictured at the award ceremony were: Miss Yvonne Choi Ying-pik, JP, Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Commerce, Industry and Tourism) (*left*) and Mr. William Chu, General Manager & Head of Corporate Banking Division of The Bank of East Asia.