

For Immediate Release

**The Bank of East Asia Obtains Approval to Offer
Foreign Currency Services to Local Customers in Shanghai**

Hong Kong, 26 March 2002 – The Bank of East Asia (BEA) today announced that, apart from Guangzhou and Zhuhai branches, it has also obtained official approval from the People's Bank of China to offer foreign currency services to all types of customers, including local enterprises and local residents, in Shanghai. In addition, BEA's Shanghai Branch has a licence to operate limited Renminbi services in China.

Currently BEA has seven branches, located in Shanghai Pudong, Shenzhen, Guangzhou, Xiamen, Zhuhai, Dalian and Xi'an respectively, and one sub-branch in Shanghai Puxi in Mainland China. BEA maintains one of the most extensive branch networks among all foreign banks in China. All the seven branches of BEA have already submitted applications to the People's Bank of China to increase their capital for expanding the foreign currency business. It is expected that the other four branches of BEA will obtain approval to conduct full foreign currency business very soon.

While BEA's Shanghai and Shenzhen branches will continue to operate limited Renminbi business in China, its Dalian branch has also submitted an application to participate in this business.

- End -

For further information, please contact:

Mr. Chan Kay-cheung
Executive Director and Deputy Chief Executive
The Bank of East Asia

Tel: (852) 2842 3203