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BEA 東亞銀行

The Bank of East Asia, Limited

(Incorporated in Hong Kong with limited liability in 1918)
(Stock Code: 23)

Executive Director:

Dr. The Hon. Sir David LI Kwok-po (*Chairman & Chief Executive*)

Registered Office:

10 Des Voeux Road Central
Hong Kong

Non-executive Directors:

Professor Arthur LI Kwok-cheung (*Deputy Chairman*)

Mr. Aubrey LI Kwok-sing

Dr. William MONG Man-wai

Tan Sri Dr. KHOO Kay-peng

Mr. Richard LI Tzar-kai

Mr. Eric LI Fook-chuen

Mr. Stephen Charles LI Kwok-sze

Dr. Isidro FAINÉ CASAS

Independent Non-executive Directors:

Dr. Allan WONG Chi-yun (*Deputy Chairman*)

Mr. WONG Chung-hin

Dr. LEE Shau-kee

Mr. Winston LO Yau-lai

Mr. Thomas KWOK Ping-kwong

Mr. Kenneth LO Chin-ming

Mr. William DOO Wai-hoi

Mr. KUOK Khoon-ean

Mr. Valiant CHEUNG Kin-piu

31st March, 2010

Dear Shareholder,

2009 FINAL SCRIP DIVIDEND SCHEME

1. Particulars of the Scrip Dividend Scheme

On 11th February, 2010 the Board of Directors of The Bank of East Asia, Limited (the "Bank") (the "Directors") declared a final dividend of HK\$0.48 per share for the year 2009 in cash and that any shareholder of the Bank

(the "Shareholder") entitled to receive such dividend would be given the option to elect to receive new, fully paid shares in lieu of cash ("Scrip Dividend Scheme"). The dividend will be paid on or about Friday, 23rd April, 2010 to Shareholders whose names were on the Register of Members of the Bank (the "Register of Members") at the close of business on Wednesday, 31st March, 2010.

Shareholders thus have the choice of receiving:

- (a) cash of HK\$0.48 in respect of each share; or
- (b) an allotment of shares of HK\$2.50 each credited as fully paid ("New Shares") having a market value (as set out below) equal to the amount of dividend which Shareholders could elect to receive in cash; or
- (c) partly cash and partly New Shares.

For the purpose of calculating the number of New Shares to be allotted, the market value of the New Shares means the average closing price on The Stock Exchange of Hong Kong Limited (the "Stock Exchange") of the shares of the Bank from Tuesday, 30th March, 2010 to Thursday, 8th April, 2010. The exact number of New Shares to which a Shareholder electing to receive New Shares in lieu of cash will be entitled may only be determined after the close of business on 8th April, 2010. The basis of allotment of the New Shares will be published on the website of Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited and the Bank's own website after the close of business on Thursday, 8th April, 2010.

Fractional entitlements to the New Shares in respect of choices (b) and (c) above will be refunded in cash to the respective Shareholders concerned. The New Shares will, on issue, not be entitled to the final dividend in respect of the financial year ended 31st December, 2009, but will rank *pari passu* in all other respects with the existing shares. The dividend warrants and the share certificates for the New Shares will be sent to Shareholders by ordinary mail at their own risk on or about Friday, 23rd April, 2010 and the first day of dealings in the New Shares will be on or about Friday, 23rd April, 2010.

The Scrip Dividend Scheme will give Shareholders an opportunity to increase their investment in the Bank at market value without incurring brokerage fees, stamp duty and related dealing costs. It will also benefit the Bank to the extent that such cash which would otherwise have been paid to Shareholders who elect to receive the New Shares, in whole or in part in lieu of cash dividend, will be retained for use as working capital by the Bank.

2. Book Closure Period and Last Date of Transfer

For the purpose of determining Shareholders who qualify for the final dividend, the Register of Members was closed on Tuesday, 30th March, 2010 and Wednesday, 31st March, 2010. The last date on which transfers were accepted for registration for participation in the Scrip Dividend Scheme was 29th March, 2010 (at 4:00 p.m.).

3. Conditions of Scrip Dividend Scheme

The Scrip Dividend Scheme is conditional upon the passing of the relevant resolution at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting and the Listing Committee of the Stock Exchange granting the listing of and permission to deal in the New Shares.

4. Stock Exchange Listing

Application has been made to the Listing Committee of the Stock Exchange for a listing of and permission to deal in the New Shares. The US\$550 million 5.625% Subordinated Notes due 2015 (Code: 2532) issued by the Bank in December 2005 are listed on the Stock Exchange; the £300 million 6.125% Step-up Perpetual Subordinated Notes issued by the Bank in March 2007 and the US\$600 million Floating Rate Step-up Subordinated Notes due 2017 issued by the Bank in June 2007 are listed on the Singapore Exchange Securities Trading Limited. The Hybrid Tier 1 Capital Instruments with a face value of US\$500 million which comprise 8.5% step-up subordinated notes due 2059 issued by the Bank in November 2009 stapled with perpetual non-

cumulative step-up preference shares of no par value issued by Innovate Holdings Limited, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Bank, are listed on the Singapore Exchange Securities Trading Limited. Save as disclosed, no part of the shares or other debt securities of the Bank is listed or dealt in on any stock exchange other than the Stock Exchange.

5. Central Clearing and Settlement System

Shares issued by the Bank have been admitted as eligible securities for deposit and settlement in Central Clearing and Settlement System ("CCASS") established and operated by Hong Kong Securities Clearing Company Limited. Dealings in the shares of the Bank may be settled through CCASS. Investors should seek the advice of their stockbroker or other professional adviser for details of these settlement arrangements and how such arrangements will affect their rights and interests.

6. Form of Election

A Form of Election is enclosed (see *Note*) with this letter for use by Shareholders who wish to receive the final dividend in New Shares or to make a permanent election to receive shares in lieu of any future dividends to be payable in cash with a scrip alternative. Please complete and return the enclosed Form of Election to reach Tricor Standard Limited, 26th Floor, Tesbury Centre, 28 Queen's Road East, Hong Kong, **by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, 16th April, 2010.**

*Note: The Form of Election has not been enclosed for the Shareholders who have previously elected to receive their dividends in scrip or in cash permanently. If you wish to change the permanent election, please inform Tricor Standard Limited by notice in writing **by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, 16th April, 2010.***

If you wish to receive your dividend in cash in respect of the current final dividend, you need take no action. Shareholders who do not make an election to receive their dividend in scrip will receive the dividend in cash.

If you wish to receive New Shares in lieu of cash dividend, or partly cash and partly New Shares, in respect of the current final dividend, you should complete Box D and fill in the number of registered shares for which you wish your dividend to be paid in shares.

If you wish to receive New Shares in lieu of cash dividend in respect of the current final dividend and all future dividends permanently, you should enter a (✓) in Box E. A permanent election cannot be made in respect of part of your registered shares.

If you wish to receive all future dividends in cash permanently, you should sign the section on Permanent Receipt of Cash Dividend on the reverse side of the Form of Election.

7. Shareholders Resident Outside Hong Kong

All Shareholders resident outside Hong Kong should consult their bankers or other professional advisers as to whether any governmental or other consents are required or other formalities need to be observed to enable them to participate in the Scrip Dividend Scheme. Such Shareholders receiving a copy of this document and/or a Form of Election outside Hong Kong may not treat the same as an invitation to participate in the Scrip Dividend Scheme unless such invitation could lawfully be made to him without having to comply with any registration or other legal requirements in the relevant territory.

The Bank has made enquiries regarding the feasibility of extending the Scrip Dividend Scheme to Shareholders with registered addresses in the United States of America. Since registration or filing or other procedure will need to be carried out in relation to the Scrip Dividend Scheme to comply with the relevant securities legislation in this country, the Directors have formed the view that it is not expedient to make available the Scrip Dividend Scheme to Shareholders whose registered addresses are in the United States of America or any of its territories

or possessions. Therefore, such Shareholders will not be permitted to participate in the Scrip Dividend Scheme. Such Shareholders will receive the 2009 final dividend wholly in cash and no Form of Election will be sent to such Shareholders. Apart from Shareholders in the United States of America, according to the Register of Members, there are some other Shareholders whose registered addresses are outside Hong Kong. Such Shareholders are allowed to participate in the Scrip Dividend Scheme.

Yours faithfully,

Alson LAW Chun-tak

Company Secretary

This Document in both English and Chinese is now available in printed form and on the website of the Bank at <http://www.hkbea.com>.

Shareholders are encouraged to rely on the website version to help reduce the quantity of printed copies of Corporate Communications and hence the impact on the environment. In this connection, Shareholders are requested to send a notice in writing to the Bank's Registrars, Tricor Standard Limited, at 26th Floor, Tesbury Centre, 28 Queen's Road East, Hong Kong or by fax to (852) 2861 1465.