



Dominic Bruynseels appointed CEO of Banca Comercială Română

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Experienced retail and commercial banker joins BCR from Barclays Bank

Erste Bank der oesterreichischen Sparkassen AG (Erste Bank) announces that the Supervisory Board of Banca Comercială Română (BCR) has appointed Dominic Bruynseels (48) as Chief Executive Officer of BCR. In line with the plans announced when Manfred Wimmer took over as interim CEO of BCR in December 2007, the appointment of Mr. Bruynseels as new CEO follows the completion of the Integration and Development Program of BCR in April 2008 - within the planned 12-18 month schedule.

An internationally experienced banker, Mr. Bruynseels joins BCR after a 27 year career with Barclays Bank. Most recently, he worked as Senior Executive Director of Barclays Global Retail and Commercial Banking Emerging Markets division based in Dubai. Dominic Bruynseels gained his extensive professional experience through a variety of UK-based branch, regional and head office roles as well as international positions. During the latter part of his 17-year career in the UK business of Barclays, Mr. Bruynseels was responsible, among others, for the financial and network and operations planning and development of the integrated delivery channel strategy of Barclays Bank in the UK. From 1997-99, Mr. Bruynseels served as Finance Director for Barclays Africa, Caribbean, Middle East and Latin American business, becoming the chief executive officer of Barclays Africa and the Middle East in 1999, responsible for the 12 operations across the region. From 2005-07 he played a leadership role in the acquisition and integration into Barclays of Absa, the leading South African Bank, serving on both the Absa Executive Committee and Board.

"Dominic Bruynseels is a highly regarded and experienced banker, who has served one of the most prestigious banking groups in the world for almost 30 years. Previously active in an emerging markets environment, Mr. Bruynseels has an impressive track record of building a group of retail banks with modern retail and commercial banking practices as well as first class customer service. We believe he is an ideal choice for CEO, and that BCR and the Erste Group as a whole will benefit in particular from his forward thinking and sound execution", said Andreas Treichl President of the BCR Supervisory Board.

"Romania is a key market for Erste Bank and I am honored to have been appointed as CEO of BCR. I have been impressed by the people I have met at Erste Bank and BCR as well as by the excellent position the bank has in the market. I am looking forward to joining the board and the exciting challenge of building further on the solid foundations laid by my predecessors", Mr. Bruynseels stated, on the occasion of the announcement.

Manfred Wimmer (52), who has managed the integration of BCR into the Erste Bank Group in a highly professional manner, while at the same time ensuring growth of BCR's business and delivery on its financial targets, will return to the Erste Bank headquarters in the second half of 2008, in order to take up a senior position within the Group.

Dominic Bruynseels' appointment requires the approval of the National Bank of Romania, subject to which, he will officially take over as CEO on July 1, 2008. Until then, Mr. Bruynseels will join BCR as advisor to the Board, starting May 1, 2008 and will work closely with the current CEO in order to ensure a smooth hand-over.