

22 July 2005

The following is the text of an advertisement which is to be published in the press in Malta on 23 July 2005 by HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c., a 70.03 per cent indirectly-held subsidiary of HSBC Holdings plc.

**HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c.
Half-Yearly Results for 2005**

Review of Performance

The published figures, which have been prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards for interim financial statements (IAS 34 'Interim Financial Reporting'), have been extracted from HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c.'s unaudited group management accounts for the six months ended 30 June 2005. 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. These figures have been drawn up according to the accounting policies used in the preparation of the annual audited accounts, except for a change in the basis of accounting for investments in subsidiary companies, which were previously measured to fair value with revaluation adjustments recognised through revaluation reserves. In order to align its policies with those of its ultimate parent company, HSBC Holdings plc, HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c. now measures its investment in subsidiary companies at cost.

The published figures also take into account revisions arising from the IAS Improvements project, as well as the adoption of the new series of International Financial Reporting Standards ('IFRS'). The revised standards that had a significant effect on the group's financial statements include IAS 10 'Events after the Balance Sheet Date' and IAS 27 'Consolidated and Separate Financial Statements', and together with the newly adopted IFRS 2 'Share-based Payment', these standards have been applied retrospectively. Comparative figures have therefore been restated accordingly. The group adopted IFRS 4 'Insurance Contracts' from 1 January 2005.

Under IAS 10 as revised, dividends declared after the balance sheet date are no longer recognised in reserves at the balance sheet date.

IAS 27 now requires that all subsidiaries be consolidated on a line-by-line basis. Accordingly, the revenues, costs and third party assets of HSBC Life Assurance (Malta) Limited are no longer being reported in aggregate on single lines within 'other operating income' and 'other assets'.

IFRS 2 requires entities to recognise share-based payments, in respect of awards granted after 7 November 2002, at fair value at the date of the grant, which is to be amortised over the vesting period.

IFRS 4 requires certain insurance products with insignificant insurance risk to be accounted for under IAS 39 'Financial Instruments: Recognition and Measurement'.

HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c. and its subsidiaries recorded a profit before tax of Lm18.5 million for the six months ended 30 June 2005. The tax charge for the period amounted to Lm6.4 million. Operating profit before net loan impairment releases is recorded at Lm17.5 million and represents an increase of 14.3 per cent over the Lm15.3 million earned during the same period in 2004. Earnings per share for the first six months ended 30 June 2005 decreased to 16.6 cents compared to 18.0 cents for the first six months of 2004. Comparative data have been adjusted for the April 2005 two-for-one share split.

- Profit attributable to shareholders of Lm12.1 million, a decrease of 8.1 per cent over the Lm13.2 million earned during the same period in 2004 which was influenced by a much higher level of impairment releases.
- Net interest income up by 11.9 per cent over prior year to Lm21.3 million.
- Non-interest income increased by 8.7 per cent, contributing Lm12.1 million to net operating income.
- Administrative expenses increased by 8.7 per cent, mainly due to higher performance-based compensation for all staff. The cost:income ratio improved from 49.1 per cent to 47.5 per cent.
- The net release in impairment provisions totalled Lm1.0 million. New specific allowances of Lm0.5 million were raised and bad debt write-offs of Lm2.4 million were effected. An overall improvement in the credit quality of the lending book reduced non-performing loans from Lm82.3 million to Lm70.7 million. This contributed towards the release of Lm3.3 million in specific allowances and Lm0.6 million in collective allowances.
- Customer deposits amounted to Lm1,331.5 million at 30 June 2005 compared with Lm1,295.8 million at 31 December 2004. Collective investment schemes managed by the group grew by Lm28.7 million, whilst life assurance assets grew by Lm9.5 million during the period.
- Loans and advances to customers were Lm1,026.7 million at 30 June 2005 - up Lm50.4 million or 5.2 per cent over 31 December 2004.
- Total assets amounted to Lm1.63 billion at 30 June 2005 compared with Lm1.60 billion at 31 December 2004.

Shaun Wallis, Director and Chief Executive Officer of HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c., said: “Our results for the first six months confirm the business momentum we have been building, with solid growth in all three customer groups. Our focus is on maximising existing business relationships through a clear understanding of clients’ needs.

“In our personal financial services business, we have concentrated on providing excellent customer service supported by strong sales management. Commercial banking is similarly focussed on quality customer service and making ‘business more personal’. Both customer groups have recorded significant increases in all areas as a result. Our treasury and capital markets division has also reported healthy growth supported by higher volumes of foreign exchange earnings and the sale of securities.

“The Board has recommended an ordinary interim dividend of 19.1 cents gross per share and additionally a special dividend of 27.4 cents gross per share, giving a total interim dividend of 46.5 cents gross per share. This will be payable to shareholders who are on the company’s register of shareholders as at 29 July 2005. The ordinary interim dividend payment of Lm9.1 million has been set at 75 per cent of year-to-date earnings. The special dividend payment of Lm13.0 million is earmarked out of retained reserves built up from earnings over the last six years and is surplus to local regulatory capital requirements, internal capital plans and normal global banking practice.

“We would like to thank our customers for their support during the first six months of this year and to thank our staff for their continued high level of commitment to customer service.

“We remain optimistic about the economic activity in Malta for the remainder of the year and our business prospects.”

HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c., a member of the HSBC Group, has more than 1,400 staff and 60 offices.

With over 9,800 offices in 77 countries and territories and over 110 million customers worldwide at 31 December 2004, the HSBC Group is one of the world’s largest banking and financial services organisations. For more information about HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c. and its products and services, visit our website at www.hsbc.com.mt.

Income Statement for the period 1 January 2005 to 30 June 2005

| | <i>Group</i> | | <i>Bank</i> | |
|--|--|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| | 6 mths to 30/6/05 Lm000 | 6 mths to 30/6/04 Lm000 | 6 mths to 30/6/05 Lm000 | 6 mths to 30/6/04 Lm000 |
| Interest receivable and similar income | | | | |
| – on loans and advances and balances with Central Bank of Malta | 29,430 | 27,764 | 27,877 | 26,004 |
| – on debt and other fixed income instruments | 5,536 | 5,081 | 6,232 | 5,785 |
| Interest payable | (13,671) | (13,812) | (13,808) | (13,952) |
| Net interest income | 21,295 | 19,033 | 20,301 | 17,837 |
| Fees and commissions receivable | 5,587 | 5,239 | 4,427 | 4,306 |
| Fees and commissions payable | (359) | (327) | (287) | (279) |
| Dividend income | 38 | 42 | 338 | 2,042 |
| Trading profits | 3,598 | 2,968 | 3,607 | 2,974 |
| Net income from insurance financial instruments designated at fair value | 3,860 | 2,581 | - | - |
| Net gains on disposal of non-trading financial instruments | 1,221 | 1,749 | 1,267 | 1,018 |
| Net earned insurance premiums | 8,305 | 7,067 | - | - |
| Other operating income | 677 | 664 | 2 | 56 |
| Total operating income | 44,222 | 39,016 | 29,655 | 27,954 |
| Net insurance claims incurred and movement in policyholder liabilities | (10,857) | (8,883) | - | - |
| Net operating income | 33,365 | 30,133 | 29,655 | 27,954 |
| Administrative expenses | (14,410) | (13,255) | (13,711) | (12,610) |
| Depreciation | (1,423) | (1,388) | (1,367) | (1,345) |
| Net amortisation of goodwill | - | (145) | - | (103) |
| Operating profit | 17,532 | 15,345 | 14,577 | 13,896 |
| Net loan impairment (charges)/releases | 954 | 4,468 | 939 | 4,467 |
| Profit on ordinary activities before tax | 18,486 | 19,813 | 15,516 | 18,363 |
| Tax on profit on ordinary activities | (6,396) | (6,662) | (5,297) | (6,452) |
| Profit for the financial period attributable to shareholders | 12,090 | 13,151 | 10,219 | 11,911 |
| Earnings per share | 16.6c | 18.0c | 14.0c | 16.3c |

Balance Sheet at 30 June 2005

| | <i>Group</i> | | <i>Bank</i> | |
|--|------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|
| | 30/6/05 | 31/12/04 | 30/6/05 | 31/12/04 |
| | Lm000 | Lm000 | Lm000 | Lm000 |
| Assets | | | | |
| Balances with Central Bank of Malta, treasury bills and cash | 87,116 | 106,806 | 87,114 | 106,781 |
| Cheques in course of collection | 5,324 | 4,458 | 5,324 | 4,458 |
| Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss | 88,158 | 77,359 | 6,103 | 4,826 |
| Investments | 234,167 | 238,446 | 264,065 | 268,226 |
| Loans and advances to banks | 126,785 | 131,283 | 160,859 | 172,363 |
| Loans and advances to customers | 1,026,740 | 976,296 | 941,501 | 884,868 |
| Shares in subsidiary companies | - | - | 19,850 | 19,850 |
| Intangible assets | 9,457 | 8,782 | 754 | 964 |
| Tangible fixed assets | 30,018 | 30,993 | 29,667 | 30,620 |
| Other assets | 5,961 | 6,302 | 5,009 | 5,381 |
| Prepayments and accrued income | 13,722 | 16,486 | 13,164 | 15,716 |
| Total assets | 1,627,448 | 1,597,211 | 1,533,410 | 1,514,053 |
| Liabilities | | | | |
| Financial liabilities at fair value through profit or loss | 5,901 | 9,917 | 5,901 | 9,917 |
| Amounts owed to banks | 43,231 | 48,336 | 43,231 | 48,336 |
| Amounts owed to customers | 1,331,472 | 1,295,758 | 1,334,224 | 1,296,687 |
| Debt securities in issue | 12 | 12 | - | - |
| Deferred taxation | 3,521 | 2,251 | 1,252 | 561 |
| Other liabilities | 85,951 | 71,443 | 15,641 | 11,379 |
| Accruals and deferred income | 15,756 | 15,101 | 15,598 | 14,818 |
| Provisions for liabilities and other charges | 2,255 | 26 | 2,065 | 26 |
| Subordinated liabilities | - | 19,914 | - | 20,000 |
| | 1,488,099 | 1,462,758 | 1,417,912 | 1,401,724 |
| Shareholders' funds | | | | |
| Called up share capital | 9,120 | 9,120 | 9,120 | 9,120 |
| Revaluation reserves | 10,616 | 11,086 | 10,567 | 11,092 |
| Other reserves | 4,242 | 4,242 | 4,242 | 4,242 |
| Profit and loss account | 115,371 | 110,005 | 91,569 | 87,875 |
| | 139,349 | 134,453 | 115,498 | 112,329 |
| Total liabilities | 1,627,448 | 1,597,211 | 1,533,410 | 1,514,053 |
| Memorandum items | | | | |
| Contingent liabilities | 41,179 | 46,806 | 41,589 | 47,226 |
| Commitments | 343,960 | 320,159 | 352,903 | 328,104 |

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors on 22 July 2005 and signed on its behalf by:

Albert Mizzi, *Chairman*

Shaun Wallis, *Director and Chief Executive Officer*

Statement of Changes in Equity for the period 1 January 2005 to 30 June 2005

| | <i>Group</i> | | | | |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| | <i>Share capital</i> | <i>Revaluation reserves</i> | <i>Other reserves</i> | <i>Profit and loss account</i> | <i>Total</i> |
| | Lm000 | Lm000 | Lm000 | Lm000 | Lm000 |
| At 1 January 2004 | 9,120 | 10,978 | 4,242 | 106,822 | 131,162 |
| Net fair value adjustments on investments not recognised in the profit and loss account | - | 453 | - | - | 453 |
| Release of previously recorded net gains on available-for-sale assets transferred to the income statement on disposal | - | (1,556) | - | - | (1,556) |
| Profit attributable to shareholders | - | - | - | 13,151 | 13,151 |
| Dividends | - | - | - | (5,833) | (5,833) |
| At 30 June 2004 | 9,120 | 9,875 | 4,242 | 114,140 | 137,377 |
| At 31 December 2004 as previously stated | 9,120 | 11,086 | 4,242 | 110,125 | 134,573 |
| Net effect of change arising from retrospective application of IFRS 2 | - | - | - | (120) | (120) |
| At 31 December 2004 as restated | 9,120 | 11,086 | 4,242 | 110,005 | 134,453 |
| At 1 January 2005 | 9,120 | 11,086 | 4,242 | 110,005 | 134,453 |
| Impact of adoption of IFRS 4 | - | - | - | (199) | (199) |
| At 1 January 2005 as restated | 9,120 | 11,086 | 4,242 | 109,806 | 134,254 |
| Net fair value adjustments on investments not recognised in the profit and loss account | - | 257 | - | - | 257 |
| Transfer between reserves on disposal of property | - | 52 | - | (52) | - |
| Release of previously recorded net gains on available-for-sale assets transferred to the income statement on disposal | - | (779) | - | - | (779) |
| Profit attributable to shareholders | - | - | - | 12,090 | 12,090 |
| Dividends | - | - | - | (6,473) | (6,473) |
| At 30 June 2005 | 9,120 | 10,616 | 4,242 | 115,371 | 139,349 |

Statement of Changes in Equity for the period 1 January 2005 to 30 June 2005 (continued)

| | <i>Bank</i> | | | | <i>Total</i> |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| | <i>Share capital</i> | <i>Revaluation reserves</i> | <i>Other reserves</i> | <i>Profit and loss account</i> | |
| | Lm000 | Lm000 | Lm000 | Lm000 | Lm000 |
| At 31 December 2003 as previously stated | 9,120 | 32,069 | 4,242 | 85,626 | 131,057 |
| Effect of change in accounting policy for valuation of investment in subsidiary companies | - | (21,752) | - | - | (21,752) |
| At 31 December 2003 as restated | 9,120 | 10,317 | 4,242 | 85,626 | 109,305 |
| At 1 January 2004 as restated | 9,120 | 10,317 | 4,242 | 85,626 | 109,305 |
| Net fair value adjustments on investments not recognised in the profit and loss account | - | 447 | - | - | 447 |
| Release of previously recorded net gains on available-for-sale assets transferred to the income statement on disposal | - | (862) | - | - | (862) |
| Profit attributable to shareholders | - | - | - | 11,911 | 11,911 |
| Dividends | - | - | - | (5,833) | (5,833) |
| At 30 June 2004 as restated | 9,120 | 9,902 | 4,242 | 91,704 | 114,968 |
| At 31 December 2004 as previously stated | 9,120 | 33,265 | 4,242 | 87,995 | 134,622 |
| Effect of change in accounting policy for valuation of investment in subsidiary companies | - | (22,173) | - | - | (22,173) |
| Net effect of change arising from retrospective application of IFRS 2 | - | - | - | (120) | (120) |
| At 31 December 2004 as restated | 9,120 | 11,092 | 4,242 | 87,875 | 112,329 |
| At 1 January 2005 | 9,120 | 11,092 | 4,242 | 87,875 | 112,329 |
| Net fair value adjustments on investments not recognised in the profit and loss account | - | 248 | - | - | 248 |
| Transfer between reserves on disposal of property | - | 52 | - | (52) | - |
| Release of previously recorded net gains on available-for-sale assets transferred to the income statement on disposal | - | (825) | - | - | (825) |
| Profit attributable to shareholders | - | - | - | 10,219 | 10,219 |
| Dividends | - | - | - | (6,473) | (6,473) |
| At 30 June 2005 | 9,120 | 10,567 | 4,242 | 91,569 | 115,498 |

Cash Flow Statement for the period 1 January 2005 to 30 June 2005

| | <i>Group</i> | | <i>Bank</i> | |
|---|--|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| | 6 mths to 30/6/05 Lm000 | 6 mths to 30/6/04 Lm000 | 6 mths to 30/6/05 Lm000 | 6 mths to 30/6/04 Lm000 |
| Cash flows from operating activities | | | | |
| Interest, commission and premium receipts | 50,554 | 41,826 | 38,015 | 31,331 |
| Interest, commission and claim payments | (13,989) | (15,256) | (12,913) | (15,148) |
| Payments to employees and suppliers | (15,829) | (13,924) | (14,902) | (13,696) |
| Operating profit before changes in operating assets/liabilities | 20,736 | 12,646 | 10,200 | 2,487 |
| (Increase)/decrease in operating assets: | | | | |
| Trading instruments | 809 | (181) | 809 | (181) |
| Reserve deposits with Central Bank of Malta | 73 | (964) | 73 | (968) |
| Loans and advances to banks | (6,513) | 2,128 | (6,515) | 3,405 |
| Loans and advances to customers | (49,491) | (23,540) | (55,695) | (32,999) |
| Treasury bills with contractual maturity of over three months | 29,907 | (9,551) | 29,907 | (7,952) |
| Cheques in course of collection | (866) | (321) | (866) | (321) |
| Other receivables | (1,031) | 1,380 | (938) | 1,827 |
| Increase/(decrease) in operating liabilities: | | | | |
| Amounts owed to banks | (22,367) | 5,769 | (22,367) | 5,768 |
| Amounts owed to customers | 25,118 | 31,568 | 26,941 | 33,239 |
| Other payables | 4,578 | 423 | 4,262 | (933) |
| Net cash from/(used in) operating activities before income tax | 953 | 19,357 | (14,189) | 3,372 |
| Tax paid | (1,100) | (1,298) | (933) | (1,072) |
| Net cash (used in)/from operating activities | (147) | 18,059 | (15,122) | 2,300 |
| Cash flows from investing activities | | | | |
| Dividends received | 25 | 28 | 325 | 1,328 |
| Income received from financial instruments designated at fair value through profit or loss | 695 | 269 | - | - |
| Interest received from available-for-sale debt and other fixed income instruments | 3,351 | 2,625 | 3,351 | 2,625 |
| Interest received from held-to-maturity debt and other fixed income instruments | 2,759 | 3,344 | 4,116 | 4,703 |
| Proceeds on disposal of financial instruments designated at fair value through profit or loss | 7,463 | 1,341 | - | - |
| Proceeds on disposal of available-for-sale instruments | 11,401 | 10,640 | 11,299 | 5,126 |

Cash Flow Statement for the period 1 January 2005 to 30 June 2005 (continued)

| | | | | |
|---|-----------------|----------|-----------------|----------|
| Proceeds on maturity of held-to-maturity debt and other fixed income instruments | 25,293 | 35,630 | 25,293 | 35,630 |
| Proceeds on disposal of tangible fixed assets | 439 | 17 | 431 | 17 |
| Purchase of financial instruments designated at fair value through profit or loss | (14,388) | (13,047) | - | - |
| Purchase of available-for-sale instruments | (27,961) | - | (27,961) | - |
| Purchase of held-to-maturity debt and other fixed income instruments | - | (51,298) | - | (51,298) |
| Purchase of tangible fixed assets | (591) | (381) | (584) | (364) |
| Purchase of intangible assets | (344) | (48) | (52) | (43) |
| Net cash flows from/(used in) investing activities | 8,142 | (10,880) | 16,218 | (2,276) |
| Cash flows from financing activities | | | | |
| Dividends paid | (6,473) | (5,833) | (6,473) | (5,833) |
| Maturity of subordinated loan stock | (19,914) | - | (20,000) | - |
| Cash used in financing activities | (26,387) | (5,833) | (26,473) | (5,833) |
| (Decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents | (18,392) | 1,346 | (25,377) | (5,809) |
| Effect of exchange rate changes on cash and cash equivalents | 2,588 | 758 | 2,538 | 541 |
| Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents | (20,980) | 588 | (27,915) | (6,350) |
| | (18,392) | 1,346 | (25,377) | (5,809) |
| Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of period | 97,051 | 108,019 | 138,108 | 165,217 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at end of period | 78,659 | 109,365 | 112,731 | 159,408 |

Segmental Information

a Class of business

| | <i>Personal financial services</i> | | <i>Commercial banking</i> | | <i>Corporate, investment banking and markets</i> | | <i>Group total</i> | |
|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|--|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | 6 mths to 30/6/05 Lm000 | 6 mths to 30/6/04 Lm000 | 6 mths to 30/6/05 Lm000 | 6 mths to 30/6/04 Lm000 | 6 mths to 30/6/05 Lm000 | 6 mths to 30/6/04 Lm000 | 6 mths to 30/6/05 Lm000 | 6 mths to 30/6/04 Lm000 |
| Profit before tax | | | | | | | | |
| Segment operating income | 16,048 | 15,063 | 11,204 | 10,435 | 6,113 | 4,635 | 33,365 | 30,133 |
| Segment impairment allowances | (174) | (97) | 1,128 | 4,565 | - | - | 954 | 4,468 |
| Common costs | | | | | | | (15,833) | (14,788) |
| Profit on ordinary activities before tax | | | | | | | 18,486 | 19,813 |
| | 30/6/05 Lm000 | 30/6/04 Lm000 | 30/6/05 Lm000 | 30/6/04 Lm000 | 30/6/05 Lm000 | 30/6/04 Lm000 | 30/6/05 Lm000 | 30/6/04 Lm000 |
| Assets | | | | | | | | |
| Segment total assets | 523,987 | 443,742 | 658,005 | 634,696 | 445,456 | 510,717 | 1,627,448 | 1,589,155 |
| Average total assets | 500,335 | 428,644 | 654,596 | 639,365 | 457,678 | 496,061 | 1,612,609 | 1,564,070 |
| Net assets | 39,961 | 34,726 | 87,235 | 84,292 | 12,153 | 18,359 | 139,349 | 137,377 |

b Geographical segments

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

HSBC Bank Malta p.l.c. is licensed as a credit institution and provider of investment services by the Malta Financial Services Authority.
Registered Office: 233, Republic Street, Valletta VLT 05, Malta. Telephone: (00356) 2380 2380
Company Registration Number: C3177