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PRESS RELEASE

Heinrich Karasek takes over as Chairman of the Zertifikate Forum Austria (ZFA)

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As of May 1, 2008, Heinrich Karasek, 39, Director Structured Products and Equities at Bank Sal. Oppenheim jr. & Cie. (Austria) has taken over as Chairman of the Board of Zertifikate Forum Austria.

In the coming year Heinrich Karasek will be focusing the activities of Zertifikate Forum Austria on international representation of Austrian interests as well as on establishing an uniform European standard of training for the professional utilization of derivative products in advisory activities and asset management.

In addition to his current post as Head of Structured Investment Products at Volksbanken AG, Fritz Strobl, the previous chairman, is taking on the position of Managing Director Marketing, PR and Sales at Volksbank Invest, which is competent for funds. "The idea of putting the investment approach above the respective product groups is unique in Europe so far. Funds and certificates have again come a little closer, which we welcome for the benefit of the investors" says Karasek.

Bank Sal. Oppenheim is a founding member of the Forum established in 2006. Among the other current members are Volksbank AG, Raiffeisen Centro Bank, Erste Bank, Bank Austria/HBV and ABN Amro.

Heinrich Karasek has been in the investment business for 20 years: In 2005 he took on the position of Head of Structured Products at Sal. Oppenheim Austria. Last year he was entrusted with establishing the Equity Sales team for the bank. Previously, he held positions with INVESCO Asset Management Österreich, BAWAG and Creditanstalt Bankverein, in the treasury and institutional sales divisions.

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