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Orange joins 3G Infrastructure Services AB as a third owner together with Europolitan Vodafone and Hi3G

Today it is announced that Orange Sverige AB joins 3G Infrastructure Services AB (3GIS), the established UMTS-infrastructure joint venture between Europolitan Vodafone and Hi3G. 3GIS's objective is – for its owners – to build and operate an UMTS-infrastructure covering up to 70 percent of the total population in Sweden.

“With Orange now joining our working partnership within 3G Infrastructure Services AB, we can reduce our 3G investments even further. This not only benefits both our customers and us, it also gives Sweden unique advantages in terms of coverage and shared infrastructure utilisation,” says Jon Risfelt, President and CEO of Europolitan Vodafone.

The entrance of Orange in the joint venture will lower network rollout investment costs whilst also reducing the total number of masts required, in turn minimizing the impact on the environment. The agreement states a co-operation between three equal partners.

The co-operation is fully in line with the regulations and licence conditions set out by The Swedish National Post and Telecom Agency, PTS, and is subject to approval from authorities concerned.

3G Infrastructure Services AB is an equally owned joint venture between Europolitan Vodafone, Hi3G Access AB and Orange Sverige. The purpose of the company is to build and operate a joint Swedish UMTS-infrastructure except in the metropolitan areas of Stockholm, Gothenburg, Malmö and Karlskrona. In these areas the companies will build their own networks. The companies will retain their operating independence including designing and delivering of services and content to customers, market positioning and pricing. 3GIS has its headquarters in the Stockholm area.

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Europolitan Vodafone is a mobile operator with a license to build 3G mobile telecoms networks. Our strength lies in our focus on developing international services, service and quality. Europolitan Vodafone employs some 1,500 people and is listed on the Attract 40 list of the Stockholm Stock Exchange. The company's majority owner is Vodafone of the UK, with 71 per cent of Europolitan Holdings AB. Private shareholders, investment companies and pension funds own the remaining 29 per cent. Vodafone is represented on 5 continents and has more than 200 million mobile telecoms users. In April 2002 Europolitan Vodafone will change brand to Vodafone. www.europolitan.se/ and www.vodafone.com/

Hi3G is the holder of a Swedish and a Danish UMTS licence and is aiming to become a leading mobile multimedia operator with attractive and innovative services. The company's strength lies in the fact that it is a pure 3G company, with no baggage from old technologies such as GSM. Hi3G is expanding rapidly with the support of its owners, Hutchison Whampoa Ltd. (60%) and Investor AB (40%), who have solid network and industry track records worldwide. Hi3G is cooperating with other Hutchison Whampoa companies that hold 3G licences in Australia, Austria, Hong Kong, Israel, Italy, and the United Kingdom. Please stay in touch and visit www.hi3gaccess.se.

Orange and wirefree™ are trademarks of Orange. In August 2000 Orange plc was acquired by France Telecom, leading to the creation of Europe's second largest mobile operator. The new Orange has operations in 20 countries across Europe and beyond, and aims to have a presence in 50 countries worldwide by 2005. As at the end of September 2001, Orange had 37 million controlled customers worldwide. Orange UK now offers roaming on 255 networks in 114 countries. In May 2001, for the fourth consecutive year, the J.D. Power and Associates study on the UK mobile market ranked Orange number one for customer satisfaction.

The Orange group companies have been awarded next generation (UMTS) licences in 11 countries: the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Austria, Sweden, Switzerland, Portugal, Belgium, Denmark and France. Orange is now rolling out the network for the third generation mobile telephony (UMTS) in Sweden, which will cover the entire population by the end of 2003. Orange Sverige AB is owned by Orange SA and Schibsted. Information about Orange can be found at www.orange.se and at www.orange.com.