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## MeritaNordbanken welcomes Christiania Board recommendation for acceptance of bid

Commenting on the decision of the Board of Directors of Christiania Bank, Hans Dalborg, Chief Executive Officer of the MeritaNordbanken Group, says:

"Naturally, we are delighted at the decision of the Board of Directors of Christiania Bank og Kreditkasse to recommend that the bank's shareholders accept, within the acceptance period, MeritaNordbanken's bid to purchase all shares for a price of NOK 44.00 per share."

"I note that the Board of Directors of Christiania Bank finds our bid financially fair and industrially appropriate. The Board of Directors particularly mentions the benefits that partnership with the MeritaNordbanken Group will bring to customers, employees and shareholders."

"The aim of the proposed merger is to strengthen not only the competitiveness and expertise of the participating banks but also the range of services available on local markets. In partnership with the MeritaNordbanken Group, Christiania Bank will soon be able to launch new services and, among other things, offer Norwegian companies more opportunities for expansion on the regional and international markets. This will benefit the entire Norwegian economy."

The vision of the MeritaNordbanken Group is to be the leading financial partner in the Nordic and Baltic Sea region, with a nationwide coverage and proximity to customers on all Nordic markets, new cross-border products and a stronger investment capacity throughout the region. The intention is that the Group will have centres of competence and management functions in all participating Nordic countries and its Board of Directors and Executive Management will include members from each of the participating countries. The Group also plans to be listed in all Nordic countries in which it operates and strive for a strong ownership base on all these markets.

*MeritaNordbanken, the leading bank group in the Nordic region, provides a broad spectrum of financial products and services to more than 6.5 million private individuals and 400,000 companies and institutions. The Group's service network comprises some 800 branch offices in Finland and Sweden, over 1,000 Swedish post offices and a wide range of effective telephone and Internet banking facilities. More than a million customers use the Group's electronic banking services. Household savings under management total almost EUR 45 billion. Outside the Nordic region, the Group has a presence in 19 countries. The two holding companies, Merita Plc and Nordbanken Holding AB (publ), are listed in Helsinki and Stockholm, respectively.*