



1st April 2003

PRESS RELEASE

FROM TODAY 1ST APRIL 2003

IBERCLEAR IS

THE SPANISH CENTRAL SECURITIES DEPOSITORY.

From today 1st April 2003, IBERCLEAR is the Spanish Central Securities Depository, and as a result takes charge of the registering, clearing and settlement of securities in the following Spanish markets: "Mercado bursátil", "AIAF Mercado de Renta Fija", "Mercado de Deuda Pública en Anotaciones" y "Latibex Mercado de Valores Latinoamericanos" in accordance with the authorisations published in the Official State Bulletin (Boletín Oficial del Estado) – see "Legal Approval" later.

IBERCLEAR is a member of the holding company "Bolsas y Mercados Españoles" (BME) and participates directly in the strategy and objectives of that said company: Resource Optimisation, Cost Reductions and Rationalisation of Services, which all contribute to the advancement of the company in order to meet the challenges of the international environment.

The undertaking of functions concludes the process established in the Law 44/2002, 22nd November "The Reform Measures Of The Financial System" ("Ley 44/2002, de 22 de noviembre, de Medidas de Reforma del Sistema Financiero") which establishes the creation of the "Sociedad de Gestión de los Sistemas de Registro, Compensación y Liquidación de Valores, S.A" whose commercial name is IBERCLEAR.

IBERCLEAR is the resultant merger between the SCLV ("Servicio de Compensación y Liquidación de Valores, S.A.") and CADE ("Central de

Anotaciones del Mercado de Deuda Pública”) which was managed, until yesterday, by the Banco de España.

Today, IBERCLEAR has celebrated its first Board meeting approving, among other important issues, the internal structure of IBERCLEAR, presided over by **Mr. José Barreiro**. IBERCLEAR is now divided into three main areas which are directly headed by **Mr. José María Narváez** who maintains the position of Chief Executive Officer.

These three main areas are as follows:

1) Equities & Technology.

Managed by Mr. Luis Catalán

Position: Director General.

He will be responsible for the SCLV platform which registers, clears and settles trades from the national stock exchanges and Latibex. He will also be in charge of the technological resources of the company.

2) Fixed Income.

Managed by Mr. Juan de Dios Pérez

Position: Assistant Director General.

He will be responsible for the CADE platform which registers and settles trades for the Public Debt Market and the AIAF Fixed Income Market. He will also be in charge of the technological migration of the CADE platform from the Banco de España IT environment to that of Iberclear's.

3) Strategy And General Services.

Managed by Mr. Jesús Benito

Position: Assistant Director General.

He will be responsible for all issues of a strategic or international nature including new projects and company communication. He will also be in charge of all administration functions, the internal organisation and Human Resources of Iberclear.

The organisational structure of IBERCLEAR is designed to tackle the challenges, both internally or externally, which a new company must confront. At a domestic level IBERCLEAR will have to integrate both the personnel from SCLV and those from the Banco de España all of which whose value and professionalism have been demonstrated. IBERCLEAR will also have to

contribute fully to the modernisation of the Spanish Settlement Systems in order to benefit participants, the Issuers and the Spanish Stock Markets in general.

From an International perspective, IBERCLEAR must seek to position itself alongside its European counterparts. IBERCLEAR must achieve all of this by following the guidelines laid down by the holding company BME.

For additional information please contact:

Mr. Jesús Benito, telephone + (34) 91 417 09 12

Notes to the Editor.

IBERCLEAR:

The commercial name for “Sociedad de Gestión de los Sistemas de Registro, Compensación y Liquidación de Valores, S.A.”, created by the Law 44/2002, 22nd November “The Reform Measures Of The Financial System” (“Ley 44/2002, de 22 de noviembre, de Medidas de Reforma del Sistema Financiero”) is the result of the merger between SCLV (Servicio de Compensación y Liquidación de Valores, S.A) and CADE (la Central de Anotaciones del Mercado de Deuda Pública) which from its onset, until yesterday, was managed by the Banco de España.

BME (BOLSAS Y MERCADOS ESPAÑOLES):

The formal name is “Bolsas y Mercados Españoles, Sociedad Holding de Mercados y Sistemas Financieros S.A.”. It is the holding company which has integrated the Spanish Stock Exchanges, AIAF Fixed Income Market, Derivatives Market and the Spanish Clearing & Settlement systems.

Central Securities Depository:

It is the Institution in charge of:

the dematerialised securities

the central security register in book-entry form or electronic form

Clearing & Settlement of securities

The management of the Clearing & Settlement platforms

Therefore IBERCLEAR is in charge of two systems (two platforms) for Clearing & Settlement:

1) SCLV for the Spanish Stock Exchanges

and

2) CADE for the Fixed Income and Private & Public Debt Markets.

Legal Approval:

The authorisation given to IBERCLEAR for the undertaking of its functions are as follows:

- Agreement- 18th March, Board of the Comisión Nacional Mercado de Valores – Published by the B.O.E (Boletín Oficial del Estado) on 26th March 2003
- Resolution- 14th March 2003 of the Banco de España - Published by the B.O.E (Boletín Oficial del Estado) on 28th March 2003
- Legal Order ECO/689/2003, 27th March which approves the Regulation for IBERCLEAR - Published by the B.O.E (Boletín Oficial del Estado) on 28th March 2003