Fibank Enters into a Strategic Partnership with the Leading European Institution, Erste Asset Management

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Fibank (First Investment Bank) and Austrian **Erste Asset Management** have entered into a strategic partnership agreement, offering fund investment solutions that are new to the Bulgarian market. Erste Asset Management is an international asset management company with leading positions in the Central and Eastern European region. The company is part of the Austrian financial group Erste Group Bank AG and specialises in the management of mutual, alternative, private, and other funds.

As a partner of Erste Asset Management, Fibank will offer its clients the opportunity to invest in the funds managed by the Austrian financial institution.

Through its partnership with Fibank, Erste Asset Management now enters the Bulgarian market.

Fibank will offer four investment funds that are registered in Bulgaria and managed in Austria and are denominated in euro, namely:

- ESPA Bond Euro Corporate – a bond fund that invests in corporate bonds of European companies with high credit rating;
- ESPA Portfolio Balanced 30 – a balanced fund with moderate risk;
- ESPA Stock Europe – an equity fund investing in European companies;
- ESPA Stock Global – an equity fund investing in companies around the world.

The funds are characterised by high liquidity, and investors can buy and sell units at any time. They are designed for both retail and institutional investors. For more information on the funds, please visit the websites of First Investment Bank and www.erste-am.bg.

Erste Asset Management will also offer selected investment funds on the Bulgarian market, which will be particularly geared towards institutional investors.

Talking about the cooperation with Fibank, Heinz Bednar, CEO of the Austrian fund house Erste Asset Management stressed that "*we clearly have very similar ideas about the need for profitable and secure fund management in the region and are looking forward to working together with a well-established and reliable partner such as Fibank.*"

"*Our experience in investment funds and portfolio solutions within Erste Group Bank AG and Fibank's positioning in the Bulgarian market make this partnership particularly special. We both are customer-oriented and innovative institutions that offer a diverse range of services for individual and corporate clients,*" said Mr. Bednar.

"The partnership with Erste Asset Management will allow us to offer our clients new investment opportunities so that they can more actively manage their savings and achieve better returns," Mr. Nedelcho Nedelchev, CEO of Fibank, pointed out.

About Erste Group

Erste Asset Management is a subsidiary of Erste Group and operates in Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia. By the end of 2017, the total assets under management exceeded EUR 60bn. Erste Group is an Austrian bank established in 1819 as the first Austrian savings bank. Today, Erste Group is the largest banking institution in Austria, and one of the largest financial service providers in Central and Eastern Europe.

About Fibank (First Investment Bank)

First Investment Bank (Fibank) is the largest bank with Bulgarian capital It has developed and consolidated as a financial group with its main activity in the Republic of Bulgaria, and with a regional presence through its foreign operations in Cyprus and Albania. Fibank is an innovative, customer-oriented credit institution offering a diverse range of products and services to both individual and corporate clients. It has a strong tradition in corporate banking and an expanded presence in the retail market. The bank provides its clients with high-tech solutions and a modern banking experience.

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Warning notice: Investors in mutual funds should keep in mind that the value of mutual fund shares and the income from them may decrease. Gains are not guaranteed, and investors take the risk of not recovering their investment in full. Investments in mutual funds are not guaranteed by a government guarantee fund, or by any other kind of guarantee. Historical fund performance is not indicative of future developments. Investors should carefully read the prospectus of the funds before investing in them.

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