

GRUPPO SANPAOLO IMI

NEWS RELEASE

SANPAOLO IMI DENIES POSSIBLE EURIZON SALE

Turin, September 26, 2006 – Following the article published in today’s newspaper La Repubblica headlined *“Eurizon, SanpaoloIMI examines its sale, Blackstone fund in pole position”*, Sanpaolo IMI Group decisively denies the report which is completely without foundation.

On the contrary, Sanpaolo IMI reasserts what has already been repeatedly stated, that Eurizon is strategic within the envisaged merger with Banca Intesa.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

In connection with the proposed business combination, the required information document will be sent to Commissione Nazionale per le Società e la Borsa (“CONSOB”) and, to the extent that the shares issued in connection with the proposed business combination will be required to be registered in the United States, a registration statement on Form F-4, which will include a prospectus, may be filed with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC”). If an exemption from the registration requirements of the U.S. Securities Act of 1933 (the “Securities Act”) is available, the shares issued in connection with the proposed business combination will be made available within the United States pursuant to such exemption and not pursuant to an effective registration statement on Form F-4. Investors are strongly advised to read the documents that will be sent to CONSOB, the registration statement and prospectus, if and when available, and any other relevant documents sent to CONSOB and/or the SEC, as well as any amendments or supplements to those documents, because they will contain important information. If and when filed, investors may obtain free copies of the registration statement, the prospectus as well as other relevant documents filed with the SEC, at the SEC’s web site at www.sec.gov and will receive information at an appropriate time on how to obtain these transaction-related documents for free from the parties involved or a duly appointed agent.

This communication does not constitute an offer to purchase, sell or exchange or the solicitation of an offer to purchase, sell or exchange any securities, nor shall there be any purchase, sale or exchange of securities in any jurisdiction in which such offer, solicitation or sale or exchange would be unlawful prior to the registration or qualification under the laws of such jurisdiction. The distribution of this communication may, in some countries, be restricted by law or regulation. Accordingly, persons who come into possession of this document should inform themselves of and observe these restrictions. To the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, the companies involved in the proposed business combination disclaim any responsibility or liability for the violation of such restrictions by any person.

The shares to be issued in connection with the proposed business combination may not be offered or sold in the United States except pursuant to an effective registration statement under the Securities Act or pursuant to a valid exemption from registration.