



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AXIA Ventures Group acts as Exclusive Financial Advisor to ATHEX in the formation of a Consortium to acquire a 44% equity stake in Boursa Kuwait

Athens, Greece, February 14th, 2019 – AXIA Ventures Group (“AXIA”) acted as Exclusive Financial Advisor to Athens Stock Exchange (“ATHEX”) with respect to the formation of a Consortium for the acquisition of a 44% equity stake in Boursa Kuwait, the only market operator in the State of Kuwait and one of the leading stock exchanges in the Gulf area.

Following its application and qualification as an international operator with regard to the privatization process of Boursa Kuwait, organized by the Capital Markets Authority (“CMA”) of Kuwait, the Athens Stock Exchange decided to participate as a technical, operational and business services provider for Boursa Kuwait by forming a consortium with the largest possible participation from the qualified local companies to proceed to the final bidding process.

The Consortium comprising of ATHEX, as the qualified international operator, and a wide group of leading listed, financial groups in Kuwait, namely Arzan Financial Group (“ARZAN”), First Investment Company (“FIC”) and National Investments Company (“NIC”), has been awarded the bid by way of a closed bidding process organized by the CMA.

The Consortium offered 0.237 Kuwaiti dinar (€0.69) per share for the stake purchase. A 6% stake is owned by Kuwait’s Public Institution For Social Security (“PIFSS”), while the remaining 50% will be sold to the public through an IPO process. The resulting ATHEX’s participation in Boursa Kuwait’s equity stake is ca. 0.8%, amounting to an investment of approximately €1 million.

At the time of the announcement, Socrates Lazaridis, CEO of ATHEX stated: *“ATHEX as a market operator and as a listed entity has the necessary experience and with the cooperation of its partners plans to have an active involvement in Boursa Kuwait as a technical and operations solution provider and business development consultant. The goal is to enhance Boursa Kuwait’s profile in the region and produce additional value through the close strategic cooperation of the two market operators in the future”.*

Bader Al-Kharafi, the Consortium’s representative, commented: *“This groundbreaking investment will prove a milestone in the development and growth of Boursa. The recent overhaul of the Boursa and its inclusion as an emerging market on several important international indices, including FTSE and MSCI shows that Kuwait’s stock exchange is an attractive destination for local and international investors”.*

About National Investment Company

National Investments Company, is a Kuwait-based company engaged in investment and asset management activities. The Company is organized, along with its subsidiaries, into seven business segments, including Assets and Portfolio Management, focused on discretionary, non-discretionary and custodial accounts of institutional and high net worth investors; Real Estate, focused on investing in the local, regional and international real estate markets; Corporate Finance, focused on financial advisory and mergers and acquisitions services; Private Equity, focused on direct investments; Treasury, focused on investment advice; Research, focused on asset management research and electronic trading systems.

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Supervised by the Cyprus Securities and Exchange Commission (license number 086/7)
4 Vas. Sofias, 3rd Floor, 10674 Athens, Greece
Tel +30 210 7414400, Fax +30 210 7414449
www.axiavg.com

About Arzan Financial Group

Arzan Financial Group, is a Kuwait-based public shareholding company that provides personalized financial management and advisory services. The company's business lines include in Wealth Management, Credit and Debt Collections, Asset Management, and Venture Capital Investments. The Wealth Management department advises clients on real estate, private equity and development investments. On the Corporate Credit side, Arzan offers its services to small & medium businesses facilitating working capital, along with factoring services to those who deal in the wholesale and retail business. The Asset Management and Brokerage department offers both brokerage and investment platform services across the Middle East market. The Venture Capital department invests in innovative tech startups in MENA, U.S. and Europe.

About First Investment Company

First Investment Co, is a Kuwait-based public shareholding company principally engaged in the provision of investment and financial services in accordance to the Islamic Sharia principles. The Company invests in private equity, venture capital, public equity and asset management. The Company's business is structured into three segments: the Direct Investment segment, which is responsible for establishing new companies, advising on mergers and acquisitions and managing real estate investments; the Asset Management segment, which is engaged in portfolio management, mutual fund and treasury services, and the Funds Management segment, which manages three funds, namely First Gulf Equity Fund, First Arabian Equity 2000 Fund, and Muthanna Money Market Fund.

About the Athens Exchange Group

The Athens Exchange Group consists of the publicly traded company "Hellenic Exchange-Athens Stock Exchange (ATHEX)" (Symbol: EXAE), the "Hellenic Central Securities Depository (ATHEXCSD)" and "Athens Exchange Clearing House (ATHEXClear)". Athens Exchange Group (ATHEX Group) provides support to the Greek Capital Market, operates the organized equities, derivatives markets and the alternative market, performs clearing and settlement of trades, offers financing tools and solutions to companies and expands investor choice by providing a safe, stable and easy environment in full alignment with international practices and the European regulatory framework.

About AXIA Ventures Group Ltd

AXIA Ventures Group Ltd ("AXIA"), a member of AXIA Financial Group ("AFG"), is a privately owned investment banking group providing financial advisory and capital market-related services to corporate and institutional clients. AXIA is headquartered in Nicosia, Cyprus, regulated by the Cyprus Securities and Exchange Commission (License No: 086/07) and fully licensed to provide financial advisory services in many financial markets around the world. AXIA has presence in Nicosia (headquarters), Athens (branch), Lisbon (branch), New York (subsidiary), Milan (representative office) and London (representative office). For more information on AXIA and its services, you can visit the AXIA website at <http://www.axiavg.com>.

Contact:

Vaia Dotsia

Associate

AXIA Ventures Group Ltd

Athens, Greece

Tel: +30 210 7414430

Email: vaia.dotsia@axiavg.com

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