

## Press Release

### **Mizuho Securities, The Bridgeford Group and Evercore Partners form strategic alliance to offer cross-border M&A advisory services in Japan and North America**

*Alliance provides Evercore direct access to Japanese M&A market through Mizuho's large corporate client roster*

*Mizuho and Bridgeford to benefit from the depth of Evercore's client relationships and industry experience in North America*

Tokyo, Japan and New York, NY – February 2, 2006 – Mizuho Securities, a leading Japanese financial institution, its wholly-owned U.S. advisory subsidiary The Bridgeford Group, and Evercore Partners, a leading New York-based boutique financial advisory and investment firm, have signed a strategic alliance agreement to provide cross-border M&A advisory services to clients in North America and Japan.

Under the terms of the exclusive agreement announced today, Mizuho Securities will gain access to Evercore's deep senior-level client relationships, extensive M&A and restructuring experience, and industry expertise. The alliance will give Evercore access to the large roster of Japanese corporate clients that Mizuho Securities serves and a greatly enhanced ability to advise its North American clients on a global basis.

Makoto Fukuda, President of Mizuho Securities, said: "Evercore is a distinguished partner who can bring senior level experience and industry expertise to a wide variety of opportunities and also strengthen the global capability of our advisory services. In addition, the strong personal relationships that senior Evercore professionals enjoy with corporate managers in the United States will allow us to help our Japanese corporate clients identify new strategic investment opportunities and assist in successfully completing large and complex cross-border transactions."

Roger Altman, Chairman, Co-CEO and Co-Founder of Evercore Partners, said: "Evercore's exclusive relationship with Mizuho Securities expands our firm's reach into Japan, significantly enhancing our ability to advise our clients globally. We are proud

to be partnering with a leader in financial services in Japan and are extremely excited about the prospect of providing a new dimension of Evercore capabilities to our clients.”

The alliance is intended to cover large-scale, cross-border M&A and related transactions between Japanese and North American companies. The Bridgeford Group has been focusing mainly on M&A advisory services for Japanese companies interested in the North American market and will continue to strengthen its capabilities both inside and outside the scope of the alliance.

#### **About Mizuho Securities and The Bridgeford Group**

Mizuho Securities is a member of the Mizuho Financial Group, a leading multinational financial services group that was formed by the September 2000 combination of The Dai-Ichi Kangyo Bank, Ltd., The Fuji Bank, Ltd. and The Industrial Bank of Japan, Ltd. In its core business areas of debt, equity, M&A, and structured finance, Mizuho Securities makes use of quality personnel and cutting-edge technology to provide high value-added products and services, and engages in global activities as a leading professional house that can compete with the top firms of the United States and Europe. Mizuho Securities' Advisory Group provides its corporate clients with strategic and financial advice on corporate mergers, spin-offs, acquisitions, divestitures, business tie-ups, and financial strategy as well as corporate restructuring, the disposal of non-performing loans, and bankruptcy disposal.

Founded in 1990, The Bridgeford Group is an M&A advisory firm based in New York City, and is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Mizuho Securities. The Bridgeford Group is unique in the way it mobilizes banking executives from both Japan and top U.S. investment banks to work jointly on financial advisory projects. The Bridgeford Group has advised on some of the most significant cross-border transactions by Japanese acquirers in the United States and abroad.

### **About Evercore Partners**

Established in 1996, Evercore Partners is a leading boutique advisory and investment firm. Evercore provides mergers and acquisitions and restructuring advisory services to prominent multinational corporations. The firm also manages private equity and venture capital funds. Evercore recently extended its investing business to create Evercore Asset Management, an institutional asset management firm. The company's recent advisory transactions include SBC's \$22 billion acquisition of AT&T, Tyco's and Cendant's proposed split-ups, Scientific Atlanta's pending \$6.9 billion sale to Cisco Systems, and Swiss Re's pending \$6.8 billion purchase of General Electric's Insurance Business.

### ***Inquiries:***

For Mizuho Securities:  
Corporate Communication Office  
Telephone: +81-3-5208-2030

For Evercore Partners:  
Kenny Juarez of The Abernathy MacGregor Group  
Telephone: +1-212-371-5999