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BHP LIMITED BILLITON PLC

JOINT STOCK EXCHANGE ANNOUNCEMENT AND NEWS RELEASE
Melbourne, 1000, Friday, 15 June 2001

EUROPEAN COMMISSION APPROVES MERGER OF BHP AND BILLITON

BHP Limited and Billiton Plc announce that the European Commission has provided the necessary regulatory approvals for the merger of the two companies to proceed. The companies are confident that the remaining non-Australian regulatory approvals will be obtained shortly.

Information on the effective implementation date for the merger, as well as the record date and timing of the issue of bonus shares to BHP shareholders will be announced within a short period of time.

Following completion of the merger, BHP Billiton will issue further information to the investment market, relating to the timing and nature of financial reporting, as well as additional information on the organisational structure.

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