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For Immediate Release

Investors planning return to private equity markets, conference told

Despite suffering some heavy losses in the private equity markets recently, investors are expected to return with some substantial funds, according to Ray Soudah, one of Europe's top M&A specialists in the field of the wealth management industry.

Speaking at the European Private Equity Conference in Edinburgh (on November 21), he said the move would lead to steady growth in M&A activity over the next few years.

Mr. Soudah, the founder of MilleniumAssociates, an independent M&A advisory firm to the global wealth management industry, pointed out that institutions and high wealth individual investors were allocating 5%-15% of their cash for alternative investment products – including private equity funds.

"If only a fraction of this is earmarked for private equity funds, we will see a tremendous demand for quality, private equity products in the coming years," he said. "This demand will force the need for more accurate business models of the organisations involved and the typical partnerships set up to manage such businesses."

Mr. Soudah said global asset management houses would be seeking to acquire private equity firms more and more in the future. This meant that the firms would have to be structured in such a way as to make themselves more easily transferable as businesses in their own right, rather than funds managed by qualified managers and partners.

He added: "M&A activity in this sector is expected to grow steadily with most deals being relatively smaller in the short term. This reflects the relatively smaller size of the funds under management by most private equity partnerships."

Note to Editors

MilleniumAssociates AG is headquartered in Switzerland, the heart of the Wealth Management Industry. The firm specialises in advising on Merger and Acquisitions and strategy consulting with emphasis on private banking, family offices, asset/fund management and other Wealth Management businesses including life insurance. As a Swiss-based corporation, MilleniumAssociates AG is not part of an integrated investment house and the firm is therefore uniquely positioned to offer independent pure advice in order to maximise shareholder value for its clients.

The company currently has numerous well-experienced specialists who have managed, amongst other important deals, the acquisition of **Global Asset Management**, with about CHF 20 billion assets under management, by **UBS AG**, and the acquisitions of **J O Hambro Investment Management** and **Frye-Louis Capital Management** by **Credit Suisse**. The team has experienced participating in numerous transactions in the past few years covering key aspects including origination, valuation, due diligence and contract negotiations.

MilleniumAssociates' fully dedicated team of specialists are involved in numerous active Wealth Management advisory projects with assignments supporting clients with expanding global strategies as well as those seeking to determine their ideal strategic options including partnerships and alliances. The firm recently stated that it intended to donate at least one percent of annual gross profits to charity.

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