



WSBI

PRESS INFORMATION



BancoEstado

World Savings Banks Institute /
BancoEstado, Chile

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22nd WSBI World Congress:

In the context of the financial crisis, Savings Banks from around the world renew their commitment to support the real economy and the most vulnerable parts of the population

- Savings and retail banks representatives from all over the world will gather in Santiago this Thursday 30 April and Friday 1st May to develop sustainable and innovative solutions to maintain their commitment in favour of giving access to finance to all citizens, while meeting their efficiency and competitive objectives. This objective is particularly relevant within the context of the global economic and financial crisis.

Santiago, Chile, Wednesday 29 April 2009. More than 300 savings and retail banks professionals will attend the 22nd Congress of the World Savings Banks Institute (WSBI) entitled "Financial inclusion in a globalised world: OUR CHALLENGE". The conference, organized by BancoEstado and the World Savings Banks Institute (WSBI) aims to provide a way forward towards full social and financial inclusion in the current economic context.

The two day programme includes five sessions during which high level representatives will discuss the crisis, financial inclusion, the role of technology and finance throughout the world.

During the press conference, José Antonio Olavarieta, the President of the WSBI, highlighted the importance of organising such an event in the current context: *"Both the proximity banking model and the pluralism of banking markets should be considered as building blocks for the reconstruction of the global financial system"*. The WSBI promotes the retail banking model as a positive approach to prevent the high risk ventures which are commonly believed to have precipitated the crisis.

José Luis Mardones, Chairman of BancoEstado and Vice President of the WSBI, emphasized the relevance of this event and welcomed both the President of the WSBI and the WSBI Managing Director: *"The organization of this event in Chile is very exciting, especially within this historical economic context. These times of global economic troubles provide us with an opportunity to work together to support financial inclusion and get back to the basics in helping people save their earnings and grow their businesses"*.

WSBI Managing Director Chris De Noose declared that this Congress would reinforce the retail banking sector: *"I strongly believe that the innovation and progress in the banking sector must be put to the service of our core market segment: the retail customers, the small businesses and the society as a whole that are at the heart of our business values"*.

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WSBI members aim to expand access to financial services and products for unbanked people throughout the world. The important aspects to focus on in order to accomplish this are geographical access to financial institutions, the use of technology, high quality and adapted services, client education, and information availability.

Editors Notes

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WSBI (World Savings Banks Institute) is one of the largest international banking associations and the only global representative of savings and retail banks. Founded in 1924, it represents more than 7 000 financial intermediaries from 92 countries, including all ESBG (European Savings Banks Group) members. It works closely with international financial institutions and donor agencies and manages banking projects to develop worldwide financial sectors.

WSBI members are typically savings and retail banks or associations thereof. They are often organised in decentralised networks and offer their services throughout their region. WSBI member banks have re-invested responsibly in their region for many decades and are one distinct benchmark for corporate social responsibility activities throughout the world.

For more information, please visit: www.savings-banks.com

BancoEstado (BancoEstado is a public institution with legal entity and own patrimony. It is an autonomous institution that offers financial services to all people, public institutions, micro, small, medium and big companies. BancoEstado has millions of clients all over the country and especially focuses on the savings issues. It is a leader in the provision of services to low income segments. Its mission is to be a universal bank offering a full range of integrated financial services to all clients so that every Chilean, everywhere, can develop and undertake entrepreneurial activities. Its vision is to be a world-class bank that contributes to families and firms progress as well as Chile's growth and modernization. BancoEstado is one of the three main banks in the country. Financially speaking, it is a profitable, efficient and outstanding institution with an important position in the financial market. Likewise, BancoEstado has an excellent risk classification guaranteed by Standard & Poor that confirms the traditional reliability of the bank. BancoEstado was established in 1953 after the merger of several banks like the mortgage and the saving banks with the concept of public bank.

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