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## Press Release

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### The 7<sup>th</sup> Asian Banker Excellence in Retail Financial Services Awards 2008

#### Public Bank wins Best Retail Bank in Malaysia award

- *Public Bank wins the 2008 Best Retail Bank in Malaysia award for its performance in 2007.*
- *Public Bank's outstanding financial performance and expanded product offerings give it the edge over domestic competitors*
- *Over 150 banks and financial institutions from 23 countries across the Asia Pacific, GCC region and Central Asia were evaluated as part of the Excellence in Retail Financial Services programme.*

**Kuala Lumpur, 16 May 2008** – Public Bank has notched a major accolade at the seventh Asian Banker Excellence in Retail Financial Services Awards: *Best Retail Bank in Malaysia*. The bank received the award at The Asian Banker Excellence in Retail Financial Services 2008 Awards ceremony, held in conjunction with the region's most prestigious retail banking event, the Excellence in Retail Financial Services Convention. The ceremony was held at the Westin Grande Sukhumvit in Bangkok on the evening of 16 May 2008.

About 150 senior bankers from award winning banks in 23 countries across the Asia Pacific, the Gulf region and Central Asia attended the glittering event, the industry's celebration of the region's best retail bankers that recognizes their efforts in bringing superior products and services to their customers.

The awards programme, administered by The Asian Banker, and refereed by prominent global bankers, consultants and academics, is the most prestigious award of its kind.

- *Public Bank wins the 2008 Best Retail Bank in Malaysia award for its performance in 2007.*

Public Bank has won the prestigious award for Best Retail Bank in Malaysia 2008 in The Asian Banker Excellence in Retail Financial Services programme.

- *Public Bank's outstanding financial performance and expanded product offerings give it the edge over domestic competitors*

Public Bank beat out fierce competition to win the country award in Malaysia based on its outstanding financial performance, strong non-interest income activities and a range of new products and services.

The well-rounded retail banking franchise delivered robust profitability alongside asset and deposit growth. It has a healthy cost to income ratio of 33 percent, an excellent core deposit growth of 24 percent, and generated more loans and profits per employee than most of its peers. The Islamic banking business continues to thrive, with asset growth in excess of 30 percent and new mortgage products were added to its flagship residential mortgage loan offerings that continue to rank among the top housing loan brands in the market.

Public Bank's unit trust and wealth management business and the strategic alliance in bancassurances with ING Group will further boost the fee income base and help accelerate its ability to offer a broadened and integrated range of financial services.

- ***Over 150 banks and financial institutions in 23 countries across Asia Pacific, the GCC region and Central Asia evaluated as part of the Excellence in Retail Financial Services programme.***

"This year over 150 banks and financial institutions in 23 countries across the Asian region were evaluated as part of the Excellence in Retail Financial Services programme," said Mr Phillip Strause, chairman of the Excellence in Retail Financial Services programme and an International Resource Director for The Asian Banker.

The award evaluation process uses a comprehensive methodology to evaluate the strength of individual banks' retail banking businesses that involved extensive research and probing interviews, and taps the combined experience of a team of experienced researchers. The process also incorporates an AC Nielsen customer perception survey to gauge the strength and reputation of retail banks in the different countries.

Mr Strause, who has close to 40 years' experience working with commercial banks, investment banks, brokerage firms, insurance companies and other specialised financial institutions, further added: "The Asian Banker Excellence programme was instituted in 2001 on the premise that an outstanding player in the retail financial services industry should build business franchises that are sustainable, competitive and profitable over a period of time".

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### ***About The Asian Banker***

The Asian Banker is the region's most authoritative provider of strategic business intelligence to the financial services community. The Singapore-based company has offices in Singapore, Malaysia, Beijing and Shanghai as well as representatives in London, New York, Dubai and San Francisco. It has a business model that revolves around three core business lines: publications, research services and forums. For more information, please visit [www.theasianbanker.com](http://www.theasianbanker.com).

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