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ASIA CASSAVA RESOURCES HOLDINGS LIMITED

亞洲木薯資源控股有限公司

(Incorporated in the Cayman Islands with limited liability)

(Stock Code : 841)

**INTERIM RESULTS ANNOUNCEMENT
FOR SIX MONTHS ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2017**

The Board of Directors (the "Board") of Asia Cassava Resources Holdings Limited (the "Company") is pleased to announce the unaudited consolidated results of the Company and its subsidiaries (the "Group") for the six months ended 30 September 2017 together with the comparative figures in 2016.

**CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS
AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME (UNAUDITED)**

	Notes	Six months ended 30 September 2017 HK\$'000	2016 HK\$'000
REVENUE	4	852,169	951,489
Cost of sales		(753,065)	(854,422)
Gross profit		99,104	97,067
Other income	4	4,081	3,016
Selling and distribution costs		(66,711)	(64,103)
General and administrative expenses		(26,782)	(26,549)
Finance costs		(2,549)	(2,823)
PROFIT BEFORE TAX	5	7,143	6,608
Income tax expense	6	(750)	(714)
PROFIT FOR THE PERIOD ATTRIBUTABLE TO OWNERS OF THE COMPANY		6,393	5,894
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME			
Other comprehensive income to be reclassified to profit or loss in subsequent periods:			
Exchange differences arising on translation of foreign operations		651	(125)
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE PERIOD		7,044	5,769
EARNINGS PER SHARE ATTRIBUTABLE TO ORDINARY EQUITY HOLDERS OF THE COMPANY	7		
Basic and diluted (HK cents)		1.1	1.0

CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	Notes	30 September 2017 HK\$'000 (unaudited)	31 March 2017 HK\$'000 (audited)
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment		153,758	153,575
Investment properties		91,838	91,838
Prepaid land lease payments		8,657	8,681
Available-for-sale investments	8	30,749	30,749
Prepayments, deposits and other receivables		8,328	8,328
Deferred tax assets		517	517
Total non-current assets		<u>293,847</u>	<u>293,688</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Inventories		325,331	437,678
Trade and bills receivables	9	303,408	417,202
Prepayments, deposits and other receivables		35,780	34,185
Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	10	3,980	3,553
Pledged deposits		10,151	10,151
Cash and cash equivalents		123,675	162,406
Total current assets		<u>802,325</u>	<u>1,065,175</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables and accruals	12	32,824	38,591
Interest-bearing bank borrowings		205,842	470,560
Tax payable		48,746	47,996
Total current liabilities		<u>287,412</u>	<u>557,147</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>514,913</u>	<u>508,028</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>808,760</u>	<u>801,716</u>
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Deferred tax liabilities		<u>4,801</u>	<u>4,801</u>
Net assets		<u>803,959</u>	<u>796,915</u>
EQUITY			
Equity attributable to owners of the Company			
Issued share capital		58,473	58,473
Reserves		<u>745,486</u>	<u>738,442</u>
Total equity		<u>803,959</u>	<u>796,915</u>

CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY (UNAUDITED)

	Attributable to owners of the Company										Non-controlling interest HK\$'000 (note (iv))	Total equity HK\$'000
	Issued capital HK\$'000	Share premium* HK\$'000	Contributed surplus* HK\$'000 (note (i))	Merger reserve* HK\$'000 (note (ii))	Legal reserve* HK\$'000 (note (iii))	Asset revaluation reserve* HK\$'000	Exchange fluctuation reserve* HK\$'000	Retained profits* HK\$'000	Proposed dividends HK\$'000	Total HK\$'000		
At 1 April 2016	58,473	424,931	8,229	(249,726)	46	16,955	204	521,959	-	781,071	-	781,071
Profit for the period	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,894	-	5,894	-	5,894
Other comprehensive income for the period:												
Exchange differences arising on translation of foreign operations, as restated	-	-	-	-	-	-	(125)	-	-	(125)	-	(125)
Total comprehensive income for the period	-	-	-	-	-	-	(125)	5,894	-	5,769	-	5,769
At 30 September 2016	<u>58,473</u>	<u>424,931</u>	<u>8,229</u>	<u>(249,726)</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>16,955</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>527,853</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>786,840</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>786,840</u>

	Attributable to owners of the Company										Non-controlling interest HK\$'000 (note (iv))	Total equity HK\$'000
	Issued capital HK\$'000	Share premium* HK\$'000	Contributed surplus* HK\$'000 (note (i))	Merger reserve* HK\$'000 (note (ii))	Legal reserve* HK\$'000 (note (iii))	Asset revaluation reserve* HK\$'000	Exchange fluctuation reserve* HK\$'000	Retained profits* HK\$'000	Proposed dividends HK\$'000	Total HK\$'000		
At 1 April 2017	58,473	424,931	8,229	(249,726)	46	19,125	(3,682)	539,519	-	796,915	-	796,915
Profit for the period	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,393	-	6,393	-	6,393
Other comprehensive income for the period:												
Exchange differences arising on translation of foreign operations	-	-	-	-	-	-	651	-	-	651	-	651
Total comprehensive income for the period	-	-	-	-	-	-	651	6,393	-	7,044	-	7,044
At 30 September 2017	<u>58,473</u>	<u>424,931</u>	<u>8,229</u>	<u>(249,726)</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>19,125</u>	<u>(3,031)</u>	<u>545,912</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>803,959</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>803,959</u>

Notes:

- (i) The Group's contributed surplus represents the excess of the nominal value of the shares of the subsidiaries acquired pursuant to a group reorganisation (the "Group Reorganisation") prior to the listing of the Company's shares, over the nominal value of the Company's shares issued in exchange therefor.
 - (ii) The merger reserve represents (1) the excess of the consideration paid over the net asset value of the subsidiaries acquired pursuant to the Group Reorganisation in the prior year and (2) the difference between the consideration paid and the net assets value of the acquiree arising from the business combination under common control.
 - (iii) In accordance with the provisions of the Macau Commercial Code, the Group's subsidiary incorporated in Macau is required to transfer 25% of the annual net profit to the legal reserve before the appropriation of profits to dividends until the reserve equals half of the capital. This reserve is not distributable to the respective shareholders.
 - (iv) The Group's non-controlling interest represents 10% of equity interest in subsidiaries, Asiafame Enterprises Limited and Artsun Resources Company Limited, of HK\$10.
- * These reserve accounts comprise the consolidated reserves of HK\$745,486,000 (30 September 2016: HK\$728,367,000) in the consolidated statement of financial position.

CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS (UNAUDITED)

	Six months ended 30 September	
	2017 HK\$000	2016 HK\$000
NET CASH INFLOW/(OUTFLOW) FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	226,536	209,282
NET CASH INFLOW/(OUTFLOW) FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES	(1,200)	3,472
NET CASH OUTFLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES	<u>(264,718)</u>	<u>(291,254)</u>
NET INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	(39,382)	(78,500)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of period	162,406	191,297
Effect of foreign exchange rate changes, net	<u>651</u>	<u>(125)</u>
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT END OF PERIOD	<u><u>123,675</u></u>	<u><u>112,672</u></u>

1. CORPORATE INFORMATION

The Company was incorporated as an exempted company with limited liability in the Cayman Islands on 8 May 2008. The registered office of the Company is located at Cricket Square, Hutchins Drive, PO Box 2681, Grand Cayman, KY1-1111, Cayman Islands.

The principal activities of the Group are the procurement of dried cassava chips in Southeast Asian countries and the sales of dried cassava chips in Mainland China and Thailand and the hotel operations in the Mainland China.

In the opinion of the directors, the ultimate holding company of the Company is Art Rich Management Limited which is incorporated in the British Virgin Islands.

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND BASIS OF PRESENTATION

These interim condensed consolidated financial information have been prepared in accordance with Hong Kong Accounting Standard (“HKAS”) 34 “Interim Financial Reporting” issued by the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants (“HKICPA”), and the disclosure requirements set out in Appendix 16 of the Rules Governing the Listing of Securities on the Stock Exchange. The accounting policies and basis of preparation adopted in the preparation of the interim condensed consolidated financial statements are the same as those used in the annual financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2017, except for the adoption of certain new and revised Hong Kong Financial Reporting Standards (“HKFRSs”) (which also include HKASs and Interpretation) for the first time in the current period as disclosed in note 2.1 below.

2.1 CHANGES IN ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND DISCLOSURES

The Group adopted the new and revised HKFRSs issued by HKICPA for the first time for the current period’s unaudited condensed consolidated financial statements.

Amendments to HKAS 7	Disclosure Initiative
Amendments to HKAS 12	Recognition of Deferred Tax Assets for Unrealised Losses

The adoption of the revised standards and new interpretation has had no significant financial effect on these financial statements.

3. SEGMENT INFORMATION

For management purposes, the Group is organised into business units based on their products and services and has three reportable operating segments as follows:

- (a) the procurement and sale of dried cassava chips segment engages in the procurement and sale of dried cassava chips;
- (b) the property investment segment invests in office space and industrial properties for its rental income potential; and
- (c) the hotel operations segment engages in hotel operations in the PRC.

Management monitors the results of its operating segments separately for the purpose of making decisions about resources allocation and performance assessment. Segment performance is evaluated based on reportable segment profit, which is a measure of adjusted profit before tax. The adjusted profit before tax is measured consistently with the Group's profit before tax except that interest income, finance costs, as well as head office and corporate expenses are excluded from such measurement.

Segment assets exclude cash and cash equivalents, pledged deposits, available-for-sales investment, other unallocated head office and corporate assets as these assets are managed on a group basis.

Segment liabilities exclude tax payable, deferred tax liabilities and other unallocated head office and corporate assets as these liabilities are managed on a group basis.

3. SEGMENT INFORMATION (continued)

	Procurement and sales of dried cassava chips HK\$'000	Property investment HK\$'000	Hotel operation HK\$'000	Total HK\$'000
Six months ended 30 September 2017				
Segment revenue:				
Sales to external customers	840,901	-	-	840,901
Gross rental income	-	1,404	-	1,404
Hotel room revenue, food and beverage	-	-	11,268	11,268
Total	<u>840,901</u>	<u>1,404</u>	<u>11,268</u>	<u>853,573</u>
Segment results	<u>8,145</u>	<u>878</u>	<u>21</u>	9,044
Interest and unallocated gains				2,677
Corporate and other unallocated expenses				(2,029)
Finance costs				<u>(2,549)</u>
Profit before tax				<u>7,143</u>
Other segment information:				
Depreciation	3,646	510	950	5,106
Capital expenditure	<u>1,170</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>1,200</u>
Six months ended 30 September 2016				
Segment revenue:				
Sales to external customers	940,129	-	-	940,129
Gross rental income	-	1,061	-	1,061
Hotel room revenue, food and beverage	-	-	11,360	11,360
Total	<u>940,129</u>	<u>1,061</u>	<u>11,360</u>	<u>952,550</u>
Segment results	<u>8,972</u>	<u>459</u>	<u>(4)</u>	9,427
Interest and unallocated gains				1,955
Corporate and other unallocated expenses				(1,951)
Finance costs				<u>(2,823)</u>
Profit before tax				<u>6,608</u>
Other segment information:				
Depreciation	3,064	303	988	4,355
Capital expenditure	<u>2,231</u>	<u>2,404</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,635</u>

3. SEGMENT INFORMATION (continued)

	Procurement and sales of dried cassava chips HK\$'000	Property investment HK\$'000	Hotel operation HK\$'000	Total HK\$'000
As at 30 September 2017				
Segment assets	724,689	115,684	60,485	900,858
Corporate and other unallocated assets				<u>195,314</u>
Total assets				<u>1,096,172</u>
Segment liabilities	225,843	784	9,099	235,726
Corporate and other unallocated liabilities				<u>56,487</u>
Total liabilities				<u>292,213</u>
	Procurement and sales of dried cassava chips HK\$'000	Property investment HK\$'000	Hotel operation HK\$'000	Total HK\$'000
As at 31 March 2017				
Segment assets	931,690	116,575	58,182	1,106,447
Corporate and other unallocated assets				<u>252,416</u>
Total assets				<u>1,358,863</u>
Segment liabilities	495,158	804	8,396	504,358
Corporate and other unallocated liabilities				<u>57,590</u>
Total liabilities				<u>561,948</u>

Geographical information

(a) Revenue from external customers

	Six months ended 30 September	
	2017 HK\$'000	2016 HK\$'000
Hong Kong	1,404	1,061
Mainland China	<u>852,169</u>	<u>951,489</u>
	<u>853,573</u>	<u>952,550</u>

The revenue information above is based on the location of the customers.

(b) Non-current assets

	30 September 2017 HK\$'000	31 March 2017 HK\$'000
Hong Kong	106,749	103,266
Mainland China	77,922	78,872
Thailand	44,359	45,017
Unallocated	<u>33,551</u>	<u>35,267</u>
	<u>262,581</u>	<u>262,422</u>

The vessel (included in property, plant and equipment) is primarily utilised across geographical markets for shipment of dried cassava chips throughout the world. Accordingly, it is impractical to present the locations of the vessel by geographical areas and thus the vessel is presented as unallocated non-current assets.

The information of the remaining non-current asset above is based on the location of assets and excludes financial instruments and deferred tax assets.

4. REVENUE AND OTHER INCOME

Revenue, which is also the Group's turnover, represents the net invoiced value of goods sold, after allowances for returns and trade discounts.

An analysis of revenue is as follows:

	Six months ended 30 September	
	2017 HK\$'000	2016 HK\$'000
<u>Revenue</u>		
Sales of dried cassava chips	840,901	940,129
Hotel room revenue, food and beverage	<u>11,268</u>	<u>11,360</u>
	<u>852,169</u>	<u>951,489</u>

An analysis of other income is as follows:

	Six months ended 30 September	
	2017 HK\$'000	2016 HK\$'000
<u>Other income</u>		
Bank interest income	173	166
Gross rental income	1,404	1,061
Logistic service income	1,340	-
Others	<u>1,164</u>	<u>1,789</u>
	<u>4,081</u>	<u>3,016</u>

5. PROFIT BEFORE TAX

The Group's profit before tax is arrived at after charging/(crediting):

	Six months ended 30 September	
	2017 HK\$'000	2016 HK\$'000
Cost of inventories sold	749,123	849,516
Depreciation	5,106	4,355
Employee benefit expenses (including directors' remuneration):		
Wages and salaries	13,028	12,867
Pension scheme contributions*	720	698
	<u>13,748</u>	<u>13,565</u>
Rental income on investment properties less direct operating expense of HK\$12,000 (2016: HK\$12,000)	(1,392)	(1,049)
Minimum lease payments under operating leases in respect of storage facilities and office premises	1,344	2,430
Contingent rent under operating leases in respect of storage facilities	<u>1,803</u>	<u>1,399</u>

6. INCOME TAX

Hong Kong profits tax has been provided at the rates of 16.5% (2016: 16.5%) on the estimated assessable profits arising in Hong Kong during the period. Taxes on profits assessable elsewhere have been calculated at the rates of tax prevailing in the countries/jurisdictions in which the Group operates.

	Six months ended 30 September	
	2017 HK\$'000	2016 HK\$'000
Current – Hong Kong	<u>750</u>	<u>714</u>
Total tax charge for the period	<u>750</u>	<u>714</u>

7. EARNINGS PER SHARE ATTRIBUTABLE TO ORDINARY EQUITY HOLDERS OF THE COMPANY

The calculation of basic earnings per share amounts is based on the profit for the six months ended 30 September 2017 and 2016 attributable to ordinary equity holders of the Company and the weighted average number of 584,726,715 (2016: 584,726,715) ordinary shares in issue during the period.

No adjustment has been made to the basic earnings per share amounts presented for the six months ended 30 September 2017 and 2016 in respect of a dilution as the Group had no potentially dilutive ordinary shares in issue during those periods.

8. AVAILABLE-FOR-SALE INVESTMENTS

	30 September 2017 HK\$'000	31 March 2017 HK\$'000
Available-for-sale investments:		
Unlisted equity investments, at cost	<u>30,749</u>	<u>30,749</u>

Notes:

The above investments consist of investments in equity securities which were designated by the Group as available-for-sale financial assets and have no fixed maturity date or coupon rate.

As at 30 September 2017, the Group's unlisted equity investments were stated at cost less impairment because the range of reasonable fair value estimates is so significant that the directors are of the opinion that fair value cannot be measured reliably. The Group does not intend to dispose of it in the near future.

9. TRADE AND BILLS RECEIVABLES

It is the Group's policy that all customers who wish to trade with the Group to provide the Group with irrecoverable letters of credit issued by reputable banks, with terms within 90 days to 180 days at sight, or by cash on delivery. Credit limits are set for individual customers. The Group seeks to maintain tight control over its outstanding receivables in order to minimise credit risk.

An aged analysis of the Group's trade and bills receivable as at the end of the reporting period, based on the invoice date, is as follows:

	30 September 2017 HK\$'000	31 March 2017 HK\$'000
Within 30 days	214,904	210,008
30 – 60 days	82,515	141,249
61 – 90 days	<u>5,989</u>	<u>65,945</u>
	<u>303,408</u>	<u>417,202</u>

Bills receivable of HK\$ nil as at 30 September 2017 (31 March 2017: HK\$25,398,000) were discounted to the banks with recourse.

Receivables that were neither past due nor impaired relate to customers for whom there was no recent history of default.

10. FINANCIAL ASSETS AT FAIR VALUE THROUGH PROFIT OR LOSS

	30 September 2017 HK\$'000	31 March 2017 HK\$'000
Listed equity securities, at market value	<u>3,980</u>	<u>3,553</u>

The above equity investments at 30 September 2017 were classified as held for trading and were, upon initial recognition, designated by the Group as financial assets at fair value through profit or loss.

11. TRADE AND OTHER PAYABLES AND ACCRUALS

	30 September 2017 HK\$'000	31 March 2017 HK\$'000
Trade payables	13,160	10,451
Other payables	9,947	16,669
Accrued liabilities	7,375	9,602
Rental deposits received	<u>2,342</u>	<u>1,869</u>
	<u>32,824</u>	<u>38,591</u>

An aged analysis of the trade payables as at the end of the reporting period, based on the invoice date, is as follows:

	30 September 2017 HK\$'000	31 March 2017 HK\$'000
Within 1 month	<u>13,160</u>	<u>10,451</u>

Trade and other payables are non-interest-bearing and have an average term of three months.

MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

During the period, the Group was principally engaged in procurement of dried cassava chips in Southeast Asian countries, including Thailand and sales of dried cassava chips, to customers in the People's Republic of China (the "PRC"). The Group had remained the largest procurer and exporter of dried cassava chips in Thailand and the largest supplier of imported dried cassava chips in the PRC with an all-round integrated business model covering procurement, processing, warehousing, logistics and sale of cassava chips, leading to a significant influence over the pricing in the market through continuous expansion of procurement networks.

During the six months ended 30 September 2017 (the "Current Period"), the PRC's demands for edible alcohol and ethanol fuel was stable, which is conducive to the Group's sales of dried cassava chips. However, certain customers in the PRC sourced domestic stockpiled raw material for production. As a result, the import quantity of the dried cassava chips in the PRC was decreased during the Current Period which led to the import price of dried cassava chips in the PRC fluctuated at comparatively low level.

Revenue

The Group's revenue from procurement and sales of dried cassava chips decreased by approximately HK\$99.2 million or approximately 10.6% from approximately HK\$940.1 million in the corresponding period of previous year to approximately HK\$840.9 million for the Current Period. Decrease in the Group's revenue was mainly attributable to the decrease in average selling price of dried cassava chips during the Current Period.

The Group's revenue from hotel operation was remain stable and it recorded approximately HK\$11.3 million for the Current Period (2016: approximately HK\$11.4 million). The Group intended to continue to capitalise opportunities, such as putting resources in carrying out promotions and optimising staff allocation so as to improve profitability.

Gross profit and gross profit margin

The Group's cost of sales from procurement and sales of dried cassava chips decreased by approximately HK\$100.4 million, or approximately 11.8%, from approximately HK\$849.5 million for the corresponding period of the previous year to approximately HK\$749.1 million in the Current Period, mainly due to the decrease in sales of dried cassava chips and unit costs in the Current Period.

The Group's gross profit from procurement and sales of dried cassava chips increased by approximately HK\$1.2 million, or approximately 1.3%, from approximately HK\$90.6 million for the corresponding period of previous year to approximately HK\$91.8 million for the Current Period, mainly due to net effect of decrease in revenue and increase in gross profit margin.

The Group's gross profit margin from procurement and sales of dried cassava chips for the Current Period increased to approximately 10.9% from approximately 9.6% for the corresponding period of previous year. During the Current Period, the Group decreased the procurement costs of dried cassava chips in view of the market condition. Hence, it resulted in a slightly increase in average gross profit margin of the sale of dried cassava chips of the Group.

The Group's cost of sales from hotel operation amounted to approximately HK\$3.9 million for the Current Period (2016: approximately HK\$4.9 million) due to its control over the direct costs. The Group's gross profit margin from hotel operation for the Current Period increased to approximately 65.0% from approximately 57.0% for the corresponding period of previous year.

Selling and distribution costs

During the Current Period, the Group's selling and distribution expenses of approximately HK\$66.7 million (2016: approximately HK\$64.1 million), comprised mainly (a) ocean freight costs of approximately HK\$26.5 million (2016: approximately HK\$26.3 million), (b) warehouse, handling and inland transportation expenses of approximately HK\$36.4 million (2016: approximately HK\$34.8 million) and (c) those related to hotel operation of approximately HK\$3.8 million (2016: approximately HK\$3.0 million) .

The Group's selling and distribution expenses increased mainly due to slightly increase in ocean freight costs and (ii) more promotion expenses incurred for hotel operation during the Current Period.

The Group's selling and distribution expenses represented 7.8% of the total sales revenue for the Current Period, compared to that of 6.7% for the corresponding period of previous year.

General and administrative expenses

General and administrative expenses of the Group was approximately HK\$26.8 million for the Current Period compared with approximately HK\$26.6 million for the corresponding period of previous year.

Finance costs

Finance expenses of the Group decreased from approximately HK\$2.8 million for the corresponding period of previous year to approximately HK\$2.5 million for the Current Period. During the Current Period, the Group had sufficient internal working capital for procurement of dried cassava chips and hence, the Group's outstanding bank borrowings were decreased and the decrease in finance expenses was resulted.

Taxation

For each of six months ended 30 September 2017 and 2016, the Group's taxations were approximately HK\$0.8 million and HK\$0.7 million, respectively. The effective tax rate of the Group for the Current Period was approximately 10.5% (2016: 10.8%).

Profit for the period

The Group's profit for the Current Period amounted to approximately HK\$6.4 million (2016: approximately HK\$5.9 million).

Financial resources and liquidity

As at 30 September 2017, the net assets amounted to approximately HK\$804.0 million, representing an increase of approximately HK\$7.1 million from approximately HK\$796.9 million as at 31 March 2017 due to the profit for the Current Period.

Current assets as at 30 September 2017 amounted to approximately HK\$802.3 million (31 March 2017: HK\$1,065.2 million), including cash and cash equivalents of approximately HK\$123.7 million (31 March 2017: HK\$162.4 million), trade and bills receivables of approximately HK\$303.4 million (31 March 2017: HK\$417.2 million) pledged deposits of HK\$ 10.2 million (31 March 2017: HK\$10.2 million) and inventories of approximately HK\$325.3 million (31 March 2017: HK\$437.7 million). As at 30 September 2017, the Group had non-current assets of approximately HK\$293.8 million (31 March 2017: HK\$293.7 million) which represented mainly the investments, the hotel, the vessel, and the properties located in Hong Kong for office and property investment purposes.

The Group's current liabilities as at 30 September 2017 amounted to approximately HK\$287.4 million (31 March 2017: HK\$557.1 million), which comprised mainly trade and other payables and accruals of approximately HK\$32.8 million (31 March 2017: HK\$38.6 million), tax payable of HK\$48.7 million (31 March 2017: HK\$ 48.0 million) and bank borrowings of approximately HK\$205.8 million (31 March 2017: HK\$470.6 million). The Group's non-current liabilities as at 30 September 2017 included deferred tax liabilities of approximately HK\$4.8 million (31 March 2017: HK\$4.8 million).

The Group expresses its gearing ratio as a percentage of borrowings over total assets. As at 30 September 2017, the Group had a gearing ratio of 18.8% (31 March 2017: 34.6%). Such decrease is mainly due to the decrease in bank borrowings at end of the Current Period.

Employment and remuneration policy

As at 30 September 2017, the total number of the Group's staff was approximately 250. The total staff costs (including directors' remuneration) amounted to approximately HK\$13.7 million for the six months ended 30 September 2017. The Group remunerates its employees based on their performance, experience and prevailing industry practice. The Group provides retirement benefit for its employees in Hong Kong in form of mandatory provident fund and provides similar schemes for its employees in the PRC, Macau, Vietnam and Thailand.

Charge on group assets

As at 30 September 2017, the Group's pledged bank deposits, land and buildings and investment properties situated in Hong Kong and bills receivable with aggregate carrying values of HK\$10,200,000 (31 March 2017: HK\$10,200,000), HK\$13,340,000 (31 March 2017: HK\$13,340,000), HK\$34,370,000 (31 March 2017: HK\$34,370,000), and HK\$ nil (31 March 2017: HK\$25,398,000) respectively, were pledged to the bankers to secure the banking facilities granted to the Group. There was no bills receivable as at 30 September 2017 (31 March 2017: HK\$25,398,000) were discounted to the banks with recourse.

Foreign currency exposure

The Group carries on business in Renminbi ("RMB"), United States dollars ("US\$") and Thai Baht and therefore the Group is exposed to foreign currency risk as the values of these currencies fluctuate in the international market. The Group currently does not have a foreign currency hedging policy in respect of foreign currency exposure. However, the directors monitor the related foreign currency exposure and will consider hedging significant foreign currency exposure should the need arise.

Contingent liabilities

As 30 September 2017, the Group did not have any material contingent liabilities.

Prospect

The Board believes that the Group is still facing challenges and opportunities ahead. In medium to long run, renewable energy is considered a vital resource of energy in the PRC, playing an important role in the aspects such as satisfying national energy safety and demand, and reducing environmental pollution. As a result, the use of non-grain feedstock to produce bio-fuel is encouraged by the PRC government. According to "The Mid- and Long-term Development Plan for Renewable Energy" in August 2007, the PRC would cease increasing the production capacity of ethanol fuel using grain feedstock, and target to increase the annual production capacity of ethanol fuel using non-grain feedstock from the current level of less than 1 million tonnes to 2 million tonnes by 2010 and to 10 million tonnes by 2020.

In addition, during the Current Period, the National Development and Reform Commission (國家發展改革委), the National Energy Administration (國家能源局), the Ministry of Finance (財政部) and other 15 ministries or commissions issued the "Implementation Plan on the expansion of bio-fuel ethanol production and promotion of the use of automotive ethanol gasoline" (《關於擴大生物燃料乙醇生產和推廣使用車用乙醇汽油的實施方案》) and the head of Science and Technology Division of National Energy Administration answered the journalists' questions about the plan. The media's articles mentioned that according to this plan, by 2020, the promotion of the use of automotive ethanol gasoline will be implemented nationwide. Up to now, China has only 11 provincial regions for pilot promotion of the ethanol gasoline. Should this plan be implemented as scheduled, we anticipate that the demand of dried cassava chips in the PRC ethanol fuel industry in the coming years will be growing. In addition, the Group will closely monitor on the implementation of this plan and will adjust the corporate development strategy, as appropriate, which will be beneficial to the Group's future business development.

For procurement, the Group has total 14 procurement facilities and networks of total storage capacity of 700,000 tonnes (including 9 procurement facilities and networks near the riverside or the cassava plantation zone in Thailand, 4 in Cambodia and 1 in Vietnam) which pave the solid foundation for enhancement of the market coverage and maintenance of long-term business development. The Group targets to reduce its unit cost of dried cassava chips and increase its gross profit margin with the effect of economy of scales in relation to the procurement business of dried cassava chips by the Group's procurement networks in Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia. In coming year, the Group intends to set up additional procurement facilities and networks (when appropriate) in Thailand, Vietnam or Cambodia so as to cope with the expected increase in demand of dried cassava chips, to increase the Group's market share and to maintain our leading position in the industry.

For transportation and logistics, the Group owns a vessel of 46,000 tonnes serving the Group to transport dried cassava chips from Thailand to the PRC and it operates trucks for inland transportation which connects the warehouse facilities near the plantation zone to the ports. As such, it will speed up the inland transportation of dried cassava chips, reduce the reliance on the external trucks and save the transportation costs.

The Group's unique and integrated business model combines the procurement, processing, warehousing, logistics and sale of cassava chips. Looking ahead, the Group plans to continue establishing more procurement and warehouse centres in order to replicate the proven business model in Thailand. Riding on our broad procurement channels and network together with the warehouse facilities, optimised logistics capabilities and the widespread sales network in the PRC, the Group will continue to strive to enhance our market coverage and maximise returns for our shareholders.

As regards the hotel operation, influenced by the slowdown in China's macro-economic growth, the Group not only puts more effort on controlling costs but also continues to allocate resources on promoting wedding and other banquets services, opening new restaurants, and attracting local residents (other than tourists or business travelers) for consumption in hotel so as to broaden income stream and improve the profitability. During the Current Period, the gross profit margin and the operating results of the Group's hotel business were improved. In addition, as the Group has a good reputation in hotel management locally, certain small or medium-sized local hotels has intentions to approach and negotiate with the Group in relation to engaging the Group as their hotel management company. The Group will prudently consider its feasibility for exploring new hotel management income.

Apart from the operation of hotel and the acquisition of investment properties, the Group will prudently explore other investment project with potentials, but not limiting to property project, in order to broaden the revenue sources and maximize returns for our shareholders.

DIVIDENDS AND CLOSURE OF REGISTER OF MEMBERS

The Board do not recommend payment of an interim dividend for the six months ended 30 September 2017 and hence, no closure of register of members is necessary.

PURCHASE, REDEMPTION OR SALE OF THE COMPANY'S LISTED SECURITIES

There were no purchases, redemption or sale of the Company's listed securities by the Company or its subsidiaries during the Current Period.

CODE OF CONDUCT REGARDING SECURITIES TRANSACTIONS BY DIRECTORS

During the six months ended 30 September 2017, the Company had adopted a code of conduct regarding securities transactions by directors on terms no less exacting than the required standard of dealings set out in Appendix 10 to the Rules Governing the Listing of Securities (the "Listing Rules") on the Stock Exchange. The Company also had made specific enquiry of all directors and the Company was not aware of any non-compliance with the required standard of dealings and its code of conduct regarding securities transactions by directors.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

To the knowledge of the Board, the Company has complied with all the code provisions in the Code on Corporate Governance Practices ("CG Code") as set out in Appendix 14 to the Listing Rules for the six months ended 30 September 2017, save for the deviation from the code provision A.2.1 of the CG Code.

Under provision A.2.1 of the CG Code, the role of the Chairman and the Chief Executive Officer should be performed by separate individuals. Mr. Chu Ming Chuan is the Chairman of the Board who provides leadership for the Board. According to A.2.2 and A.2.3 of the CG Code, Mr. Chu Ming Chuan as the Chairman ensures that all directors are properly briefed on issues arising at board meetings, and receive adequate information, both complete and reliable, in a timely manner. The executive Directors of the Company collectively oversee the overall management of the Group in each of their specialised executive fields, which fulfils the function of Chief Executive Officer in substance. Therefore, the Company currently has not appointed its Chief Executive Officer to avoid the duplication of duties.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Audit Committee comprises three independent non-executive directors of the Company. The Audit Committee held a meeting on 27 November 2017 and has reviewed with the management the accounting principles and practices adopted by the Group, the interim report and interim financial information of the Group for the Current Period and to give recommendations to the Board.

By order of the Board
Chu Ming Chuan
Chairman

Hong Kong, 30 November 2017

As at the date of this announcement, the executive directors of the Company are Mr. Chu Ming Chuan, Ms. Liu Yuk Ming and Ms. Lam Ching Fun; the independent non-executive directors of the Company are Mr. Lee Kwan Hung, Professor Fung Kwok Pui and Mr. Yue Man Yiu Matthew.