

Media release

St.Gallen, 22 April 2016

Helvetia: Shareholders' Meeting approves all proposals

The shareholders of Helvetia Holding AG acknowledged the company's solid performance in the past financial year at the 20th ordinary Shareholders' Meeting. They also gained a deeper insight into the new helvetia 20.20 strategy. The insurance group is building on its strengths and becomes more digital, more agile and more valuable. The Shareholders' Meeting approved all proposals by the Board of Directors.

At the 20th ordinary Shareholders' Meeting in St.Gallen, the Helvetia Group presented the 1,820 shareholders with voting rights (76.24 percent of the share capital represented) with another solid performance. This was shored up by the two successful acquisitions of Nationale Suisse and Baloise Austria, both of which have been largely integrated. Helvetia turned in a convincing performance in 2015, lifting its underlying earnings by 4.1 percent to CHF 439.0 million after taxes. The main driver was the technically strong non-life business, but the life segment also made gains. The IFRS result – temporarily distorted by the accounting effects of the acquisitions – amounted to CHF 309.5 million. In 2015 the insurance group increased its business volume by 11.1 percent in original currency to CHF 8,235.3 million. The Shareholders' Meeting acknowledged this and approved the management report, the annual financial statements and the consolidated financial statements for 2015. It also granted discharge to the Board of Directors and Executive Management for all actions taken during the 2015 financial year.

Helvetia set to be more digital, more agile and more valuable

The shareholders also gained a deeper insight into the new helvetia 20.20 strategy. Following the successful conclusion of the most recent strategy period "Helvetia 2015+", this new strategy provides answers to current market trends and makes the company more digital, more agile and more valuable. It places an even greater emphasis on its customers. Building on its strengths Helvetia can thus pursue ambitious goals. It wants to be the best Swiss insurer in the home market as a solid foundation for the Group. In addition, it is seeking to substantially improve its positioning in Europe and to expand its standing as a selective niche player in the Specialty Markets area. Helvetia will deploy the new strategy to create value for

customers, its employees and shareholders – with higher earnings and dividends for the shareholders. The company aims to remain personal and reliable.

Increased dividend

Thanks to the solid performance, the Shareholders' Meeting agreed to raise the dividend to CHF 19.00 per share – an increase of almost 6 percent compared to the previous year. The payout ratio is thus 45 percent on the basis of the underlying earnings and 66 percent on the basis of the IFRS result after taxes.

Members of the Board of Directors re-elected

The shareholders re-elected Dr. Pierin Vincenz as Chairman of the Board of Directors, a post he has held since October 2015, until the next ordinary Shareholders' Meeting in 2017. They also re-appointed the other nine former members standing for re-election for a further term of one year. As announced in March 2016, John Martin Manser, Dr. Balz Hösly and Dr. Peter Kaemmerer decided not to stand again and thus left the Board of Directors. Dr. Pierin Vincenz praised their commitment: "On behalf of the Board of Directors I would like to thank John Martin Manser for his considerable contribution to the success of our insurance group over the past 23 years. I would particularly like to thank Dr. Balz Hösly and Dr. Peter Kaemmerer for their valuable support during the acquisition and the integration of Nationale Suisse." Finally, the Shareholders' Meeting also confirmed KPMG AG, Zurich, as the statutory auditors for another year.

Remuneration approved

Moreover, the shareholders elected the members of the Nomination & Compensation Committee for another year and voted on the fixed and variable components of the remuneration for the members of the Board of Directors and the Executive Management. All proposals were approved.

This media release can also be found on the website www.helvetia.com/media.
An info kit on the Shareholders' Meeting is available at www.helvetia.com/gvinfokit.

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About the Helvetia Group

In over 150 years, the Helvetia Group has grown from a number of Swiss and foreign insurance companies into a successful international insurance group. Today, Helvetia has subsidiaries in its home market Switzerland as well as in the countries that make up the Europe market area: Germany, Italy, Austria and Spain. With its Specialty Markets market area, Helvetia is also present in France and in selected regions worldwide. Some of its investment and financing activities are managed through subsidiaries and fund companies in Luxembourg and Jersey. The Group is headquartered in St.Gallen, Switzerland.

Helvetia is active in the life and non-life business, and also offers customised specialty lines and reinsurance cover. Its business activities focus on retail customers as well as small and medium-sized companies and larger corporates. With some 6,700 employees, the company provides services to more than 4.7 million customers. With a business volume of CHF 8.24 billion, Helvetia generated underlying earnings of CHF 439 million in the 2015 financial year. The registered shares of Helvetia Holding are traded on the SIX Swiss Exchange under the symbol HELN.

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