

Liquidity and Capital Resources

As at 31st December 2013, the Group had a net current deposits position of HK\$3,916 million (31st December 2012: HK\$5,957 million) and long-term borrowings of HK\$24,401 million (31st December 2012: HK\$25,230 million). In addition, banking facilities available for use amounted to HK\$11,200 million (31st December 2012: HK\$7,100 million).

The operating and capital expenditures of the Group are funded by cash flow from operations, internal liquidity, banking facilities, debt and equity financing. The Group has adequate and stable sources of funds and unutilised banking facilities to meet its future capital expenditures and working capital requirements.

Financing Structure

In May 2009, the Group established a US\$1 billion Medium Term Note Programme (the "Programme") which gives the Group the flexibility to issue notes at favourable terms and timing under the Programme. In May 2012, the Programme was updated with the size increased to US\$2 billion. Up to 31st December 2013, the Group issued notes in the total amount of HK\$10,210 million (31st December 2012: HK\$10,210 million) with maturity terms of 5 years, 10 years, 12 years, 15 years, 30 years and 40 years in Renminbi, Australian dollar, Japanese yen and Hong Kong dollar under the Programme (the "MTNs"). The carrying value of the issued MTNs as at 31st December 2013 was HK\$9,789 million (31st December 2012: HK\$10,046 million).

As at 31st December 2013, the outstanding principal amount of the 10-year US dollar Guaranteed Notes (the "Guaranteed Notes") issued in August 2008 at a fixed coupon rate of 6.25 per cent per annum was US\$995 million (31st December 2012: US\$995 million) and the carrying value was HK\$7,663 million (31st December 2012: HK\$7,651 million).

As at 31st December 2013, the Group's borrowings amounted to HK\$30,623 million (31st December 2012: HK\$31,721 million). While the Notes mentioned above together with the bank and other loans of HK\$1,360 million (31st December 2012: HK\$1,331 million) had fixed interest rate and were unsecured, the remaining bank and other loans were unsecured and had a floating interest rate, of which HK\$5,614 million (31st December 2012: HK\$6,469 million) were long-term bank loans and HK\$6,197 million (31st December 2012: HK\$6,219 million) had maturities within one year on revolving credit or term loan facilities. As at 31st December 2013, the maturity profile of the Group's borrowings was 20 per cent within 1 year, 8 per cent within 1 to 2 years, 44 per cent within 2 to 5 years and 28 per cent over 5 years (31st December 2012: 20 per cent within 1 year, 4 per cent within 1 to 2 years, 24 per cent within 2 to 5 years and 52 per cent over 5 years).

The US dollar Guaranteed Notes, the RMB Note, AUD Note and JPY Note issued, and a bank loan of RMB500 million raised in Hong Kong are hedged to Hong Kong dollars by currency swaps and the Group's borrowings are primarily denominated in Hong Kong dollars and Renminbi; thus, the Group has no significant exposure to foreign exchange risk. The gearing ratio [net borrowing / (shareholders' funds + net borrowing)] for the Group as at 31st December 2013 remained healthy at 29 per cent (31st December 2012: 30 per cent).

In January 2013, Towngas China Company Limited, a subsidiary of the Group, successfully placed 150 million new ordinary shares at a price of HK\$6.31 per share in the market with net proceeds from the placing (after deduction of commission and other expenses of the placing) amounting to approximately HK\$930 million. This share placement was over-subscribed by enthusiastic investors with more than 20 times.

In January 2014, the Group issued its first Perpetual Subordinated Guaranteed Capital Securities (the "Perpetual Securities") amounting to US\$300 million with nominal interest rate of 4.75 per cent per annum for the first five years and thereafter at floating interest rate. With no fixed maturity, the Perpetual Securities are redeemable at the Group's option on or after 28 January 2019 and are accounted for as equity in the financial statements. The Perpetual Securities are guaranteed by the Company. The issuance helps strengthen the Group's balance sheet, improve its financing maturity profile and diversify its funding sources.

Contingent Liabilities

As at 31st December 2013 and 2012, the Group did not provide any guarantee in respect of bank borrowing facilities made available to any associates, joint ventures or third parties.

Currency Profile

The Group's operations and activities are predominantly based in Hong Kong and mainland China. As such, its cash, cash equivalents or borrowings are mainly denominated in Hong Kong dollars, Renminbi or United States dollars, whereas borrowings for the Group's subsidiaries, associates and joint ventures in mainland China are predominantly denominated in the local currency, Renminbi, in order to provide natural hedging for the investment there.

Group's Investments in Securities

Under the guidance of the Group's Treasury Committee, investments have been made in equity and debt securities. As at 31st December 2013, the investments in securities amounted to HK\$3,599 million (31st December 2012: HK\$3,426 million). The performance of the Group's investments in securities was satisfactory.