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ECE Real Estate Partners expands investment strategy with European hotel investment expert Ascan Kókai

Ten years after launching its first real estate fund for institutional investors, ECE Real Estate Partners G.m.b.H. is expanding its investment activities to include hotel real estate. As of October 2020, Ascan Kókai will be responsible for the hotel investment business as Principal - Head of Hotels under the leadership of Dr. Volker Kraft and Markus Schmitt-Habersack.

With 28 years of international experience in hotel real estate investment sector and the hospitality industry, Ascan Kókai has extensive knowledge in hotel asset and fund management, in negotiations of operating contracts, sale and purchase agreements as well as real estate financing.

After almost seven years in London as a consultant in the hospitality division of JLL, in 2005 he joined European hotel investor, Invesco Real Estate (IRE). There he helped to build the first hotel real estate fund, which he later managed for several years. In 2015, Kókai was appointed by NH Hotel Group to the management committee of the Business Unit Northern Europe based in Berlin and Amsterdam. In the newly created position as Head of Development and Asset Management, his responsibility was to optimise a portfolio of almost 130 hotels in 13 countries. In addition to expansion through takeovers and newly developed hotel projects, his focus was on landlord relations and strategic portfolio management.

Ascan Kókai is delighted: "The return to the investor side of the hospitality sector at this time allows me, together with Volker and the ECE REP team, to implement the hotel fund strategy in an anti-cyclical manner. The team's extensive investment experience, high professionalism and enthusiasm are complemented by my sector expertise. We will thus offer investors an attractive platform to participate in this sought-after asset class beyond the current turmoil".

Volker Kraft, Managing Partner of ECE REP, welcomes Ascan Kókai: "I am happy to have gained an internationally renowned expert for our hotel strategy in Ascan. His extensive experience as an investor, operator and consultant provides a special profile that will enable us to attract investors and make investments on a pan-European basis.

In building up the hotel investment business, ECE Real Estate Partners benefits from the extensive hotel expertise in the ECE Group. As one of the largest developers of hotel real estate in the German-speaking countries, ECE has been active in the hotel segment for more than ten years. In addition, the Otto family has extensive experience in the sector with its investments in numerous hotel properties and its strategic investment in the Ruby Hotel Group.

ECE Real Estate Partners

ECE Real Estate Partners is a regulated fund manager (AIFM) and has successfully invested institutional capital in shopping centres for more than ten years. With a portfolio under management valued at more than EUR 5.0 billion, ECE Real Estate Partners is Europe's leading private equity real estate investment manager specialized on shopping centres. Whilst further investing in shopping centres, going forward ECE Real Estate Partners will be extending its investment focus on the hotel sector. www.ecerep.com

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