

Belgian spin-off secures €6 million in Malaysian funding

Leuven, Belgium – February 7th, 2006 – Essensium NV, a Belgian fabless provider of SoC ASICs (system-on-chip application-specific integrated circuits), today announced that it has secured a strategic partnership with Silterra, a leading semiconductor wafer foundry in Malaysia, through a €6 million private equity financing from Silterra's parent company Khazanah Nasional. The capital will be injected in the spin-off of IMEC - the Belgian research centre on nanotechnology and nanoelectronics - through Atlantic Quantum, the investment sister company of Silterra.

Essensium is a fabless semiconductor company that provides system-on-chip products and design services to original equipment manufacturers, design houses, and application-specific standard-products (ASSP) suppliers. Essensium acts as an aggregator, which manages the full silicon development and supply chain. Essensium thereby adds key value at several stages of the flow, especially at the system-design level, where the impact on delivering competitive SoC solutions is the largest.

Essensium was founded in March 2005 by IMEC and a team of experienced system-on-chip ASIC professionals. With the capital injection from Silterra, Essensium now becomes an independent spin-off company. It can thereby count on IMEC's vast experience in wireless and complex system-on-chip design and system-in-package implementation.

Silterra is a leading semiconductor wafer foundry that provides advanced CMOS logic and mixed-signal/RF technologies. The company has granted Essensium priority access to its foundry through a business-to-business agreement signed last November. This priority access, even for lower volumes, combined with Essensium's local-support capabilities, uniquely positions Essensium as a low-cost, high-quality silicon-solutions provider.

Atlantic Quantum (AQ) is a strategic investment company wholly owned by Khazanah Nasional. Aligned and in partnership with Silterra, AQ makes strategic investments in promising young companies within the semiconductor and micro devices industry.

Bruce Gray, Chief Executive Officer of Silterra stated that: "The solid industrial experience of Essensium's founders, backed-up by the unique R&D environment in the Leuven region - and our partner IMEC in particular – led to our investment in this project."

Gilbert Declerck, CEO and President of IMEC, quoted: "We are very pleased to see a continuation of our fruitful relationship with Silterra through its investment in our newest spin-off venture that will facilitate the transfer from research to industry."

Johan Danneels, founder and CEO of Essensium, commented: "Today is an important step in our ambition to become a major player on the European market. The trust that we get from international key players such as Silterra and IMEC is not only important as such, but also proves our credibility towards our customers."

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Note to editors

- **About Essensium**

Essensium is a fabless semiconductor company located in Leuven, Belgium, that provides system-on-chip products and design services to original equipment manufacturers, design houses, and ASSP suppliers. Essensium was created as a spin-off of the nanoelectronics research center IMEC in Leuven. Essensium's skills and technology focus on custom silicon for portable, wireless, and low power applications. Essensium is an ideal partner for customers that want to create new, innovative, and affordable portable products and that inevitably will be confronted with lower start-up volumes. In addition, Essensium will also work towards the development of standard products for wireless sensor networks and active RFID applications. Essensium's team has accumulated significant experience in designing and delivering complex, low power, wireless system-on-chip solutions and wants to leverage this know how for customers that lack the skills to develop their own highly integrated System-on-Chip solutions. For additional information on Essensium, please visit <http://www.essensium.com>.

- **About Silterra Malaysia Sdn. Bhd.**

Silterra Malaysia Sdn. Bhd. is a leading semiconductor wafer foundry that provides advanced foundry standard CMOS logic, high-voltage and mixed-signal/RF technologies. The company's wafer fab has a designed capacity of 40,000 eight-inch wafers per month. Silterra, which is committed to world-class service and environmental friendliness, received Notable Mention in the Malaysian Prime Minister's Hibiscus Award competition for Environmental Performance in 2003. The company is ISO 9001:2000 and ISO 14001 certified. Silterra's headquarters and factory are located in Kulim, Malaysia, and has offices in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), San Jose (California, USA) and Hsinchu (Taiwan). For additional information on Silterra or its services, please visit <http://www.silterra.com>.

- **About Atlantic Quantum Sdn. Bhd.**

Atlantic Quantum (AQ), a wholly own subsidiary of Khazanah Nasional Berhad, is a strategic investment sister company to Silterra Malaysia. It was formed to make strategic equity investments in young and promising companies within the semiconductor and micro devices industry in alignment with Silterra's business and beyond. AQ's main target companies are fabless IC design companies, semiconductor design services companies and other micro devices-related companies.

Atlantic Quantum is headquartered in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

- **About IMEC**

IMEC is a world-leading independent research center in nanoelectronics and nanotechnology. Its research focuses on the next generations of chips and systems, and on the enabling technologies for ambient intelligence. IMEC's research bridges the gap between fundamental research at universities and technology development in industry. Its unique balance of processing and system know-how, intellectual property portfolio, state-of-the-art infrastructure and its strong network of companies, universities and research institutes worldwide position IMEC as a key partner for shaping technologies for future systems. As an expansion of its wireless autonomous microsystems research, IMEC has created a legal entity in the Netherlands. Stichting IMEC Nederland runs activities at the Holst Centre, an independent R&D institute that develops generic technologies and technology platforms for autonomous wireless transducer solutions and systems-in-foil.

IMEC is headquartered in Leuven, Belgium, and has representatives in the US, China and Japan. Its staff of about 1400 people includes close to 500 industrial residents and guest researchers. In 2005, its revenues are estimated to be close to EUR 200 million. Further information on IMEC can be found at <http://www.imec.be>.

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