**Questions in regards to the Africa Finance & Investment Forum 2012:**

1. Please give us a brief description of **I&P’s** (Investisseur & Partenaire pour le Development) work in sub-Saharan Africa?

Investisseurs & Partenaires (I&P) is a social business dedicated to promoting African entrepreneurs and businesses, in order to accelerate African growth and make it more sustainable. It operates by managing two profitable private equity funds, targeted at SMEs and differentiated by the size of the businesses in which they invest. It currently runs 30 SMEs in Sub Saharan Africa, and has recently raised 50 million euros for its last fund, “Investisseur et Partenaire Afrique Entrepreneurs” (IPAE).

1. I&P’s mission is to finance and support the **SME sector in Africa** – Do you consider it as the main vector for development in the continent? What are the main regions/countries you work with?

Growth is back in Africa, and is accelerating so far. But it remains insufficient to bite fast enough into poverty and growth remains fragile and is unevenly distributed. Deepening the SME tissue and increasing the manufacturing sector are important and relevant ways to speed up growth, reduce inequalities, and strengthen the society by increasing the middle class. Those SMEs also have to improve their environmental, social and governance practices, a set of issues I&P addresses strongly in its relationship with the entrepreneurs.

1. As mentioned in your Book “Africa’s Moment” - The 21st century will be the century of Africa – what are the main strengths of the continent that make it the rising star of our century?

Demography is Africa’s main strengths. The continent is entering the era of the “demographic dividend”, during which each year in the coming 80 years, the dependency ratio between the active and inactive parts of the population is going to improve. The growing population is also going to create huge markets, while the urbanization process will also improve the productivity of the economy. Africa’s growth will be less dependent on external markets and build strongly on the nascent deep domestic markets which will emerge.

1. You will be one of the upcoming Africa Finance & Investment Forum speakers. What is the key message you intend to bring to the forum? What can participants expect from your presentation?

It is time to invest in Africa, and Africa needs active, honest, and innovative investors. There are many ways one can contribute to the boosting African economy, and private equity is an excellent one. At the same time, private equity has concentrated in the past ten years mainly on a limited set of countries and in a limited number of sectors, as infrastructure and banking. It is high time to turn to the corporate sector, and especially the SMEs. There will not be large corporations in Africa if there are no start ups and SMEs now. This is I&P’s mission to address the challenge of this fantastic area of opportunities.