

For immediate release

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**Appointment of Mr. Diego Hernandez
as Chief Executive Officer of Antofagasta Minerals S.A.**

London, 24 July 2012

Antofagasta plc ("Antofagasta") announces that the Board of Antofagasta has appointed Mr. Diego Hernandez as Chief Executive Officer of Antofagasta Minerals S.A. the mining division of the Group, with effect from 1 August 2012.

Mr. Hernandez is a mining engineer and has held various senior executive positions in the mining sector in South America in operational, strategic and corporate roles. He has been CEO at Codelco for the last two years and his previous positions include President, Base Metals for BHP Billiton, Chairman of Minera Escondida Ltda, President and CEO of Compañía Minera Doña Inés de Collahuasi, and Executive Director, Non Ferrous at Vale S.A.

Mr Hernandez, aged 63, is based in Santiago and is a Chilean citizen.

Mr. Jean-Paul Luksic, Chairman of Antofagasta, stated, "On behalf of the Board, we are delighted that Diego has accepted our invitation to lead the mining division business as its Chief Executive Officer. He has an extensive knowledge of the mining industry. This, we feel, will greatly benefit Antofagasta as it continues to enhance its overall growth profile, supported by our strong financial position and low-cost and profitable operations".

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