

Group Chief Executive's review

In June this year, I announced eight strategic priorities for the bank between now and 2020. These have two aims – to get HSBC back to growth and to create value.



John Flint Group Chief Executive

We will seek to achieve these aims by increasing returns from the Group's areas of strength, particularly in Asia and across our network; turning around low-return businesses of high strategic importance, particularly in the United States; investing in building a bank for the future with the customer at its centre; and making it easier for our colleagues to do their jobs.

Our first-half performance both reflected these intentions and met our expectations. We grew reported and adjusted revenue in our four global businesses relative to the same period last year, creating the room to invest at the start of this strategy phase while remaining committed to achieving full-year positive adjusted jaws.

Our investment in the first half included hiring more front-line staff in our strongest businesses and expanding our digital capabilities in core markets, both of which will improve the service we offer customers. Our first-half reported and adjusted operating expenses rose as a consequence, which contributed to a drop in adjusted profit before tax. We continued to benefit from a low credit-loss environment in the first half.

Retail Banking and Wealth Management, and Commercial Banking were again our strongest performing businesses. Both continued to gain from a positive interest rate environment, and used the benefits of past investment to grow lending and deposit balances, particularly in Asia and the UK.

Strong adjusted revenue growth in Commercial Banking was supported by our leading transaction banking capabilities. Global Liquidity and Cash Management had another excellent six months, and Global Trade and Receivables Finance made further progress in its core markets.

Adjusted revenue growth in Retail Banking and Wealth Management was underpinned by higher retail deposit balances and strong Wealth Management product sales in Hong Kong. We also grew our share of the UK mortgage market.

Global Banking and Markets had a steady first half. Strong performances from Global Liquidity and Cash Management, Securities Services and Foreign Exchange more than covered the impact of lower client activity in Rates and Credit.

Global Private Banking enjoyed a successful six months, growing adjusted revenue and attracting net new money through collaboration with our other global businesses.

HSBC UK Bank plc – our UK ring-fenced bank – commenced business on 1 July, six months ahead of the legal deadline. Ringfencing presents a major opportunity to get closer to our 14.5 million personal and business customers in the UK.

HSBC is a strong business with a number of clear commercial advantages. In particular, we are a leading international bank with a network that gives us unparalleled access to high-growth markets, particularly in Asia and the Middle East. Our aim for this next strategy phase is to build on these strengths to grow profits consistently, leading to the creation of value for shareholders. With a period of significant restructuring now behind us, and with monetary policy in the US-dollar bloc normalising, it is now time to realise the potential of the Group.



John Flint
Group Chief Executive
6 August 2018