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BCI ACQUIRES TOTAL BANK IN FLORIDA

Ávila, Rodríguez, Hernández, Mena & Ferri in Miami, Garrigues in Madrid and Carey in Santiago have helped Chile's Banco de Crédito e Inversiones (BCI) expand its presence in the US by acquiring Miami-based bank TotalBank from Santander for US$528 million.

Santander, which acquired TotalBank's parent company Banco Popular in June, relied on Cravath Swaine & Moore LLP in New York. TotalBank is thought to have hired Stearns Weaver Miller Weissler Alhadeff & Sitterson in Miami, but this was not confirmed prior to publishing.

BCI made the purchase through its subsidiary, City National Bank of Florida (CNB), which it acquired in 2015, the first acquisition of a US bank by a Chilean counterpart.

CNB's purchase of TotalBank fortifies BCI's US presence even further – CNB will become the third-largest bank in Florida, with combined assets totalling some US$13 billion, and will be part of the top 2% of the US's biggest national banks.

The transaction comes nearly six months after Santander bought Banco Popular for the nominal amount of €1 after EU authorities warned that Banco Popular was on the brink of insolvency.

CNB's purchase was signed on 30 November, and is expected to close in the second semester of 2018, once it receives US and Chilean regulatory approvals.

Other cross-border M&A activity has taken place in the Latin American financial sector recently, most notably when global investment manager BlackRock bought Citigroup's Mexican subsidiary Citibanamex. The deal involved some US$31 billion in assets under management and is expected to be finalised in the second semester of 2018.

Counsel to Banco de Crédito e Inversiones

In-house counsel – Fernando Carmash and José Miguel de la Cerda

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