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TOKYO, JAPAN (09.01 hrs GMT +9) & BRACKLEY, UK (00.01 hrs GMT)

## FUTURE OF THE HONDA RACING F1 TEAM SECURED

Honda Motor Company Limited and Ross Brawn are pleased to confirm that they have reached agreement to secure the future of the former Honda Racing F1 Team. With immediate effect, Honda will pass ownership to Ross Brawn, Team Principal of the new **Brawn GP Formula One Team**.

Brawn GP has agreed a partnership with Mercedes-Benz High Performance Engines, Brixworth, UK to supply the team with its 2.4 litre Mercedes-Benz FO108W Formula One engines.

The team can confirm that its race driver line-up for the 2009 season will combine the talents of two of Formula One's most experienced drivers in Jenson Button and Rubens Barrichello. The race-winning drivers continue their partnership at the team for a fourth consecutive year, forming the most experienced driver partnership on the grid with 423 Grand Prix starts between the pair.

Brawn GP Team Principal, Ross Brawn, commented: "The past few months have been extremely challenging for the team but today's announcement is the very pleasing conclusion to the strenuous efforts that have been made to secure its future.

"Firstly, it is a great shame that having worked with Honda Motor Company for so long we can no longer continue together. I would like to thank Honda for the fantastic co-operation and support we have received throughout this process - particularly those members of the senior management who were closely involved with concluding our agreement - and for the faith they have demonstrated in myself and our team.

"I would also like to take this opportunity to pay due credit to our staff at Brackley. The levels of motivation and commitment that I have witnessed at the factory deserve the highest praise.

"I am delighted that Jenson Button and Rubens Barrichello will form our race driver line-up for the 2009 season. The vast experience and knowledge that both drivers bring to our team will prove invaluable as we aim to get up to speed in the shortest possible time to be ready for the first race of the season in Melbourne on 29 March. In what will be their fourth season together, their experience with our team in Brackley, our systems and our engineers, will prove a real asset.

"It would be impossible to mention all of the people without whom today's announcement may not have been possible, however I would like to express particular appreciation for the support we have received from Mercedes-Benz Motorsport, the FIA (Fédération Internationale de L'Automobile), FOM (Formula One Management), FOTA (Formula One Teams Association), BERR (the UK's Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform), Bridgestone, our other team partners and our many fans the world over. The journey ahead will be challenging but exciting and we know we can count on their continued enthusiasm for our team and its ambitions."

Hiroshi Oshima, Managing Officer of Honda Motor Co., Ltd. responsible for Corporate Communications and Motor Sports, commented: "Since announcing our withdrawal from Formula One racing on December 5 of last year, we have conducted various studies and discussions so that the team can continue its activities as a new team. We are very pleased that we could sell the team to Ross Brawn, with whom we have been partaking in the challenges of F1 competition, and are grateful for his decision. We offer our sincerest wishes for the new team which will be led by Ross."

Brawn GP will now focus its efforts on the remaining pre-season tests, in Barcelona (9-12 March) and Jerez (15-17 March) prior to heading to Melbourne, Australia for the start of the 2009 Formula One season.

**ENDS**

### Notes to Editors:

Further information regarding the new Brawn GP Formula One Team, including news updates from the tests in Barcelona and Jerez, will be available on [www.BrawnGP.com](http://www.BrawnGP.com)

Jenson Button and Rubens Barrichello will conduct a group interview to share their initial thoughts on the BGP 001 race car at next week's test in Barcelona for media with FIA accreditation.

The change of team name and engine supplier are subject to FIA approval.

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