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**Avrupa-Antofagasta increase budget to US\$2.5 million for Alvalade JV in Portugal**

**Avrupa Minerals Ltd. (AVU:TSXV)** is pleased to announce the commencement of exploration work in the Portuguese Pyrite Belt under the Alvalade Joint Venture with major international copper producer Antofagasta Minerals SA (“AMSA”), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Antofagasta plc. The budget for work in 2012 has been increased to US\$ 2.5 million and approved by AMSA. The work program includes up to 6,000 meters of drilling on various targets in the 1,000-km<sup>2</sup> project area. The joint venture agreement was signed at the end of 2011 and includes the following major points:

- The agreement covers three Avrupa licenses (the “Property”): Alvalade, Canal Caveira, and Ferreira do Alentejo. Formerly operating Lousal and Caveira mines are located within the 1,000 square kilometer Property.
- AMSA committed US\$ 300,000 over a 6-month period to complete an initial study of the Property, which included acquisition of all remaining historic data, re-logging of selected drill holes, systematic sampling, and integrated geological and geophysical interpretation of the targeted areas. This work was completed in 2011.
- Upon completion of the initial study, Avrupa granted to AMSA the option to acquire an undivided 51% of the Property, which can be exercised by AMSA funding or incurring expenditures of an additional US\$ 4 million over three years.
- After exercise of the first option, AMSA will be granted a further option to acquire an additional 24% interest in the Property, for an aggregate 75% undivided interest, by completing and delivering a Feasibility Study on the Property to Avrupa within five years.
- Avrupa will operate the joint venture through the first option period.

**Stock Options**

Avrupa’s Board of Directors also approved the grant of 100,000 options to an officer at \$0.30 expiring on January 26, 2017.

**Antofagasta Minerals SA (“AMSA”)** is the mining division of Antofagasta plc. Antofagasta plc is listed on the London Stock Exchange and is a constituent of the FTSE-100 Index, with interests also in transport and water distribution. Currently, AMSA activities are primarily concentrated in Chile where it owns and operates four copper mines: Los Pelambres, Esperanza, El Tesoro and Michilla. Total production in 2012 is expected to be approximately 700,000 tonnes of copper, 11,000 tonnes of

molybdenum and 280,000 ounces of gold. AMSA also has exploration, evaluation and/or feasibility programs in North America, Latin America, Europe, Asia, Australia, and Africa.

**Avrupa Minerals Ltd.** is a growth-oriented junior exploration and development company focused on aggressive exploration, using a prospect generator model, for valuable mineral deposits in politically stable and prospective regions of Europe, including Portugal, Kosovo, and Germany.

The Company has an exciting portfolio of exploration projects consisting of:

- Copper and Zinc in southern Portugal at Marateca and in the Alvalade JV project area located in the Iberian Pyrite Belt, where Europe's richest active copper mine is located;
- Tungsten and Gold in northern Portugal at the Covas JV project area;
- Precious metal and REE potential in the new Aljezur project area, south Portugal
- Silver, Lead and Zinc in Kosovo at the Glavej, Kamenica, Selac, and Bajgora properties in the Trepça Mineral Belt of the Vardar Zone, historically, Europe's most productive district for lead and zinc;
- Gold in eastern Germany in the 307 km<sup>2</sup> Oelsnitz exploration license in the historic Erzgebirge Mining District, a 1000-year producer of tin, tungsten, silver, base metals, and uranium.

For additional information, contact Avrupa Minerals Ltd. at 1-604-687-3520 or visit our website at [www.avrupaminerals.com](http://www.avrupaminerals.com).

On behalf of the Board,

***“Paul W. Kuhn”***

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Paul W. Kuhn, President & Director

*This news release was prepared by Company management, who take full responsibility for its content. Paul W. Kuhn, President and CEO of Avrupa Minerals, a Licensed Professional Geologist in the State of Washington, USA, and a Registered Member of the Society of Mining Engineers, is a Qualified Person as defined by National Instrument 43-101 of the Canadian Securities Administrators. He has reviewed the technical disclosure in this release.*

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