

BANK OF LONDON AND THE MIDDLE EAST WINS BEST ISLAMIC BANK IN EUROPE

BLME awarded by Best Islamic Bank in Europe by Global Finance Magazine

London, 1 May 2012 –BLME the largest Islamic bank in Europe, has today announced that it has been awarded Best Islamic Bank in Europe by Global Finance Magazine for the second year running.

The awards will be formally presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group that will be held in Tokyo in October 2012. The judging panel included the editorial team of Global Finance, with the winners selected after extensive consultations with bankers, corporate finance executives and analysts throughout the world.

The quantitative criteria included growth in assets, profitability, geographic reach, strategic relationships, new business development and innovation in products. Among the subjective criteria considered were reputation, customer satisfaction, and the opinions of analysts and others involved in the industry.

Humphrey Percy, CEO of BLME, said: “To achieve the title of Best Islamic Bank in Europe for the second year in a row is a testament to our performance, and our ethical and client-focussed principles. I would like to thank all of our employees, for their commitment, expertise and passion to BLME and the industry.

“Our successes have been built on a differentiated offering which prioritises excellent service, innovation and a competitive range of products and services. Our success demonstrates not only that Islamic financial institutions offer a viable alternative to conventional finance, but that the benefits are starting to be seen more widely.”

Global Finance’s publisher, Joseph D. Giarraputo, commented: “The winners of this year’s awards are those banks that contributed to the growth of Islamic financing and successfully met their customers’ needs for Shariah-compliant products, while creating the foundation for continued growth and safety in the future.

“The mix of quantitative and subjective criteria yielded a winning group of leading banks that may not be the largest, oldest or the most diversified in a given country, region or product, but rather the best, the banks with which customers around the world would most likely want to do business.”

Humphrey Percy, CEO of BLME, added: “The key to sustaining the positive growth trend across the Islamic finance industry will be the dissemination of knowledge. As more companies and individuals turn to Islamic products and services, we expect to see an increased level of comfort and acceptance from the market, from SMEs to large corporates.”

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About BLME

Bank of London and The Middle East plc (“BLME”) is an independent UK wholesale Sharia’a compliant bank based in London. BLME received FSA authorisation in July 2007 and is the largest of its peers in Europe. It is led by a management team that brings together a combination of experienced international bankers and leading experts in Islamic finance.

BLME has three key business areas; Corporate Banking, Treasury and Wealth Management that includes Asset Management and Private Banking.

BLME is dedicated to offering innovative Islamic investment and financing products to businesses and high net-worth individuals in the European, US, Asian and MENA regions. To ensure that BLME’s services and operations are wholly Sharia’a compliant, the Bank has a dedicated Sharia’a Supervisory Board (“SSB”). The SSB’s role is to review contracts and agreements relating to all transactions ensuring that they are consistent with the principles of Islamic jurisprudence.

About Global Finance Magazine

Global Finance, founded in 1987, has a circulation of 50,050 and readers in 163 countries. Its circulation is audited by BPA.

Global Finance’s audience includes chairmen, presidents, CEOs, CFOs, treasurers and other senior financial officers responsible for making investment and strategic decisions at multinational companies and financial institutions. Global Finance also targets the 8,000 international portfolio investors responsible for more than 80% of all global assets under professional management.

Its website — www.GFmag.com — offers analysis and articles that are the heritage of 24 years of experience in international financial markets, and provides a valuable source of data on 192 countries. It is headquartered in New York, with offices in London and Milan.

About Islamic banking

Islamic Finance upholds the principles of fairness, integrity and transparency. The principle of fairness is reflected in the risk and reward-sharing element that forms the foundation of every Islamic financial transaction.

Islamic finance aims to create business activities that generate a fair and equitable profit from transactions that are backed by real assets. This method of financing avoids speculation, short selling and excessive credit creation whilst encouraging sound risk management procedures.

Islamic banking has a robust system of risk management and self-regulation to ensure that each transaction is transparent and that the appropriate due diligence and higher standards of disclosure required are observed. To ensure compliance with these requirements each transaction and agreement is reviewed and approved by a Sharia’a Supervisory Board. This Sharia’a specific regulation and governance is in addition to the conventional regulation that applies to all UK based financial institutions.