



BANK OF LONDON AND THE MIDDLE EAST ARRANGES £10 MILLION SHARIA'A FINANCING FACILITY FOR OCADO LTD

London, 16 January, 2009 – Bank Of London And The Middle East plc (BLME), the London based wholesale, Sharia'a compliant bank, today announced that it is providing a £10 million leasing facility to Ocado Ltd (Ocado), the UK independent online grocer.

Ocado is the UK's only dedicated online supermarket, selling groceries from its supermarket partner, Waitrose Limited, alongside major branded goods and a wide range of non-food lines. Ocado can deliver into the kitchens of more than 15 million households in England from its headquarters in Hatfield, Hertfordshire and regional centres in Manchester, Leeds, Coventry, Southampton, Aylesford (Kent) and Weybridge (Surrey). The company, whose largest shareholder (with approximately 25% of the company) is the John Lewis Partnership pension fund, had sales of £350m in 2008.

The facility marks the first Sharia'a financing raised by Ocado, which will be used to finance a new automated picking line for its Hatfield Distribution Centre.

Tim Steiner, CEO of Ocado, commented: "We had not considered Islamic financing before, but found BLME's competitive offering and highly experienced management team very attractive. Their appreciation of our business needs and the flexibility of their leasing terms made them the favoured choice for our current business requirements."

Humphrey Percy, CEO of BLME, added: "This deal marks the first time that Ocado has used Islamic finance and is BLME's first retail financing deal in the UK. For such a strong household name to make this choice reflects the growing appeal that Sharia'a finance has in the global market and illustrates clearly how we can offer financing solutions to a broad base of clients – from those who regularly use Islamic finance through to those who have so far not considered it as a viable alternative."

Since receiving its banking licence in July 2007, BLME has completed a variety of leasing, project finance, real estate and trade-related transactions, and is focused on offering Islamic financing solutions to companies in the US, Europe and MENA region.