



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BANK, OCP GROUP AND DLTLEDGERS DRIVE INTRA-AFRICAN TRADE VIA BLOCKCHAIN AMIDST THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

***Several thousands of tons of fertilizers shipped from Morocco to Ethiopia through ground-breaking transactions of nearly USD 400 million***

**Nairobi/ Casablanca, 30 March 2021** – The Eastern and Southern African Trade and Development Bank (TDB) and OCP Group, the world's largest phosphate mining and leading fertilizer company, are pleased to announce USD 400 million-worth of fertilizer trade finance transactions executed via blockchain technology, USD 270 million of which have already been completed, and the remainder to be executed in upcoming months.

These transactions make OCP Group the first African company to execute an intra-African trade transaction using blockchain. Through dltledgers' blockchain platform, OCP Group delivered phosphate fertilizers from Morocco to Ethiopia. The intra-African transaction initiative, as part of OCP's digitalization strategy, aims to reduce the trade finance gap in Africa and boost trade between African countries, particularly in the fertilizer sector, through digital inclusion.

dltledger's blockchain technology makes it possible for all parties to carry out these import-export trades digitally and in under two hours. Traditional transactions typically take over three weeks to complete due to the need to move physical documents from suppliers, through the banking system, to the buyer. This lengthy process was disrupted further by the COVID-19 pandemic, taking up to six-weeks to complete, as border and airport closures continue to create additional delays.

Through the blockchain platform, stakeholders are able to upload, view, edit, and validate the documentation in one private blockchain, simultaneously and in real time. Moreover, blockchain transactions have a lower carbon footprint, and are more secure due to encryption and verification technologies. They also allow for greater transparency and traceability, and reduce risks by eliminating potential errors and ambiguities in the exchange and amendment of documents.

These transactions come as total global trade for 2020 contracted by 5 to 10% as compared to the previous year, alongside reduced demand for trade finance..

TDB has facilitated over half a billion USD- worth of trade finance in Ethiopia in 2020 alone and supported close to USD 1 billion of fertilizer imports from OCP Group to

Ethiopia in the past three years. TDB has provided solutions that help address forex needs and enable the importation of vital agricultural and energy commodities including fertilizers, wheat, sugar and others. Importing fertilizers boosts crop yields and productivity levels, enhances food security, increases foreign exchange earnings from commercial crops, and supports employment.

TDB became the first African DFI to complete a live end-to-end trade finance transaction using blockchain in October 2019, when it financed the import of 50,000 tons of white sugar from India into the region it serves. This innovative transaction served as an example for the trade finance industry globally, as well as a template, which TDB has since then been able to replicate for further transactions such as this intra-African trade.

OCP Group has always emphasized the need for intra-African collaboration to meet the challenge of a structured, efficient and sustainable agriculture. Likewise, it is aligned with TDB's mandate to drive intra and inter-regional trade, and regional integration in the region it serves and on the continent, in the spirit of the AfCFTA (African Continental Free Trade Area).

Agriculture plays a critical role in Ethiopia's economy, representing 31% of the country's GDP and 66% of its total employment. Fertilizers are fundamental to the sector, with about half being imported from the OCP Group in Morocco.

**XXX**

### **About TDB**

Established in 1985, the Eastern and Southern African Trade and Development Bank (TDB) is a multilateral, treaty-based, investment-grade development finance institution, with 41 sovereign and institutional shareholders and assets of USD 7 bn. TDB serves 22 economies in its region, with the mandate to finance and foster trade, regional economic integration, and sustainable development.

TDB is part of the TDB Group, which also comprises TDF (the Trade and Development Fund), ESATF (the Eastern and Southern African Trade Fund), TCI (TDB Captive Insurance), and the TDB Academy.

[www.tdbgroup.org](http://www.tdbgroup.org)

### **About dltledgers**

#dltledgers is the leading, independent blockchain platform for trade and supply chain digitisation, headquartered in Singapore. The platform helps companies to digitise their commercial documents, contracts, and bank interactions, enabling them to automate multi-party transactions, streamline processes, and reduce cost. The net result is faster, more cost-effective trade execution, more robust, auditable collaboration between enterprises, and often improved capacity to obtain financing. Network participants include buyers, sellers, trading companies, banks and alternative lenders, as well as carriers, logistics partners, insurers, ports, and a variety of certifying bodies and government agencies. The #dltledgers blockchain platform is a pioneer in enterprise blockchain. It was the first platform of its kind globally to go into full production, and it has processed several billion dollars-worth of live transactions.

<https://dlt.sg>

## **About OCP Group**

OCP plays an important role in feeding a growing global population, by providing essential elements for soil fertility and plant growth. With a century of experience and revenues reaching US\$ 5.9 billion in 2020, OCP is a leader in plant nutrition and the world's first producer of phosphate-based fertilizers. OCP provides a wide range of customized fertilizer products to enhance soil, increase agricultural yields, and help feed the planet in a sustainable and affordable way. Headquartered in Morocco and present on five continents, OCP works in close partnership with more than 160 customers across the world. Closer to home, OCP is committed to help drive forward Africa's environmental and social development and implement sustainable and prosperous agriculture through innovation. The Group is firmly convinced that leadership and profitability are necessarily synonymous with social responsibility and sustainable development. Its strategic vision is rooted in the meeting of these two dimensions.

[www.ocpgroup.ma](http://www.ocpgroup.ma)

## **Media Contacts**

International Media Relations

OCP Group

[International.media@ocprgroup.ma](mailto:International.media@ocprgroup.ma)

Anne-Marie Iskandar, Senior Communications Officer

Corporate Affairs and Investor Relations

Trade and Development Bank

[Anne-Marie.Iskandar@tdbgroup.org](mailto:Anne-Marie.Iskandar@tdbgroup.org)

James Green

Chief Marketing Officer

Distributed Ledger Technologies (DLT) Pte Ltd (dltledgers)

[jamesmg@dlt.sg](mailto:jamesmg@dlt.sg)