



## **EQUITY BANK CONGO AND BANQUE COMMERCIALE DU CONGO (BCDC) RECEIVE REGULATORY APPROVAL FOR MERGER**

### **The New Merged Bank, EQUITYBCDC is the Second Largest Bank in Democratic Republic of Congo with a Balance Sheet of USD 2.5Billion**

- *As part of an international bank with presence in 7 countries, Equity BCDC can immediately lend to a single customer up to USD 40M and can access up to USD 350 Million the syndicated single lending obligor within the Group*
- *Former BCDC customers will now enjoy the benefits of an international bank with a Kshs 1 Trillion balance sheet and a worldwide network of correspondent banks and development finance institutions for the purpose of syndicating development projects*
- *The bank will ride on the rich legacy of over 100 years as a leading bank in DRC, coupled with technology, innovation and disruptive culture that defines Equity*

**Nairobi, 30<sup>th</sup> December 2020:** Equity Group holdings Plc (EGH) has received regulatory approval to merge Equity Bank Congo (EBC) and BCDC to form a new bank. Going forward, the new bank will be known as, Equity Banque Commercial du Congo (EquityBCDC). This follows EGH's acquisition of 66.53% shareholding of BCDC from the family of George Forrest, combined with prior EGH 86.6% shareholding in EBC and an additional EBC shareholding of 7.7 % acquired from KFW during the year. Post merger, EGH holds 77.5% in Equity BCDC with the remainder being held by IFC, the Government of DRC and minority shareholders.

To avail the same level of competencies, capabilities and experiences in DRC, and to reap the benefits of the synergies from both entities, Equity migrated BCDC to the Equity Group platform on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020. On 29<sup>th</sup> December 2020, the Group received approval from the Central Bank of Congo to merge the two subsidiaries (BCDC and EBC) into one bank. Bank branches and other outlets of both EBC and BCDC will start to change their name and brand identity to Equity BCDC.

Speaking after receiving the approval for merger, Dr James Mwangi, Group Chief Executive Officer of EGH said, "This is an important milestone and a great new year gift to our customers in DRC. Equity BCDC will immediately have a single obligor limit of USD 40M. This will enable our customers in DRC to access higher credit limits to grow and expand their business ventures. At the same time Equity BCDC is now part of an international bank with presence in seven countries (DRC, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, South Sudan, Rwanda, and a representative office in Ethiopia) enabling our customers to do cross border trade with ease".

On leadership, the two managing directors, Mr Yves Cuypers and Mr Celestin Muntuabu and their principal deputies will continue providing leadership as the management committee with the combined board members constituting the pioneer board of Equity BCDC.

Customers of both Equity Bank and BCDC can now walk into any branch and access services such as account opening, cash deposit and withdrawal, cheque deposit and withdrawal, SWIFT, RTGS, and EFT services, request for bank statements, do internal funds transfers and ATM withdrawals.

Dr Mwangi said that with the merger, Equity BCDC had acquired the size and countrywide infrastructure, experience and capability to contribute significantly to the transformation of lives and livelihoods in DRC, while stimulating economic transformation of the country through resource allocation. He added, "Equity BCDC is now the most inclusive bank in DRC and a front runner to become the largest bank in DRC. Our customer will access with ease the advanced digital banking, and merchant banking services with a suite of payment cards from international card associations." He assured customers that during this transition period, customers will continue to use their existing banking instruments such as cheque books, bank



accounts and account numbers as well as payment cards at the existing terms and conditions until further notice.

Equity Group Holdings has a strong global network of correspondent banks and development finance institutions for the purpose of syndicating development projects and bringing human and capital capabilities of the Group that recently crossed the Kshs 1 Trillion, equivalent to nearly USD 10B balance sheet mark. This milestone makes Equity the largest company in East and Central Africa in capital and balance sheet size and the second largest company by market capitalisation on the Nairobi Securities Exchange.

“We believe in building lasting relationships with our customers based on trust, and a world class customer experience. Equity BCDC has a wide talent assembly that is rich in experience. This coupled with versatile and agile technology will offer our customers products and services tailored to suit their needs. Our corporate customers will continue to receive personalised relationship management with an enhanced portfolio of products and services,” concluded Dr Mwangi

### **About EquityBCDC**

Equity BCDC is a subsidiary of Equity Group Holdings Plc (EGH) following the acquisition of majority shareholding of BCDC by EGH from the family of George Forrest in July 2020. Equity BCDC is the second largest bank in Democratic Bank of Congo with a balance sheet of USD 2.5 billion and a nationwide footprint of 74 branches, 214 ATMs, 13 local dedicated desks, 3055 agents, and a customer base of nearly one million.

Equity Group Holdings Plc, a financial services company is listed at the Nairobi Securities Exchange, Uganda Securities Exchange, and Rwanda Stock Exchange. In addition to Equity BCDC in DRC, the Group has banking subsidiaries in, Kenya, South Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania and a Commercial Representative Office in Ethiopia; with additional non-banking subsidiaries engaged in the provision of investment banking, custodial, insurance agency, philanthropy, consulting, and infrastructure services.

Equity Group has an asset base of over USD 10 billion. With over 14.2 million customers, the Group is one of the biggest banks by customer base in the region. The Group has a footprint of 335 branches, 52,742 Agents and 35,386 Merchants and 720 ATMs. The Group is the largest bank in market capitalization in East and Central Africa. The Banker Top 1000 World Banks 2020 ranked Equity Bank 754 overall in its global ranking, 62nd in soundness (Capital Assets to Assets ratio), 55th in terms of Profits on Capital and 20th on Return on Assets. In the same year, Moody’s gave the Bank a global rating of B2 with a negative outlook same as the sovereign rating of the Kenyan government due to the Bank’s strong brand recognition, solid liquidity buffers and resilient funding profile, established domestic franchise and extensive adoption of digital and alternative distribution channels. Equity Group Holdings Plc is regulated by the Central Bank of Kenya.