30 January 2009

ABSA GROUP ACQUIRES INTEREST IN BLUE

Dear Shareholder

One of South Africa’s largest banks recently acquired a strategic shareholding in your company.

As reported in the papers today, at 16% shareholding, The Absa Group is now one of the single largest investors in Blue, joining the ranks of the International Finance Corporation and American International Group.

Absa acquired its interest in Blue as part of a derivative settlement by an individual shareholder, as well as some additional equity unrelated to the single stock futures, from that same shareholder. This individual is not a member of staff or a member of Blue's board of directors.

Blue CEO Dave van Niekerk says that although the company itself was not involved in the transaction, Blue welcomes one of SA’s largest banks as a significant shareholder in the company. “The bulk of Blue’s open market futures position is now in the hands of a long-term shareholder with a material interest in the business. Absa already has interests in both micro-finance and in Africa.”

Van Niekerk continues that “Absa has indicated to us it would be interested in appointing an Absa representative to the Blue board of directors, and perhaps even increasing its equity stake in our group. Absa has stated that the Blue shares are presently classified as “available-for-sale” financial instruments, to account for fair value movements. A decision will be taken on where these shares will be housed in the Absa group.”

Absa recently reported to the financial market that in view of the size of the shareholding in the company, it will be a strategic investor and will work with it to realise value for shareholders.

Should you have any additional queries or questions related to this communication, please don’t hesitate to contact us on 082 480 4541.