

CREDIT OPINION

28 November 2017

Update

Rate this Research



RATINGS

Al Hilal Bank PJSC

Domicile	Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Outlook	Stable

Please see the <u>ratings section</u> at the end of this report for more information. The ratings and outlook shown reflect information as of the publication date.

Contacts

Nitish Bhojnagarwala +971.4.237.9563 VP-Senior Analyst

nitish.bhojnagarwala@moodys.com

Jonathan Parrod +971.4.237.9546

Associate Analyst

jonathan.parrod@moodys.com

Akin Majekodunmi, +44.20.7772.8614

+44.20.7772.1635

CFA

VP-Senior Analyst

akin.majekodunmi@moodys.com

Henry MacNevin
Associate Managing

Director

henry.macnevin@moodys.com

CLIENT SERVICES

Americas 1-212-553-1653
Asia Pacific 852-3551-3077
Japan 81-3-5408-4100
EMEA 44-20-7772-5454

Al Hilal Bank PJSC

Update following downgrade to A2 stable

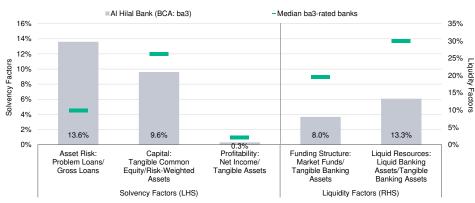
Summary

On November 20, <u>Al Hilal Bank PJSC</u>'s (AHB) long-term issuer rating was downgraded to A2 from A1. At the same time, the bank's Baseline Credit Assessment (BCA) was lowered to ba3 from ba2. The outlook on the bank's issuer rating was changed to stable from negative.

AHB's ba3 BCA reflects the bank's (1) significantly weakened asset quality and provision coverage levels; (2) modest capitalisation, coupled with relatively weak net profitability owing to high provisioning and operating costs; and (3) sound funding profile moderated by relatively low liquidity buffers.

AHB's A2 issuer rating is based on the bank's ba3 BCA and our view of a very high likelihood of support from the Government of United Arab Emirates (UAE, Aa2 stable) in case of need.

Exhibit 1
Rating Scorecard - Key financial ratios (as of 30 June 2017)



Source: Moody's Financial Metrics

Credit strengths

- » Modest capitalisation
- » Sound funding profile
- » Very high likelihood of support from UAE authorities in case of need

Credit challenges

- » Significantly weakened asset quality and provision coverage levels
- » Weak profitability
- » Relatively low liquidity buffers

Rating outlook

The stable outlook reflects our view that AHB's financial fundamentals, in particular the bank's asset quality, capital and profitability, are expected to stabilise at their current, relatively weak levels over the next 12 months.

Factors that could lead to an upgrade

Upward pressure on AHB's ratings could develop from a combination of (1) a significant improvement in the bank's asset quality, capitalisation and profitability; and (2) a significant reduction in its borrower and sector concentrations.

Factors that could lead to a downgrade

Downward pressure on AHB's ratings could develop from (1) a further weakening in the bank's asset risk and profitability metrics, or (2) a material decline in its liquidity or capital buffers.

Key indicators

Exhibit 2
Al Hilal Bank PJSC (Consolidated Financials) [1]

	6-17 ²	12-16 ²	12-15 ²	12-14 ²	12-13 ²	CAGR/Avg. ³
Total Assets (AED million)	42,721	43,427	43,091	41,291	38,705	2.9 ⁴
Total Assets (USD million)	11,631	11,824	11,732	11,242	10,538	2.9 ⁴
Tangible Common Equity (AED million)	3,733	3,650	3,626	3,745	3,906	-1.3 ⁴
Tangible Common Equity (USD million)	1,016	994	987	1,020	1,063	-1.3 ⁴
Problem Loans / Gross Loans (%)	13.6	10.9	8.9	5.4	3.7	8.5 ⁵
Tangible Common Equity / Risk Weighted Assets (%)	9.6	9.4	10.0	10.9	12.9	10.6 ⁶
Problem Loans / (Tangible Common Equity + Loan Loss Reserve) (%)	75.6	62.1	50.8	32.7	21.6	48.6 ⁵
Net Interest Margin (%)	2.5	2.5	3.1	3.4	3.7	3.1 ⁵
PPI / Average RWA (%)	1.1	1.1	1.7	2.4	2.4	1.7 ⁶
Net Income / Tangible Assets (%)	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.1	1.1	0.3 ⁵
Cost / Income Ratio (%)	66.6	68.1	58.3	50.0	54.1	59.4 ⁵
Market Funds / Tangible Banking Assets (%)	8.0	10.5	10.2	9.0	13.0	10.1 ⁵
Liquid Banking Assets / Tangible Banking Assets (%)	13.3	14.0	16.8	15.5	15.7	15.0 ⁵
Gross Loans / Due to Customers (%)	108.0	107.9	100.9	103.6	99.3	103.9 ⁵

[1] All figures and ratios are adjusted using Moody's standard adjustments. [2] Basel II; IFRS. [3] May include rounding differences due to scale of reported amounts. [4] Compound Annual Growth Rate (%) based on time period presented for the latest accounting regime. [6] Simple average of periods presented for the latest accounting regime. [6] Simple average of Basel II periods presented.

Source: Moody's Financial Metrics

This publication does not announce a credit rating action. For any credit ratings referenced in this publication, please see the ratings tab on the issuer/entity page on www.moodys.com for the most updated credit rating action information and rating history.

Profile

Established in Abu Dhabi in 2007, AHB is an Islamic bank that offers a wide range of Shariah-compliant corporate, retail, treasury and investment banking services, as well as Islamic insurance. The bank is fully owned by the Abu Dhabi government through its investment vehicle, the Abu Dhabi Investment Council (ADIC). The bank operates primarily in the UAE and through one subsidiary in Kazakhstan. As of June 2017, AHB had a domestic market share of around 1.7% in terms of total assets. The bank's concentration of activities in the UAE has resulted in a Strong- Macro Profile score, which is used to derive its rating (see <u>United Arab Emirate's Macro Profile</u>: Strong-).

Detailed credit considerations

Significantly weakened asset quality and provision coverage levels

AHB's asset-quality metrics have significantly weakened, with the adjusted non-performing financing (NPF) ratio (NPF analogous to NPL - non-performing loans - as defined by Moody's, includes all loans over 90 days past due) increasing consistently to around 13.6% as of June 2017 from 5.4% as of December 2014. This level is captured in our current scorecard and compares unfavourably with the UAE average of around 5.3% and the median for global peers with a ba3 BCA of 4.4%. At the same time, AHB's coverage ratio declined to 54% as of June 2017 from 91% as of December 2014, which is lower than both the local average and the median for global peers with a ba3 BCA of around 93% and 89%, respectively. This weakening trend since 2014 is in contrast with a period of strong recovery observed in most UAE banks.

This deterioration in asset-quality metrics is owing to (1) the non-performance of a single concentrated and idiosyncratic exposure in 2014; and (2) a sizeable increase in NPF formation in 2015 and 2016, mainly in the bank's financing portfolio for corporates, and small and medium-sized enterprises.

Following this weak asset-quality performance, a new CEO, CFO and CRO have been appointed, and the bank is taking steps to implement more stringent underwriting standards and governance practices. Although management changes and ongoing improvements in risk management and controls are expected to be broadly beneficial for the bank's risk profile in the medium term, over the next 12 months, asset quality will remain relatively weak, given the slowing domestic operating conditions. AHB also exhibits high credit concentrations common to most banks in the UAE because of the large government presence across most sectors of the economy.

Relatively weak net profitability, combined with modest capitalisation

AHB's bottom-line profitability metrics are lower than those of its domestic peers owing to high operating costs and the increased cost of risk. The bank's limited operational history (operational since 2008) implies that the bank has made significant investments in (1) establishing a branch network; and (2) advanced information technology, which led to a relatively high cost/income of around 67% for the first six months of 2017 (H1 2017), well above the UAE average of around 35%.

More recently, profitability has been impacted by (1) the bank's reduced net profit margin of 2.5% for H1 2017, down from 3.4% in 2014; and (2) an increase in provisioning costs, driven by the aforementioned increase in NPFs, and consuming over 90% of preprovision income on average since 2014. As a result, the bank's net profitability ratios declined, with net income/tangible assets of around 0.1% since 2014 (0.3% in H1 2017). Such profitability levels compare unfavorably with both the 1.7% UAE average and the 0.9% median for global peers with a ba3 BCA.

Although the new management is refocussing on the core business and reducing operating costs, we expect the bank's profitability to, nevertheless, remain relatively weak owing to elevated provisioning and funding costs.

Despite full profit retention and multiple capital injections from its owner, ADIC, AHB maintains modest capital levels. The bank's tangible common equity (TCE) ratio has been stable at around 10% since 2015 (9.6% as of June 2017), which is well below the 14.2% domestic average and the 12.0% median for global peers with a ba3 BCA. However, the bank's authorised but unissued capital, if subscribed by its sole shareholder, will boost its TCE ratio by around 2.5% to around 12%, which will be in line with that of its global peers with a ba3 BCA. The bank has also raised additional capital through a hybrid Additional Tier 1 sukuk issuance, representing around 5% of total risk-weighted assets, which (in line with the local regulatory framework) have contingent point of non-viability triggers, and hence, are not included in our TCE calculations. Consequently, the bank's reported Tier 1 capital ratio stood at 14.7% as of June 2017, which is above the median for global peers with a ba3 BCA.

We expect the bank's capitalisation to remain broadly stable at its current level owing to a slowing credit growth, which can be funded through its relatively weak internal capital-generating ability.

Sound liquidity profile, moderated by relatively low liquidity buffers

The bank's funding profile remains solid. AHB remains primarily funded with customer deposits, which represented more than 76% of the bank's total assets as of June 2017 compared with the UAE average of around 66%. Within these deposits, the share of current and savings account balance increased to 33% of total deposits as of June 2017 from 25% as of December 2014. However, in line with its Gulf Cooperation Council peers, we also observe high concentrations in AHB's deposits, with the government and public sector entities contributing around 48% of total deposits as of June 2017, down from 57% of total deposits as of December 2015.

Additionally, the bank has diversified its funding sources through long-term capital market issuances and syndications. In October 2013, the bank set up a \$2.5 billion sukuk programme under which it issued \$500 million and raised another \$225 million sukuk in June 2016. As a result, a significant proportion of AHB's market funding, representing 8% of tangible banking assets as of June 2017, carries long tenor, which is positive because it lengthens the maturity profile of liabilities and reduces refinancing risks.

However, the bank's liquidity buffers remain relatively low. The bank's liquidity position, as measured by liquid banking assets/tangible banking assets, stood at around 13% of total assets as of June 2017 (down from 17% as of December 2015). On a standalone basis, these metrics compare unfavourably with both the UAE average and the median for global peers with a ba3 BCA of around 30%. Because growth in customer deposits flattened, the bank's net financing/deposit (analogous to net loans/deposits) climbed to 100% as of June 2017 from 94% as of December 2015, a level well above the UAE average of around 90%.

We expect the bank's liquidity and funding profiles to broadly remain stable as credit growth slows; however, the tight liquidity environment in the region may strain AHB's overall liquidity position.

Support and structural considerations

Government support

AHB's A2 issuer rating incorporates a very high seven notches of uplift from its relatively low ba3 standalone BCA and is driven primarily by our "government-backed" support assessment, unlike the "very high" assumptions applied to the majority of its UAE peers.

We base this view on (1) the unique shareholding where AHB is fully owned by the Abu Dhabi government through its investment vehicle ADIC, (2) AHB's role as a flagship Islamic bank owned by the government, and (3) the UAE's strong track record of supporting banks in times of stress.

Counterparty Risk (CR) Assessment

The CR Assessment of A1(cr)/P-1(cr) for AHB also benefits from seven notches of systemic support, in line with our support assumptions on its issuer ratings. This reflects our view that any support provided by governmental authorities to a bank that benefits senior unsecured debt is very likely to benefit operating activities and obligations reflected by the CR Assessments as well, consistent with our belief that governments are likely to maintain such operations as a going concern to reduce contagion and preserve a bank's critical functions. As a result, the bank's CR Assessment is one notch higher than the bank's issuer rating.

Source of facts and figures cited in this report

Unless noted otherwise, we have sourced data relating to systemwide trends and market shares from the central bank. Bank-specific figures originate from banks' reports and Moody's Banking Financial Metrics. All figures are based on our own chart of account and may be adjusted for analytical purposes. Please refer to the document Financial Statement Adjustments in the Analysis of Financial Institutions (https://www.moodys.com/researchdocumentcontentpage.aspx?docid=PBC_187419), published on 13 June 2017.

About Moody's Bank Scorecard

Our scorecard is designed to capture, express and explain in summary form our Rating Committee's judgment. When read in conjunction with our research, a fulsome presentation of our judgement is expressed. As a result, the output of our scorecard may materially differ from that suggested by raw data alone (though it has been calibrated to avoid the frequent need for strong divergence). The scorecard output and the individual scores are discussed in rating committees and may be adjusted up or down to reflect conditions specific to each rated entity.

Rating methodology and scorecard factors

Exhibit 3

Al Hilal Bank PJSC

Macro Factors		'	
Weighted Macro Profile	Strong -	100%	

Factor	Historic Ratio	Macro Adjusted Score	Credit Trend	Assigned Score	Key driver #1	Key driver #2
Solvency						
Asset Risk						
Problem Loans / Gross Loans	13.6%	b2	$\leftarrow \rightarrow$	b3	Single name concentration	
Capital						
TCE / RWA	9.6%	ba2	$\uparrow \uparrow$	baa3	Access to capital	Expected trend
Profitability						
Net Income / Tangible Assets	0.1%	b3	1	b3	Earnings quality	Expected trend
Combined Solvency Score		b1		b1		
Liquidity						
Funding Structure						
Market Funds / Tangible Banking Assets	10.5%	a3	$\leftarrow \rightarrow$	baa2	Deposit quality	
Liquid Resources						
Liquid Banking Assets / Tangible Banking Assets	14.0%	ba2	$\leftarrow \rightarrow$	ba2	Stock of liquid assets	
Combined Liquidity Score	1	baa2		baa3		
Financial Profile				ba3		
Business Diversification				0		
Opacity and Complexity				0		
Corporate Behavior				0		
Total Qualitative Adjustments				0		
Sovereign or Affiliate constraint:				Aa2		
Scorecard Calculated BCA range				ba2-b1		
Assigned BCA				ba3		
Affiliate Support notching				0		
Adjusted BCA				ba3		

Instrument class	Loss Given Failure notching		Preliminary Rating Assessment	Government Support notching	Local Currency Rating	Foreign Currency Rating
Counterparty Risk Assessment	1	0	ba2 (cr)	7	A1 (cr)	
Source: Moody's Financial Metrics						

Ratings

Exhibit 4

EXNIDIT 4	
Category	Moody's Rating
AL HILAL BANK PJSC	
Outlook	Stable
Baseline Credit Assessment	ba3
Adjusted Baseline Credit Assessment	ba3
Counterparty Risk Assessment	A1(cr)/P-1(cr)
Issuer Rating	A2
ST Issuer Rating	P-1
AHB SUKUK COMPANY LTD.	
Outlook	Stable
Senior Unsecured	A2
Source: Moody's Investors Service	

© 2017 Moody's Corporation, Moody's Investors Service, Inc., Moody's Analytics, Inc. and/or their licensors and affiliates (collectively, "MOODY'S"). All rights reserved.

CREDIT RATINGS ISSUED BY MOODY'S INVESTORS SERVICE, INC. AND ITS RATINGS AFFILIATES ("MIS") ARE MOODY'S CURRENT OPINIONS OF THE RELATIVE FUTURE CREDIT RISK OF ENTITIES, CREDIT COMMITMENTS, OR DEBT-LIKE SECURITIES, AND MOODY'S PUBLICATIONS MAY INCLUDE MOODY'S CURRENT OPINIONS OF THE RELATIVE FUTURE CREDIT RISK OF ENTITIES, CREDIT COMMITMENTS, OR DEBT OR DEBT-LIKE SECURITIES. MOODY'S DEFINES CREDIT RISK AS THE RISK THAT AN ENTITY MAY NOT MEET ITS CONTRACTUAL, FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS AS THEY COME DUE AND ANY ESTIMATED FINANCIAL LOSS IN THE EVENT OF DEFAULT. CREDIT RATINGS DO NOT ADDRESS ANY OTHER RISK, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO: LIQUIDITY RISK, MARKET VALUE RISK, OR PRICE VOLATILITY. CREDIT RATINGS AND MOODY'S OPINIONS INCLUDED IN MOODY'S PUBLICATIONS ARE NOT STATEMENTS OF CURRENT OR HISTORICAL FACT. MOODY'S PUBLICATIONS MAY ALSO INCLUDE QUANTITATIVE MODEL-BASED ESTIMATES OF CREDIT RISK AND RELATED OPINIONS OR COMMENTARY PUBLISHED BY MOODY'S ANALYTICS, INC. CREDIT RATINGS AND MOODY'S PUBLICATIONS TO PURCHASE, SELL, OR HOLD PARTICULAR SECURITIES. NEITHER CREDIT RATINGS AND MOODY'S PUBLICATIONS COMMENT ON THE SUITABILITY OF AN INVESTMENT FOR ANY PARTICULAR INVESTOR. MOODY'S ISSUES ITS CREDIT RATINGS AND PUBLISHES MOODY'S PUBLICATIONS WITH THE EXPECTATION AND UNDERSTANDING THAT EACH INVESTOR WILL, WITH DUE CARE, MAKE ITS OWN STUDY AND EVALUATION OF EACH SECURITY THAT IS UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR PURCHASE. HOLDING, OR SALE.

MOODY'S CREDIT RATINGS AND MOODY'S PUBLICATIONS ARE NOT INTENDED FOR USE BY RETAIL INVESTORS AND IT WOULD BE RECKLESS AND INAPPROPRIATE FOR RETAIL INVESTORS TO USE MOODY'S CREDIT RATINGS OR MOODY'S PUBLICATIONS WHEN MAKING AN INVESTMENT DECISION. IF IN DOUBT YOU SHOULD CONTACT YOUR FINANCIAL OR OTHER PROFESSIONAL ADVISER. ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS PROTECTED BY LAW, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO, COPYRIGHT LAW, AND NONE OF SUCH INFORMATION MAY BE COPIED OR OTHERWISE REPRODUCED, REPACKAGED, FURTHER TRANSMITTED, TRANSFERRED, DISSEMINATED, REDISTRIBUTED OR RESOLD, OR STORED FOR SUBSEQUENT USE FOR ANY SUCH PURPOSE, IN WHOLE OR IN PART, IN ANY FORM OR MANNER OR BY ANY MEANS WHATSOEVER, BY ANY PERSON WITHOUT MOODY'S PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT.

All information contained herein is obtained by MOODY'S from sources believed by it to be accurate and reliable. Because of the possibility of human or mechanical error as well as other factors, however, all information contained herein is provided "AS IS" without warranty of any kind. MOODY'S adopts all necessary measures so that the information it uses in assigning a credit rating is of sufficient quality and from sources MOODY'S considers to be reliable including, when appropriate, independent third-party sources. However, MOODY'S is not an auditor and cannot in every instance independently verify or validate information received in the rating process or in preparing the Moody's publications.

To the extent permitted by law, MOODY'S and its directors, officers, employees, agents, representatives, licensors and suppliers disclaim liability to any person or entity for any indirect, special, consequential, or incidental losses or damages whatsoever arising from or in connection with the information contained herein or the use of or inability to use any such information, even if MOODY'S or any of its directors, officers, employees, agents, representatives, licensors or suppliers is advised in advance of the possibility of such losses or damages, including but not limited to: (a) any loss of present or prospective profits or (b) any loss or damage arising where the relevant financial instrument is not the subject of a particular credit rating assigned by MOODY'S.

To the extent permitted by law, MOODY'S and its directors, officers, employees, agents, representatives, licensors and suppliers disclaim liability for any direct or compensatory losses or damages caused to any person or entity, including but not limited to by any negligence (but excluding fraud, willful misconduct or any other type of liability that, for the avoidance of doubt, by law cannot be excluded) on the part of, or any contingency within or beyond the control of, MOODY'S or any of its directors, officers, employees, agents, representatives, licensors or suppliers, arising from or in connection with the information contained herein or the use of or inability to use any such information.

NO WARRANTY, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, AS TO THE ACCURACY, TIMELINESS, COMPLETENESS, MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PARTICULAR PURPOSE OF ANY SUCH RATING OR OTHER OPINION OR INFORMATION IS GIVEN OR MADE BY MOODY'S IN ANY FORM OR MANNER WHATSOEVER.

Moody's Investors Service, Inc., a wholly-owned credit rating agency subsidiary of Moody's Corporation ("MCO"), hereby discloses that most issuers of debt securities (including corporate and municipal bonds, debentures, notes and commercial paper) and preferred stock rated by Moody's Investors Service, Inc. have, prior to assignment of any rating, agreed to pay to Moody's Investors Service, Inc. for appraisal and rating services rendered by it fees ranging from \$1,500 to approximately \$2,500,000. MCO and MIS also maintain policies and procedures to address the independence of MIS's ratings and rating processes. Information regarding certain affiliations that may exist between directors of MCO and rated entities, and between entities who hold ratings from MIS and have also publicly reported to the SEC an ownership interest in MCO of more than 5%, is posted annually at www.moodys.com under the heading "Investor Relations — Corporate Governance — Director and Shareholder Affiliation Policy."

Additional terms for Australia only: Any publication into Australia of this document is pursuant to the Australian Financial Services License of MOODY'S affiliate, Moody's Investors Service Pty Limited ABN 61 003 399 657AFSL 336969 and/or Moody's Analytics Australia Pty Ltd ABN 94 105 136 972 AFSL 383569 (as applicable). This document is intended to be provided only to "wholesale clients" within the meaning of section 761G of the Corporations Act 2001. By continuing to access this document from within Australia, you represent to MOODY'S that you are, or are accessing the document as a representative of, a "wholesale client" and that neither you nor the entity you represent will directly or indirectly disseminate this document or its contents to "retail clients" within the meaning of section 761G of the Corporations Act 2001. MOODY'S credit rating is an opinion as to the creditworthiness of a debt obligation of the issuer, not on the equity securities of the issuer or any form of security that is available to retail investors. It would be reckless and inappropriate for retail investors to use MOODY'S credit ratings or publications when making an investment decision. If in doubt you should contact your financial or other professional adviser.

Additional terms for Japan only: Moody's Japan K.K. ("MJKK") is a wholly-owned credit rating agency subsidiary of Moody's Group Japan G.K., which is wholly-owned by Moody's Overseas Holdings Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of MCO. Moody's SF Japan K.K. ("MSFJ") is a wholly-owned credit rating agency subsidiary of MJKK. MSFJ is not a Nationally Recognized Statistical Rating Organization ("NRSRO"). Therefore, credit ratings assigned by MSFJ are Non-NRSRO Credit Ratings. Non-NRSRO Credit Ratings are assigned by an entity that is not a NRSRO and, consequently, the rated obligation will not qualify for certain types of treatment under U.S. laws. MJKK and MSFJ are credit rating agencies registered with the Japan Financial Services Agency and their registration numbers are FSA Commissioner (Ratings) No. 2 and 3 respectively.

MJKK or MSFJ (as applicable) hereby disclose that most issuers of debt securities (including corporate and municipal bonds, debentures, notes and commercial paper) and preferred stock rated by MJKK or MSFJ (as applicable) have, prior to assignment of any rating, agreed to pay to MJKK or MSFJ (as applicable) for appraisal and rating services rendered by it fees ranging from JPY200,000 to approximately JPY350,000,000.

MJKK and MSFJ also maintain policies and procedures to address Japanese regulatory requirements.

REPORT NUMBER

1101174

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS MOODY'S INVESTORS SERVICE

Contacts

Nitish Bhojnagarwala +971.4.237.9563

VP-Senior Analyst

nitish.bhojnagarwala@moodys.com

Jonathan Parrod Associate Analyst

jonathan.parrod@moodys.com

+971.4.237.9546

CLIENT SERVICES

Americas

Japan

1-212-553-1653

81-3-5408-4100

Asia Pacific 852-3551-3077

EMEA 44-20-7772-5454

