This article was downloaded by: [University of Pennsylvania] On: 15 July 2013, At: 08:57 Publisher: Taylor & Francis Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



# Synthetic Communications: An International Journal for Rapid Communication of Synthetic Organic Chemistry

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information: http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/lsyc20

# Simple and Mild Protocol for Synthesis of 1,2-Disubstitued Benzimidazoles Using SBA-15-Supported Poly(4styrenesulfonyl(perfluorobutylsulfonyl)imide Catalyst

Zhong-Hua Ma<sup>ab</sup>, Sheng Lin<sup>a</sup> & Jin Nie<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Department of Chemistry, College of Basic Sciences, Huazhong Agricultural University, Wuhan, China

<sup>b</sup> School of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan, China Accepted author version posted online: 04 Aug 2011.Published online: 17 Oct 2011.

To cite this article: Zhong-Hua Ma , Sheng Lin & Jin Nie (2012) Simple and Mild Protocol for Synthesis of 1,2-Disubstitued Benzimidazoles Using SBA-15-Supported Poly(4-styrenesulfonyl(perfluorobutylsulfonyl)imide) Catalyst, Synthetic Communications: An International Journal for Rapid Communication of Synthetic Organic Chemistry, 42:4, 506-515, DOI: 10.1080/00397911.2010.526280

To link to this article: <u>http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00397911.2010.526280</u>

# PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or

howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <a href="http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions">http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions</a>



Synthetic Communications<sup>®</sup>, 42: 506–515, 2012 Copyright © Taylor & Francis Group, LLC ISSN: 0039-7911 print/1532-2432 online DOI: 10.1080/00397911.2010.526280

## SIMPLE AND MILD PROTOCOL FOR SYNTHESIS OF 1,2-DISUBSTITUED BENZIMIDAZOLES USING SBA-15-SUPPORTED POLY(4-STYRENESULFONYL-(PERFLUOROBUTYLSULFONYL)IMIDE) CATALYST

# Zhong-Hua Ma,<sup>1,2</sup> Sheng Lin,<sup>1</sup> and Jin Nie<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Chemistry, College of Basic Sciences, Huazhong Agricultural University, Wuhan, China <sup>2</sup>School of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan, China

#### **GRAPHICAL ABSTRACT**



**Abstract** A simple method for the synthesis of several 1,2-disubstituted benzimidazoles catalyzed by strongly acidic SBA-15-supported poly(4-styrenesulfonyl-(perfluorobutylsulfonyl)imide) is described. The protocol furnished the products in moderate yield and good selectivity in the condensation of o-phenylenediamine with structurally diverse aldehydes under mild conditions.

Keywords Acidic composite; benzimidazole; perfluorobutylsulfonylimide; SBA-15

### INTRODUCTION

The benzimidazole core is certainly classified as a privileged substructure for drug design in light of the affinity it displays toward a variety of enzymes and protein receptors.<sup>[1]</sup> Among various benzimidazole analogs, 1,2-disubstituted structures result in drug leads and commercial pharmaceutical products,<sup>[2]</sup> such as the agonist against the  $\gamma$ -aminobutyric acid A receptor (GABA<sub>A</sub>),<sup>[3]</sup> inhibitors of hepatitis C virus NS5B polymerase,<sup>[4]</sup> and the antihypertensive telmisartan.<sup>[5]</sup> This widespread interest prompts extensive studies for their synthesis, and several methods have been reported. These include intramolecular cross-coupling of *o*-halo aromatic nitrogen-containing compounds (acetanilide,<sup>[6]</sup> amidine,<sup>[7]</sup> and guanidine<sup>[8]</sup>), direct

Address correspondence to Jin Nie, School of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan 430074, China. E-mail: niejin@mail.hust.edu.cn

Received August 27, 2009.



Scheme 1. Condensation of o-phenylenediamine with aldehydes.

N-alkylation of an unsubstituted benzimidazole,<sup>[3]</sup> one-pot synthesis from 2-nitroanilines in the presence of trimethyl orthoformate and H<sub>2</sub>,<sup>[9]</sup> and acid-catalyzed condensation of *o*-phenylenediamine (*o*-PD) with aldehydes.<sup>[10]</sup> Of the methods, the condensation strategy has been more concentrated on the readily available materials, but the superficially simple reaction is a complex sequence of competing reactions.<sup>[11]</sup> Over the past few years, several catalyst systems have been reported to improve the selectivity of 1,2-disubstituted benzimidazoles, such as SiO<sub>2</sub>/ZnCl<sub>2</sub>,<sup>[10(b)]</sup> ionic liquid,<sup>[10(c)]</sup> silica sulfuric acid,<sup>[10(d)]</sup> L-proline,<sup>[10(e)]</sup> TsOH/graphite,<sup>[10(g)]</sup> Fe(ClO<sub>4</sub>)<sub>3</sub>,<sup>[10(h)]</sup> and Montmorillonite K10 under microwave irradiation.<sup>[10]</sup> Although some of these catalysts are promising, there is still a need to develop new catalysts for the synthesis of the analogues.

With the considerable attention on the super nitrogen- and carbon-acid-containing perfluoroalkylsulfonyl in the development of new Brønsted acid catalysts,<sup>[12]</sup> we here report a novel acid composite, mesoporous molecular sieve SBA-15-supported poly(4-styrenesulfonyl (perfluoro-butylsulfonyl)imide) (PSFSI),<sup>[13]</sup> which is further used to catalyze the condensation of *o*-PD with aldehydes at mild conditions to afford 1,2-disubstituted benzimidazoles (Scheme 1).

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Preliminary condition optimization was carried out with *o*-PD and benzaldehyde (molar ratio 1:2.1) as the substrates. Two isolated main products were characterized, and the structures were confirmed as 1-benzyl-2-phenyl-1*H*-benzo[*d*]imidazole (1a) and 2-phenyl-1*H*-benzo[*d*]imidazole (2a), respectively. Small amounts of other complex products were not collected. The results are listed in Table 1.

As can be seen from Table 1, both products were obtained whose ratios depended on the nature of solvent (entries 2–8). The excellent selectivity (94%) was obtained with comparable yield of **1a** (65%) to the documented data catalyzed by some sulfonic acids (entries 2 and 12–14). Prolonging the reaction time was unhelpful, and decreasing the amount of the catalyst led to lower yields of **1a** in the same time (entries 10 and 11). So, the optimal reaction conditions for **1a** should be benzaldehyde (3.2 mmol), *o*-PD (1.5 mmol), PSFSI/SBA-15 (30 mol%, relative to o-PD), stirred 80 min at 25–28 °C in 7 mL of CH<sub>3</sub>NO<sub>2</sub>.

The optimal conditions were employed for other structurally diverse aldehydes to further examine catalytic performances of PSFSI/SBA-15, with minor adaptions for several aldehydes according to the actual case. In most studied cases, moderate yields were achieved, and **1** was formed selectively rather than **2** (Table 2). Aldehydes

Table 1. Effect of reaction conditions on the yield and selectivity of the reaction of o-PD with benzaldehyde<sup>*a*</sup>

Entry				Isolated yield (%)			
	Solvent	Time (min)	Catalyst (mol%)	Total	1a	2a	Selectivity (%) <sup>b</sup>
1	CH <sub>3</sub> NO <sub>2</sub>	360	_	72	43	29	60
2	CH <sub>3</sub> NO <sub>2</sub>	80	30	70	65	5	94
3	MeCO <sub>2</sub> Et	80	30	65	51	14	78
4	CH <sub>3</sub> CN	80	30	67	49	18	73
5	$CH_2Cl_2$	80	30	64	59	5	93
6		80	30	78	55	23	70
7	EtOH	80	30	56	44	12	78
8	$\frown$	80	30	69	45	24	65
9	$CH_3NO_2$	50	30	66	62	4	94
10	CH <sub>3</sub> NO <sub>2</sub>	110	30	72	63	9	88
11	$CH_3NO_2$	80	20	62	56	6	90
$12^{c}$	CH <sub>3</sub> NO <sub>2</sub>	80	30	79	52	27	66
13 <sup>d</sup>	EtOH	60	30	73	44	29	60
14 <sup>e</sup>	Solvent-free	40	19	89	66	23	74

<sup>*a*</sup>Reaction conditions: benzaldehyde (3.2 mmol), *o*-PD (1.5 mmol), PSFSI/SBA-15 (relative to *o*-PD), stirred at 25–28 °C in 7 mL of solvent.

Selectivity =  $\frac{\text{yield (1)}}{\text{total yield (1+2)}} \times 100\%$ .

<sup>c</sup>Catalyzed by NKC-9 (-SO<sub>3</sub>H resin).

<sup>d</sup>Data from Ref. 10(g). Catalyzed by silica sulfuric acid at room temperature.

<sup>e</sup>Data from Ref. 10(g). Catalyzed by *p*-toluensufonic acid/graphite at 75 °C.

bearing electron-withdrawing groups (entries 9 and 10) required longer reaction time to obtain comparable yields compared with those bearing electron-donating groups (entries 1–7), and the electron-donating effect should be responsible for the excellent selectivity. We were pleased to find that unbranched and branched aliphatic aldehydes could react smoothly in extended period (entries 11 and 12). The relatively poor yield of branched aliphatic aldehyde was perhaps due to the steric effect. Correspondingly, unsplit peaks were observed for the protons at ArCH<sub>2</sub>Ph between 5.66 and 5.39 in the <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra of the products **1**, except for **1h**, **1k**, and **1**l. Poor selectivity was unfortunately observed in the case of 3-nitrobenzaldehyde (entry 10).

A possible mechanism to explain the formation of the 1,2-disubstituted benzimidazoles **1a–l** from *o*-PD and aldehydes is depicted in Scheme 2.<sup>[10(b)</sup>, <sup>14]</sup> Products **1** and **2** are obviously the results of two competing reactions. The fast formation of dialkylidene ( $\mathbf{R} = alkyl$ ) or dibenzilidene-*o*-PD ( $\mathbf{R} = aryl$ ) was followed by acidcatalyzed ring closure and 1, 3-hydride transfer (path A). The electron-donating effect of **R** groups promoted the nucleophilic cyclization, and the electronwithdrawing effect of **R** groups behaved otherwise, which led to a lifting amount of the competitive product **2** (path B). Higher acidic strength of PSFSI ( $H_0\approx-11$ ) than that of  $-SO_3H$  ( $H_0\approx-3$ ) provided superior activation for the nucleophilic cyclization and resulted in greater selectivity (Table 1, entries 2 and 12–14).

			Isolated yield (%)		
Entry	Aldehyde	Products 1	Total	1	Selectivity (%) <sup>a</sup>
1	СНО		70	65 ( <b>1a</b> )	94
2	MeO	N N OMe	67	67 ( <b>1b</b> )	>99
3	t-Bu CHO	Tc N-Bu	49	46 ( <b>1c</b> )	93
4	Me <sub>2</sub> N CHO	N $N(CH_3)_2$ $1d$ $N(CH_3)_2$	52	52 ( <b>1d</b> )	>99
5	Срсно		60	53 ( <b>1e</b> )	88
6	CHO CH <sub>3</sub>		75	61 ( <b>1f</b> )	81
7	CHO		62	53 ( <b>1</b> g)	85

Table 2. Condensation of *o*-PD with aldehyde derivatives<sup>*a*</sup>

			Isolated yield (%)		
Entry	Aldehyde	Products 1	Total	1	Selectivity (%) <sup>a</sup>
8	СНО		50	35 ( <b>1h</b> )	70
9 <sup>b</sup>	NO <sub>2</sub> CHO		66	53 ( <b>1i</b> )	80
10 <sup>b</sup>	CHO NO <sub>2</sub>		71	36 (1j)	51
11	СНО	N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N	56	56 ( <b>1k</b> )	>99
12	>—сно	$ \begin{array}{c}                                     $	42	42 ( <b>1</b> I)	>99

Table 2. Continued

*Note.* Reaction conditions: PSFSI/SBA-15 (30 mol%, relative to *o*-PD), *o*-PD (1.5 mmol), aryl aldehyde and cinnamaldehyde (4.7 mmol), or alkyl aldehyde (3.2 mmol), stirred for 80 min at 25–28 °C in 7 mL of  $CH_3NO_2$ .

Selectivity =  $\frac{\text{yield (1)}}{\text{total yield (1+2)}} \times 100\%$ .

<sup>b</sup>Reaction time: 150 min. Only 40% of 1i and 29% of 1j were obtained in 80 min.

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, a new type of strongly acidic composite catalyst was developed by immobilizing the homopolymer, PSFSI, onto SBA-15 silica. The 1,2-disubstituted



Scheme 2. Possible mechanism of the synthesis of 1,2-disubstituted benzimidazoles.

benzimidazoles were obtained in moderate yield and good selectivity in the condensation of *o*-phenylenediamine with structurally diverse aldehydes under mild conditions.

#### EXPERIMENTAL

All solvents (analytical-reagent grade) for synthesis were commercially available in China and pretreated before used. Fourier transform infrared (FT-IR) spectra were conducted by using an Avatar 330 Fourier spectrometer with the KBr pellet technique. NMR was recorded in CDCl<sub>3</sub> or dimethylsulfoxide (DMSO- $d_6$ ) solution on a Bruker AV400 spectrometer using tetramethylsilane (TMS) as the internal standard. High-resolution mass spectroscopy (HRMS) data were tested on a Bruker Apex IV Fourier transform mass spectrometry (FTMS). The melting point was tested on X-4 digital display binocular microscope.

## Immobilization of PSFSI onto SBA-15

A wet impregnation technique was used for the immobilization of PSFSI. SBA-15 support was introduced into a three-neck flask containing anhydrous methanol. The methanol solution of PSFSI was then added. The slurry was continuously stirred at room temperature for 6 h, and then solvent was removed by rotary evaporation under reduced pressure. In the end, the resultant solid was dried at 135 °C overnight. The eligible mass ratio of the initial mixture was 1:1.15 (PSFSI/SBA-15, wt/wt) without obvious loss of the orderly structure of SBA-15. Correspondingly, the acid content of 0.87 mmol/g was obtained and the catalyst was designated as PSFSI/SBA-15.

#### General Procedure for the Synthesis of Benzimidazoles

To a mixture of aromatic aldehyde (3.2 mmol, or 4.7 mmol fatty aldehyde) and o-PD (1.5 mmol) was added 30 mol% PSFSI/SBA-15. Then 7 mL of CH<sub>3</sub>NO<sub>2</sub> were added, and the whole mixture was stirred at room temperature. The reaction progress was monitored by thin-layer chromatography (TLC). After completion of the reaction, filtration was performed and the catalyst was washed thoroughly with acetoacetate. The combined washings and the filtrate were evaporated in a vacuum.

The residue was purified by column chromatography over silica gel eluting with petroleum ether/AcOEt mixture.

#### Data

**2-Phenyl-1-(phenylmethyl)-1***H***-benzimidazole (1a).** Mp 143–145 °C (lit.<sup>[15]</sup> mp 139–141 °C); IR (KBr,  $\nu$ , cm<sup>-1</sup>): 3080, 3060, 3030, 2947 (CH<sub>2</sub>,  $\nu_{as}$ ), 2854 (CH<sub>2</sub>,  $\nu_s$ ), 1603, 1493 (benzene backbone), 1471 (CH<sub>2</sub>,  $\delta$ ), 1450 (C=N), 734, 704 (C-H,  $\gamma$ ); <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.91 (d, 1H, J = 8 Hz), 7.72 (d, 2H, J = 7.2 Hz), 7.48 (d, 3H, J = 6.8 Hz), 7.36–7.33 (m, 4H), 7.27–7.25 (m, 2H), 7.13 (d, 2H, J = 7.2 Hz), 5.49 (s, 2H, ArCH<sub>2</sub>); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 154.2, 143.1, 136.4, 136.1, 130.0, 130.0, 129.3, 129.1, 128.8, 127.8, 126.0, 123.1, 122.8, 120.0, 110.6, 48.4 (CH<sub>2</sub>).

**2-Phenyl-1***H***-benzoimidazole (2a).** IR (KBr,  $\nu$ , cm<sup>-1</sup>): 3047, 2964, 2920, 1590, 1541 (benzene backbone), 1462, 1443, 1430, 1314, 1276, 970, 742, 702, 687; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, d<sub>6</sub>-DMSO)  $\delta$ : 12.97 (s, 1H, NH), 8.19 (d, 2H, J=7.6 Hz), 7.66–7.48 (m, 5H), 7.22 (d, 2H, J=3.6 Hz); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, d<sub>6</sub>-DMSO)  $\delta$ : 151.7, 144.2, 135.5, 130.6, 130.4, 129.5, 126.9, 122.7, 119.1, 111.9.<sup>[16]</sup>

**1-(4-Methoxybenzyl)-2-(4-methoxyphenyl)-1***H*-benzoimidazole (1b). Mp 129–131 °C (lit.<sup>[10d]</sup> mp 129–130 °C); IR (KBr,  $\nu$ , cm<sup>-1</sup>): 3049, 2986, 2964, 2935 (CH<sub>3</sub>,  $\nu_{as}$ ), 2835, 1609, 1510 (benzene backbone), 1481 (CH<sub>2</sub>,  $\delta$ ), 1460 (C=N), 1386 (CH<sub>3</sub>,  $\delta$ ), 1244 (C-O-C,  $\nu_{as}$ ), 1173, 1029 (C-O-C,  $\nu_{s}$ ), 837, 813, 735; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, d<sub>6</sub>-DMSO)  $\delta$ : 7.70–7.68 (m, 3H), 7.45–7.43 (m, 1H), 7.25–7.19 (m, 2H), 7.09 (d, 2H, J=8.8 Hz), 6.95 (d, 2H, J=8.4 Hz), 6.85 (d, 2H, J=7.6 Hz), 5.49 (s, 2H, ArCH<sub>2</sub>), 3.83 (s, 3H, OCH<sub>3</sub>), 3.69 (s, 3H, OCH<sub>3</sub>).

**1-(4-***tert***-Butylbenzyl)-2-(4-***tert***-butylphenyl)-1***H***-benzoimidazole (1c). Mp 240–242 °C; IR (KBr, \nu, cm<sup>-1</sup>): 3054, 2962, 2903, 2867, 1684, 1611, 1513 (benzene backbone), 1484 (CH<sub>2</sub>, \delta), 1462 (C=N), 1393, 1362 (CH<sub>3</sub>, \delta), 743; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) \delta: 7.92–7.90 (m, 1H), 7.71–7.69 (m, 2H), 7.51–7.49 (m, 2H), 7.38–7.31 (m, 3H), 7.25–7.24 (m, 2H), 7.08 (d, 2H, J = 8.4 Hz), 5.48 (s, 2H, ArCH<sub>2</sub>), 1.39 (s, 9H, CH<sub>3</sub>), 1.33 (s, 9H, CH<sub>3</sub>); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) \delta: 154.3, 153.2, 150.7, 143.0, 136.0, 133.4, 129.9, 129.0, 127.0, 126.0, 125.8, 125.7, 125.3, 122.8, 122.6, 119.8, 110.6, 48.2 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 34.9, 34.6, 31.3, 31.2 (CMe<sub>3</sub>). HRMS (ESI): calculated for C<sub>28</sub>H<sub>32</sub>N<sub>2</sub> [M + H]<sup>+</sup> 397.26383, found 397.26375.** 

**1-(4-Dimethylaminobenzyl)-2-(4-dimethylaminophenyl)-1***H*-benzoimidazole (1d). Mp 240–242 °C; IR (KBr,  $\nu$ , cm<sup>-1</sup>): 3080, 3032, 2883, 2800 (NCH<sub>3</sub>), 1611, 1526 (benzene backbone), 1488 (CH<sub>2</sub>,  $\delta$ ), 1455 (C=N), 1442, 1389, 1365 (CH<sub>3</sub>,  $\delta$ ), 1202, 746; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.84 (d, 1H, *J*=7.6 Hz), 7.66 (d, 2H, *J*=8.8 Hz), 7.30–7.19 (m, 3H), 7.05 (d, 2H, *J*=8.8 Hz), 6.75 (d, 2H, *J*=8.8 Hz), 6.71 (d, 2H, *J*=8.4 Hz), 5.40 (s, 2H, ArCH<sub>2</sub>), 3.03 (s, 6H), 2.95 (s, 6H).

**1-(2-Furanylmethyl)-2-(2-furanyl)-1***H*-benzoimidazole (1e). Mp 100–101 °C (lit.<sup>[10d]</sup> mp 94 °C); IR (KBr,  $\nu$ , cm<sup>-1</sup>): 3151, 3129, 3054, 2938, 1671, 1605, 1511 (benzene backbone), 1475 (CH<sub>2</sub>,  $\delta$ ), 1456 (C=N), 1438, 1007, 737; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.81 (d, 1H, *J*=9.2 Hz), 7.67 (s, 1H), 7.53–7.50 (m, 1H),

7.32 (d, 3H, *J* = 19.2 Hz), 7.25 (d, 1H, *J* = 3.6 Hz), 6.63 (d, 1H, *J* = 0.8 Hz), 6.30–6.25 (m, 2H), 5.66 (s, 2H, ArCH<sub>2</sub>).

**1-(3-Methylbenzyl)-2-(3-methylphenyl)-1***H***-benzoimidazole** (1f). Mp 74–76 °C; IR (KBr,  $\nu$ , cm<sup>-1</sup>): 3018, 2919, 1606, 1591, 1501 (benzene backbone), 1463 (CH<sub>2</sub>,  $\delta$ ), 1447 (C=N), 1377, 1007, 747; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.93 (d, 1H, *J*=7.6 Hz), 7.62 (s, 1H), 7.47 (d, 1H, *J*=7.2 Hz), 7.36–7.32 (m, 3H), 7.27–7.22 (m, 3H), 6.96–6.92 (m, 2H), 5.44 (s, 2H, ArCH<sub>2</sub>), 2.40 (s, 3H), 2.33 (s, 3H).

**1-(2-Chlorobenzyl)-2-(2-chlorophenyl)-1***H*-benzoimidazole (1g). Mp 162–165 °C (lit.<sup>[10d]</sup> 163 °C); IR (KBr,  $\nu$ , cm<sup>-1</sup>): 3059, 2927, 1611, 1471 (CH<sub>2</sub>,  $\delta$ ), 1440 (C=N), 1396, 1047, 745; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.94 (d, 1H, J = 8 Hz), 7.75–7.71 (m, 1H), 7.54–7.42 (m, 3H), 7.37–7.30 (m, 3H), 7.23–7.20 (m, 2H), 7.10 (d, 1H, J = 8.8 Hz), 6.66 (d, 1H, J = 6.8 Hz), 5.39 (s, 2H, ArCH<sub>2</sub>).

**1-(3-Phenyl-2-propenyl)-2-(2-phenylethenyl)-1***H*-benzoimidazole (1h). IR (KBr,  $\nu$ , cm<sup>-1</sup>): 3156, 3026, 2926, 2849, 1686, 1635 (benzene backbone), 1550, 1495, 1450, 1202, 965, 747, 699; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 8.09 (d, 2H, J = 16 Hz), 7.89 (d, 1H, J = 7.6 Hz), 7.80 (d, 1H, J = 15.6 Hz), 7.63 (d, 1H, J = 7.2 Hz), 7.43–7.41 (m, 3H), 7.39–7.30 (m, 4H), 7.14 (d, 2H, J = 16 Hz), 6.51 (d, 2H, J = 16 Hz), 5.09 (d, 2H, J = 5.2 Hz, ArCH<sub>2</sub>).

**1-(4-Nitrobenzyl)-2-(4-nitrophenyl)-1***H***-benzoimidazole** (1i). Mp 242–244 °C; IR (KBr,  $\nu$ , cm<sup>-1</sup>): 3101, 3056, 2914, 2849, 1602 (benzene backbone), 1519 (NO<sub>2</sub>,  $\nu_{as}$ ), 1458 (C=N), 1347 (NO<sub>2</sub>,  $\nu_{s}$ ), 857, 747; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 8.35 (d, 2H, J = 8.8 Hz), 8.26 (d, 2H, J = 8.4 Hz), 7.96 (d, 1H, J = 7.6 Hz), 7.86 (d, 2H, J = 8.8 Hz), 7.45–7.41 (m, 1H), 7.39–7.35 (m, 1H), 7.31–7.28 (m, 2H), 7.23 (d, 1H, J = 8.0 Hz), 5.61 (s, 2H).

**1-(3-Nitrobenzyl)-2-(3-nitrophenyl)-1***H***-benzoimidazole (1j).** Mp 182–184 °C; IR (KBr,  $\nu$ , cm<sup>-1</sup>): 3087, 2926, 2849, 1614 (benzene backbone), 1526 (NO<sub>2</sub>,  $\nu_{as}$ ), 1455(C=N), 1350 (NO<sub>2</sub>,  $\nu_s$ ), 818, 737; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 8.52 (s, 1H), 8.38 (d, 1H, J = 8.4 Hz), 8.23 (d, 1H, J = 8.4 Hz), 8.08 (d, 2H, J = 8 Hz), 7.96 (d, 1H, J = 8 Hz), 7.72 (t, 1H, J = 8.0 Hz), 7.58 (t, 1H, J = 8.0 Hz), 7.45–7.36 (m, 3H), 7.29 (d, 2H, J = 8.8 Hz), 5.61 (s, 2H).

**2-(3-Nitrophenyl)-1***H***-benzo[***d***]imidazole (2j). Mp 204–205 °C (lit.<sup>[15]</sup> mp 207–208 °C); IR (KBr, \nu, cm<sup>-1</sup>): 3459 (NH), 3182, 1686, 1621, 1590, 1521, 1349 (NO<sub>2</sub>, \nu\_s), 811, 741, 705; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-***d***<sub>6</sub>) \delta: 13.34 (s, 1H, NH), 9.02 (s, 1H), 8.61 (d, 1H,** *J***=7.6 Hz), 8.32 (d, 1H,** *J***=8 Hz), 7.87–7.83 (m, 1H), 7.66 (s, 2H), 7.26 (s, 2H).** 

**1-Butyl-2-propyl-1***H***-benzoimidazole (1k).** IR (Nujol mull,  $\nu$ , cm<sup>-1</sup>): 3053, 2961, 2933, 2873, 1615 (benzene backbone), 1508, 1459, 1413, 1378, 766, 743; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.74 (s, 1H), 7.29 (s, 1H), 7.23–7.22 (m, 2H), 4.09 (t, 2H, J=7.6 Hz), 2.87–2.83 (m, 2H), 1.94–1.91 (m, 2H), 1.81–1.72 (m, 2H), 1.43–1.37 (m, 2H), 1.07 (t, 3H, J=7.6 Hz), 0.97 (t, 3H, J=7.6 Hz).

**1-Isobutyl-2-isopropyl-1***H***-benzoimidazole (11).** IR (KBr,  $\nu$ , cm<sup>-1</sup>): 3080, 3057, 2966, 2929, 2873, 1612 (benzene backbone), 1504, 1458, 1419, 1375, 1087, 745, 728; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 7.77–7.76 (m, 1H), 7.30 (s, 1H),

7.23–7.22 (m, 2H), 3.93 (d, 2H, J=7.6 Hz), 3.24–3.17 (m, 1H), 2.28–2.17 (m, 1H), 1.45 (d, 6H, J=6.8 Hz), 0.97 (d, 6H, J=6.4 Hz) ; <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ : 160.2, 142.5, 135.1, 121.8, 121.6, 119.2, 109.7, 50.8 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 29.3, 26.3, 21.9, 20.2. HRMS (ESI): calculated for C<sub>14</sub>H<sub>20</sub>N<sub>2</sub> [M + H]<sup>+</sup> 217.16993; found 217.16947.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support for the project from the Fundamental Research Funds for the Central Universities (2011JC004, 2009JC007, 2010BQ023).

### REFERENCES

- (a) Mason, J. S.; Morize, I.; Menard, P. R.; Cheney, D. L.; Hume, C.; Labaudiniere, R. F. New 4-point pharmacophore pethod for molecular similarity and diversity applications: Overview of the method and applications, including a novel approach to the design of combinatorial libraries containing privileged substructures. J. Med. Chem. 1999, 42, 3251–3264; (b) Singh, S.; Bharti, N.; Mohapatra, P. P. Chemistry and biology of synthetic and naturally occurring antiamoebic agents. Chem. Rev. 2009, 109, 1900–1947.
- Schnürch, M.; Flasik, R.; Khan, A. F.; Spina, M.; Mihovilovic, M. D.; Stanetty, P. Crosscoupling reactions on azoles with two and more heteroatoms. *Eur. J. Org. Chem.* 2006, 3283–3307.
- Falcó, J. L.; Piqué, M.; González, M.; Buira, I.; Méndez, E.; Terencio, J.; Pérez, C.; Príncep, M.; Palomer, A.; Guglietta, A. Synthesis, pharmacology, and molecular modeling of N-substituted 2-phenyl-indoles and benzimidazoles as potent GABA<sub>A</sub> agonists. *Eur. J. Med. Chem.* 2006, *41*, 985–990.
- Ishida, T.; Suzuki, T.; Hirashima, S.; Mizutani, K.; Yoshida, A.; Ando, I.; Ikeda, S.; Adachi, T.; Hashimoto, H. Benzimidazole inhibitors of hepatitis C virus NS5B polymerase: Identification of 2-[(4-diarylmethoxy)phenyl]-benzimidazole. *Bioorg. Med. Chem. Lett.* 2006, 16, 1859–1863.
- Battershill, A. J.; Scott, L. J. Telmisartan: A review of its use in the management of hypertension. *Drugs* 2006, 66, 51–83.
- Zou, B.; Yuan, Q.; Ma, D. Synthesis of 1,2-disubstituted benzimidazoles by a Cu-catalyzed cascade aryl amination/condensation process. *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* 2007, 46, 2598–2601.
- (a) Brain, C. T.; Steer, J. T. An improved procedure for the synthesis of benzimidazoles, using palladium-catalyzed aryl-amination chemistry. *J. Org. Chem.* 2003, *68*, 6814–6816;
   (b) Brain, C. T.; Brunton, S. A. An intramolecular palladium-catalysed aryl amination reaction to produce benzimidazoles. *Tetrahedron Lett.* 2002, *43*, 1893–1895.
- (a) Evindar, G.; Batey, R. A. Copper- and palladium-catalyzed intramolecular aryl guanidinylation: An efficient method for the synthesis of 2-aminobenzimidazoles. *Org. Lett.* 2003, 5, 133–136; (b) Bendale, P. M.; Sun, C. M. Rapid microwave-assisted liquid-phase combinatorial synthesis of 2-(arylamino)benzimidazoles. *J. Comb. Chem.* 2002, 4, 359–361.
- Hornberger, K. R.; Adjabeng, G. M.; Dickson, H. D.; Davis-Ward, R. G. A mild, one-pot synthesis of disubstituted benzimidazoles from 2-nitroanilines. *Tetrahedron Lett.* 2006, 47, 5359–5361.
- (a) Ravi, V.; Vijay, K.; Rao, A. S. Zn-proline-catalyzed selective synthesis of 1, 2-disubstituted benzimidazoles in water. *Chem. Pharm. Bull.* 2007, 55 (8), 1254–1257;

(b) Jacob, R. G.; Dutra, L. G.; Radatz, C. S.; Mendes, S. R.; Perin, G.; Lenardão, E. J. Synthesis of 1,2-disubstitued benzimidazoles using SiO<sub>2</sub>/ZnCl<sub>2</sub>. Tetrahedron Lett. 2009, 50, 1495–1497; (c) Ma, H.; Wang, Y.; Li, J.; Wang, J. Selective synthesis of 2-aryl-1-arylmethyl-1*H*-benzimidazoles promoted by ionic liquid. *Heterocycles* **2007**, *71*, 135–140; (d) Salehi, P.; Dabiri, M.; Zolfigol, M. A.; Otokesh, S.; Baghbanzadeh, M. Selective synthesis of 2-aryl-1-arylmethyl-1H-1,3-benzimidazoles in water at ambient temperature. Tetrahedron Lett. 2006, 47, 2557-2560; (e) Varala, R.; Nasreen, A.; Enugala, R.; Adapa, S. R. L-Proline-catalyzed selective synthesis of 2-aryl-1-arylmethyl-1H-benzimidazoles. Tetrahedron Lett. 2007, 48, 69–72; (f) Chakrabarty, M.; Mukherjee, R.; Karmakar, S.; Harigaya, Y. Tosic acid on silica gel: A cheap and ecofriendly catalyst for a convenient one-pot synthesis of substituted benzimidazoles. Monatsh. Chem. 2007, 138, 1279–1282; (g) Sharghi, H.; Asemani, O.; Tabaei, S. M. H. Simple and mild procedures for synthesis of benzimidazole derivatives using heterogeneous catalyst systems. J. Heterocyc. Chem. 2008, 45, 1293–1298; (h) Oskooie, H. A.; Heravi, M. M.; Sadnia, A.; Behbahani, F. A.; Jannati, F. Solventless synthesis of 2-aryl-1-arylmethyl-1H-1,3-benzimidazoles catalyzed by Fe(ClO<sub>4</sub>)<sub>3</sub> at room temperature. Chin. Chem. Lett. 2007, 18, 1357–1360; (i) Yang, H. W.; Yue, F.; Feng, S.; Wang, J. D.; Liu, A. H.; Chen, H. M.; Yu, K. B. One-step synthesis and characteristics of benzimidazole derivatives. Chin. J. Org. Chem. 2004, 24, 792-796; (j) Perumal, S.; Mariappan, S.; Selvaraj, S. A microwave-assisted synthesis of 2-aryl-1-arylmethyl-1*H*-1,3-benzimidazoles in the presences of K-10. Arkivoc 2004, 8, 46–51.

- 11. Smith, J. G.; Ho, I. Organic redox reactions during the interaction of *o*-phenylenediamine with benzaldehy. *Tetrahedron Lett.* **1971**, *38*, 3541–3544.
- (a) Ishihara, K.; Hasegawa, A.; Yamamoto, H. Polystyrene-bound tetrafluorophenylbis-(triflyl)methane as an organic-solvent-swellable and strong Brønsted acid catalyst. *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* 2001, 40, 4077–4079; (b) Cheon, C. H.; Yamamoto, H. A new Brønsted acid derived from squaric acid and its application to Mukaiyama aldol and Michael reactions. *Tetrahedron Lett.* 2009, 50, 3555–3558; (c) Xiao, J.; Zhang, Z.; Nie, J. Preparation, characterization and catalytic activity of polystyrene with pendent perfluoroalkylsulfonylimide groups. *J. Mol. Catal. A: Chem.* 2005, 236, 119–124; (d) Zhang, Z.; Zhou, S.; Nie, J. Polymer-supported sulfonimide as a novel water-tolerant Brønsted acid catalyst for esterification of equimolar carboxylic acids and alcohols. *J. Mol. Catal. A: Chem.* 2007, 265, 9–14.
- Ma, Z.-H.; Lin, S.; Nie, J. Nitrogen acid containing perfluoroalkylsulfonyl-catalyzed synthesis of 1,2-disubstituted benzimidazoles. CCS 6th National Organic Chemistry Conference, Northwest University, Xi'an, China, 1 (2009), p. 321.
- (a) Liu, S.; Yang, L. A simple and efficient procedure for the synthesis of benzimidazoles using air as the oxidant. *Tetrahedron Lett.* 2005, 46, 4315–4319; (b) Gogoi, P.; Konwar, D. An efficient and one-pot synthesis of imidazolines and benzimidazoles via anaerobic oxidation of carbon-nitrogen bonds in water. *Tetrahedron Lett.* 2006, 47, 79–82.
- Yadav, J. S.; Reddy, B. V. S.; Premalatha, K.; Shankar, K. S. Bismuth(III)-catalyzed rapid and highly efficient synthesis of 2-aryl-1-arylmethyl-1*H*-benzimidazoles in water. *Can. J. Chem.* 2008, 86, 124–128.
- 16. http://riodb01.ibase.aist.go.jp/sdbs/cgi-bin/direct\_frame\_top.cgi, no. 15607.