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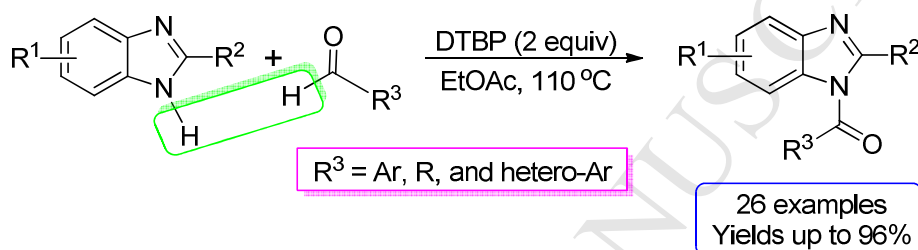
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## Graphical Abstract

**Metal-Free Cross-Dehydrogenative Coupling of Benzimidazoles with Aldehydes to *N*-Acylbenzimidazoles**Lin Yu,<sup>a</sup> Min Wang,<sup>\*,a</sup> and Lei Wang<sup>\*,a,b</sup><sup>a</sup> Department of Chemistry, Huaibei Normal University, Huaibei, Anhui 235000, P R China<sup>b</sup> State Key Laboratory of Organometallic Chemistry, Shanghai Institute of Organic Chemistry, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Shanghai 200032, P R China



# Metal-free cross-dehydrogenative coupling of benzimidazoles with aldehydes to *N*-acylbenzimidazoles

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## ABSTRACT

A novel and direct cross-dehydrogenative coupling (CDC) between benzimidazoles with aldehydes promoted by di-*tert*-butyl peroxide (DTBP) was developed. The reactions generated the corresponding *N*-acylbenzimidazoles in good yields under metal-free conditions. This method has broad substrate scope and high efficiency.

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### Keywords:

Metal-free, Cross-dehydrogenative coupling,  
Benzimidazoles, Aldehydes,  
*N*-Acylbenzimidazoles.

## 1. Introduction

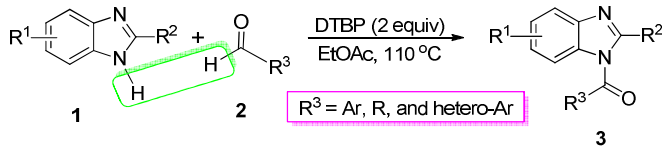
The formation of amide bonds is one of the most significant organic reactions, as the structural motif with amide bonds is a ubiquitous substructure of many biologically relevant molecules, such as proteins, natural products, pharmaceuticals, and synthetic intermediates.<sup>1</sup> Traditionally, amides are prepared from the condensation of carboxylic acids with amines, which generally relies on the use of coupling agents<sup>2</sup> or conversion into more reactive derivatives (acyl halides or anhydrides).<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, these methods suffer from the use of hazardous or expensive reagents, instability of activated carboxylic acid derivatives, and/or poor atom-efficiency. In the past decade, a number of new strategies for the construction of amide bonds have been developed, such as the modified Staudinger reaction,<sup>4</sup> Schmidt reaction,<sup>5</sup> rearrangement of oximes,<sup>6</sup> amidation of nitriles,<sup>7</sup> oxidative coupling between alcohols and amines,<sup>8</sup> acylation of amines,<sup>9</sup> aminocarbonylation of alkenes,<sup>10</sup> alkynes,<sup>11</sup> and haloarenes,<sup>12</sup> Mn- and Fe-catalyzed C–C bond cleavage,<sup>13</sup> and oxidative amidation of aldehydes.<sup>14</sup> Among the emerging amide formation methods, the direct oxidative amidation of aldehydes with amines is the most elegant atom economic approach, which involves C–H activation of aldehydes and N–H activation of amines, namely, cross-dehydrogenative coupling reaction (CDC). The CDC reaction is one of the most attractive and atom-economic synthetic approaches and has been widely applied in the C–C and C–heteroatom bond formations.<sup>15</sup> Most recently, the

synthesis of amides from aldehydes with amines via cross-dehydrogenative coupling reaction under metal-free conditions is a more attractive route because it can overcome the drawbacks of the expensive, poisonous, and air-sensitive properties of metals or organometallics.<sup>14m-u</sup> A variety of metal-free systems, such as *N*-heterocyclic carbene-catalyzed redox systems,<sup>14p-r</sup> *tert*-butyl hydroperoxide (TBHP),<sup>14n,o</sup> diacetoxyiodobenzene (DIB),<sup>14m,s</sup> hydrogen peroxide (H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>),<sup>14t</sup> and NaOCl<sup>14u</sup> have been developed. In the above reactions, aliphatic amines are popular substrates, but aromatic amines are less explored.<sup>14m-u</sup> To date, N–H of aromatic heterocycles, such as pyrroles, pyrazoles, imidazoles, benzimidazoles and indoles used for the cross-dehydrogenative coupling reaction with aldehydes is rarely investigated.

*N*-Acylation of benzimidazoles are important organic reactions, because acylation not only can provide sufficient protection for benzimidazoles, but also *N*-acylbenzimidazoles are generally considered to be mild acylation agents for kinetic resolution.<sup>16</sup> In the past decades, the synthesis of *N*-acyl aromatic heterocyclic compounds was mainly through the reactions of heterocycles with acyl halides in the presence of a base. However, the methods are not environmentally friendly and atom economical, as they require more than stoichiometric amounts of base and generate halide and/or other wastes. To develop a more environmentally friendly and atom economical route to *N*-acylbenzimidazoles from readily available starting materials is desirable. Herein, we present our recent results on metal-free

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cross-dehydrogenative coupling of benzimidazoles with aldehydes to *N*-acylbenzimidazoles. This direct oxidative coupling of benzimidazoles with aldehydes promoted by di-*tert*-butyl peroxide (DTBP) generated the corresponding products *N*-acylbenzimidazoles in good yields. The method has broad aldehyde scope, including aryl, alkenyl and alkyl aldehydes, and high efficiency (Scheme 1).



**Scheme 1** The direct cross-dehydrogenative coupling of benzimidazoles with aldehydes

## 2. Results and Discussion

Our initial efforts focused on the direct coupling between 5,6-dimethyl-1*H*-benzo[d]imidazole (**1a**) and benzaldehyde (**2a**) to examine suitable reaction conditions and the selected screening results were listed in Table 1. Firstly, various oxidants were tested for the proposed reaction using EtOAc as solvent at 110 °C for 15 h (Table 1, entries 1–7). The oxidant plays an important role in the reaction, and among examined oxidants, di-*tert*-butyl peroxide (DTBP) exhibited the highest reactivity to the reaction, providing 88% yield of the desired product (5,6-dimethyl-1*H*-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)(phenyl)methanone (**3a**) (Table 1, entry 1). *tert*-Butyl hydroperoxide (TBHP) was subsequently inferior with 84% yield of **3a** (Table 1, entry 2). Moderate yield of **3a** were obtained using *tert*-butyl perbenzoate (TBPB), cumyl hydroperoxide or diacetoxiodobenzene (DIB) as oxidant (Table 1, entries 3–5). However, trace amounts of **3a** were observed in the presence of cyclohexanone peroxide, (C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>5</sub>COO)<sub>2</sub> or H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> (Table 1, entries 6–8). No desired product was detected in the absence of oxidant. We also surveyed the effect of solvent on the model reaction and toluene was found to be equally effective as EtOAc (Table 1, entry 9), while CH<sub>3</sub>CN, dioxane, C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>5</sub>Cl, ClCH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>2</sub>Cl, CH<sub>3</sub>NO<sub>2</sub>, NMP, DMSO and DMF resulted in diminished yields, providing 23–63% yields of **3a** (Table 1, entries 10–17). When the reaction was conducted in DMA, C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>5</sub>OH, THF or CH<sub>3</sub>OCH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>2</sub>OCH<sub>3</sub>, no desired product was obtained (Table 1, entries 18–21). The addition of 4 Å molecular sieves (50 mg) slightly increased the yield of **3a** up to 93% (Table 1, entry 22). For the amount of DTBP used in the reaction, less than 2 equiv of DTBP led to the incompleteness of the reaction (Table 1, entry 23). Meanwhile, up to 3 equiv of DTBP did not increase the yield of **3a** significantly (Table 1, entry 24). The effect of temperature on the reaction was also surveyed and the results indicated that the yield of **3a** was not improved when the reaction temperature was increased to 120 °C (Table 1, entry 25), but an obviously lower yield was observed when the reaction was performed at 100 °C (Table 1, entry 26). Thus, the optimized reaction conditions for the reaction were found to be DTBP (2 equiv), 4 Å molecular sieves (50 mg) in ethyl acetate at 110 °C for 15 h.

The scope of the substrates toward this direct cross-dehydrogenative coupling of benzimidazoles with aldehydes was further investigated under the optimized reaction conditions, and

**Table 1** Optimization of the reaction conditions for the model reaction **1a** with **2a**<sup>a</sup>

| Entry | Oxidant                                          | Solvent                                                           | Yield(%) <sup>b</sup> |
|-------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1     | DTBP                                             | EtOAc                                                             | 88                    |
| 2     | TBHP                                             | EtOAc                                                             | 84                    |
| 3     | TBPB                                             | EtOAc                                                             | 63                    |
| 4     | Cumyl hydroperoxide                              | EtOAc                                                             | 50                    |
| 5     | DIB                                              | EtOAc                                                             | 45                    |
| 6     | Cyclohexanone peroxide                           | EtOAc                                                             | Trace                 |
| 7     | (C <sub>6</sub> H <sub>5</sub> COO) <sub>2</sub> | EtOAc                                                             | Trace                 |
| 8     | H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub>                    | EtOAc                                                             | Trace <sup>c</sup>    |
| 9     | DTBP                                             | Toluene                                                           | 88                    |
| 10    | DTBP                                             | CH <sub>3</sub> CN                                                | 63                    |
| 11    | DTBP                                             | Dioxane                                                           | 53                    |
| 12    | DTBP                                             | C <sub>6</sub> H <sub>5</sub> Cl                                  | 58                    |
| 13    | DTBP                                             | ClCH <sub>2</sub> CH <sub>2</sub> Cl                              | 60                    |
| 14    | DTBP                                             | CH <sub>3</sub> NO <sub>2</sub>                                   | 35                    |
| 15    | DTBP                                             | NMP                                                               | 30                    |
| 16    | DTBP                                             | DMSO                                                              | 27                    |
| 17    | DTBP                                             | DMF                                                               | 23                    |
| 18    | DTBP                                             | DMA                                                               | NR                    |
| 19    | DTBP                                             | C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>5</sub> OH                                  | NR                    |
| 20    | DTBP                                             | THF                                                               | NR                    |
| 21    | DTBP                                             | CH <sub>3</sub> OCH <sub>2</sub> CH <sub>2</sub> OCH <sub>3</sub> | NR                    |
| 22    | DTBP                                             | EtOAc                                                             | 93 <sup>d</sup>       |
| 23    | DTBP                                             | EtOAc                                                             | 56 <sup>e</sup>       |
| 24    | DTBP                                             | EtOAc                                                             | 93 <sup>f</sup>       |
| 25    | DTBP                                             | EtOAc                                                             | 89 <sup>g</sup>       |
| 26    | DTBP                                             | EtOAc                                                             | 64 <sup>h</sup>       |

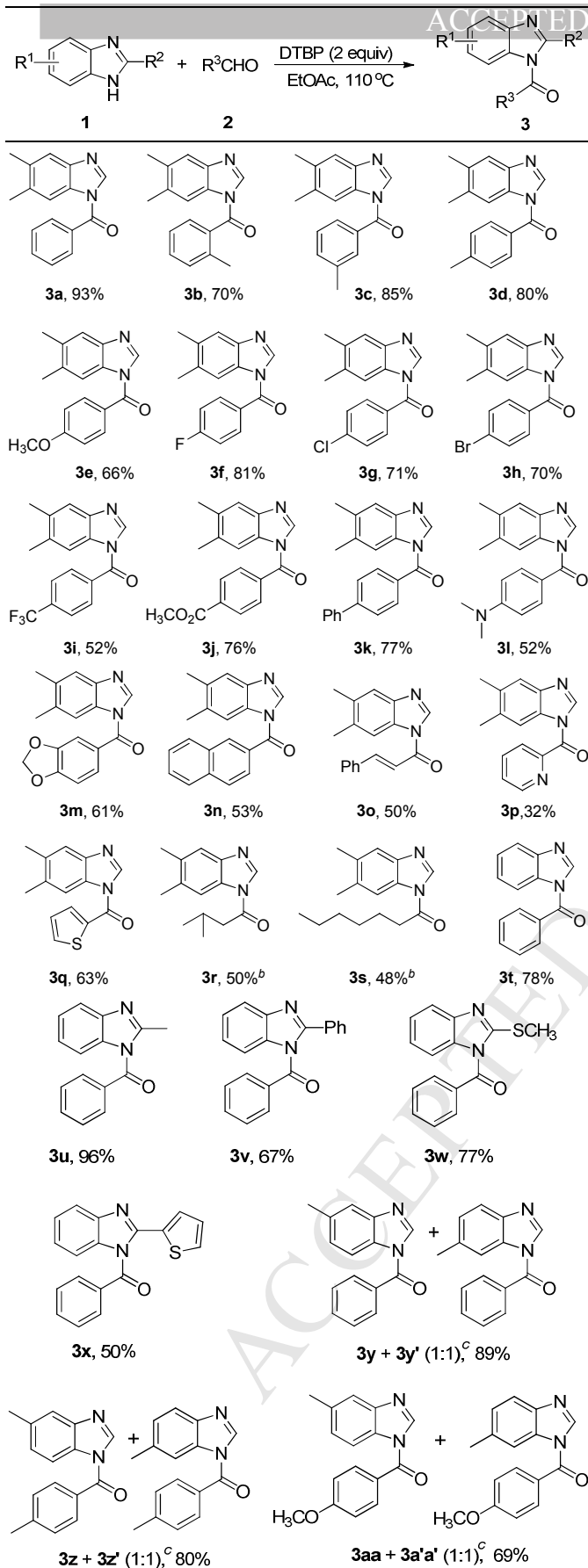
<sup>a</sup> Reaction conditions: **1a** (0.50 mmol), **2a** (1.0 mmol), oxidant (2.0 equiv.), solvent (3.0 mL), 110 °C, 15 h, sealed tube, under nitrogen.

<sup>b</sup> Isolated yields. <sup>c</sup> 30% H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> aqueous solution. <sup>d</sup> Addition of 4 Å molecular sieves (50 mg). <sup>e</sup> DTBP (1.0 equiv.). <sup>f</sup> DTBP (3.0 equiv.).

<sup>g</sup> 120 °C. <sup>h</sup> 100 °C.

examined in the reaction with 5,6-dimethyl-1*H*-benzo[d]imidazole (**1a**), and good to excellent yields of the corresponding products were obtained. Aromatic aldehydes bearing electron-donating groups, such as Me, MeO, *N,N*-(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>N, and OCH<sub>2</sub>O, or electron-withdrawing ones including F, Cl, Br, Ph, CF<sub>3</sub>, and CO<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub> reacted with **1a** smoothly to afford the desired corresponding products (Table 2, **3b–m**). Apparently, the reaction is sensitive to steric hindrance as the reaction with 2-methylbenzaldehyde afforded the corresponding amide **3b** in lower yield than with 3-methylbenzaldehyde or 4-methylbenzaldehyde (**3b** vs **3c** and **3d**). But relatively speaking, benzaldehyde gave much improved yield of the desired product **3a** than in the case of substituted benzaldehydes (Table 2, **3a** vs **3b–m**). The substrates 2-naphthaldehyde and cinnamaldehyde also displayed good reactivity, affording **3n** and **3o** in moderate yields. It is noteworthy that heteroaromatic aldehydes, such as picolinaldehyde and thiophene-2-carbaldehyde could react with **1a** and were converted into their corresponding amides in 32% and 63% yields, respectively (Table 2, **3p** and **3q**). However, when aliphatic aldehydes, for example 3-methylbutanal and heptanal, were tested under the optimized reaction conditions, only trace amount of products were detected. Gratifyingly, when 10 mol% Cu(OAc)<sub>2</sub> was added, the yields were increased to 50% and 48%, respectively (Table 2, **3r** and **3s**).

**Table 2** Oxidative amidation of aldehydes with benzimidazoles<sup>a</sup>

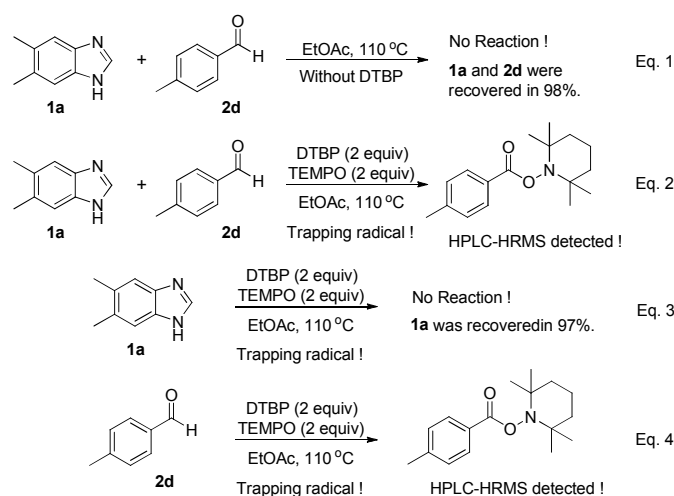


<sup>a</sup> Reaction conditions: benzimidazole (1, 0.50 mmol), aldehyde (2, 1.0 mmol), DTBP (2.0 equiv), 4 Å molecular sieves (50 mg) in ethyl acetate (3.0 mL) at 110 °C for 15 h, sealed tube, under nitrogen. <sup>b</sup> Addition of 10 mol% Cu(OAc)<sub>2</sub>. <sup>c</sup> The ratio was determined by <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra.

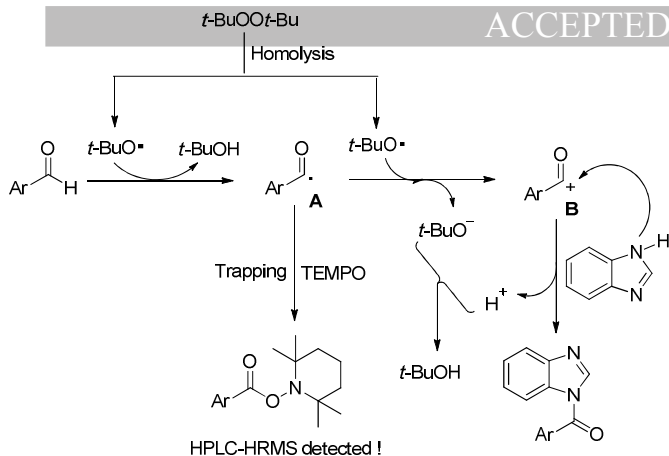
The present reaction conditions were also suitable for the reactions of benzaldehyde with other benzimidazoles. Among the methyl-substituted benzimidazoles, no matter what positions, resulted in high yields of the corresponding products (**3a** and **3u** vs **3t**). Especially for the reaction of 2-methyl-1*H*-benzo[*d*]imidazole with benzaldehyde provided the desired product in almost quantitative yield (**3u**). Even if bulky 2-substituted benzimidazoles, such as 2-phenyl-1*H*-benzo[*d*]imidazole, 2-(methylthio)-1*H*-benzo[*d*]imidazole and 2-(thiophen-2-yl)-1*H*-benzo[*d*]imidazole, reacted with benzaldehyde, corresponding *N*-acyl products **3v**, **3w**, and **3x** were isolated in 67%, 77%, and 50% yields, respectively. Owing to the tautomerism, when 5-methyl-1*H*-benzo[*d*]imidazole was engaged in the system, the reactions generated the mixtures of amides isomers with almost 1:1 ratio, which determined by <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra (Table 2, **3y** and **3y'**, **3z** and **3z'**, **3aa** and **3a'a'**).<sup>17</sup> However, no desired product was obtained for the reactions of 4-hydroxybenzaldehyde or 4-formylbenzoic acid with **1a**, and 1*H*-benzo[*d*]imidazole-5-carboxylic acid with 4-methylbenzaldehyde under the present reaction conditions.

To investigate the reaction mechanism, the related control experiments were conducted, as shown in Scheme 2. No any product was detected when the reaction of **1a** and 4-methylbenzaldehyde (**2d**) was carried out in the absence of oxidant DTBP, and the starting materials were recovered in 98% (Scheme 2, Eq. 1). When 2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidine *N*-oxide (TEMPO, 2.0 equiv), a radical scavenger, was added to the reaction of **1a** with **2d** under the optimized reaction conditions, the coupling product of acyl radical generated from **2d** with TEMPO was confirmed by HPLC-HRMS (Scheme 2, Eq. 2, and SI for detail). It is suggested that TEMPO acts as a radical scavenger and the reaction involves a radical process. On the other hand, from Eq. 3 and Eq. 4 in Scheme 2, it also verified that the formation of the amidation product is not through the direct-cross coupling of the acyl radical from aldehyde and the nitrogen radical from benzimidazole in the presence of DTBP.

Based on our results and literature,<sup>18</sup> a possible mechanism for this reaction was proposed in Scheme 3. Initially, homolysis of DTBP gave the *tert*-butoxy radical. The formed *tert*-butoxy radical abstracted H from aldehyde to generate the corresponding acyl radical **A**, which was further oxidized by *tert*-butoxy radical to afford acyl cation **B**.<sup>18</sup> Finally, the desired amidation product was formed through a nucleophilic reaction of amine (benzimidazole) to intermediate **B**.



**Scheme 2** The related control experiments



**Scheme 3** Proposed reaction mechanism

### 3. Conclusions

In conclusion, we have developed a novel and efficient method for the preparation of *N*-acylbenzimidazoles via cross-dehydrogenative coupling of benzimidazoles with aldehydes in the presence of di-*tert*-butyl peroxide under metal-free conditions. Compared to previously known approaches, the simplicity of this procedure and the generally satisfactory yields make this method particularly attractive. In addition, the method has broad aldehyde scope, including aryl, alkenyl and alkyl aldehydes and high efficiency. The presence of a diverse range of substituents and functional groups in benzimidazoles and aldehydes also opens an opportunity to acquire many other derivatives. Further studies on the mechanistic details and expansion of the scope of the reaction are currently underway in our laboratory.

### 4. Experimental section

All reactions were carried out under  $N_2$  atmosphere.  $^1H$  NMR and  $^{13}C$  NMR spectra were measured on a Bruker Avance NMR spectrometer (400 MHz or 100 MHz, respectively) with  $CDCl_3$  as solvent and recorded in ppm relative to internal tetramethylsilane standard. The peak patterns are indicated as follows: s, singlet; d, doublet; t, triplet; m, multiplet; q, quartet. The coupling constants,  $J$ , are reported in Hertz (Hz). High resolution mass spectroscopy data of the product were collected on an Agilent Technologies 6540 UHD Accurate-Mass Q-TOF LC/MS (ESI) or a Waters Micromass GCT instrument (EI).

*Typical procedure for the cross-dehydrogenative coupling of benzimidazoles with aldehydes to N-acylbenzimidazoles*

A sealable reaction tube equipped with a magnetic stirrer bar was charged with 5,6-dimethyl-1*H*-benzo[d]imidazole (0.50 mmol, 73 mg), benzaldehyde (1.0 mmol, 106 mg), di-*tert*-butylperoxide (1.0 mmol, 146 mg), 4 Å molecular sieves (50 mg) and ethyl acetate (3.0 mL). The rubber septum was then replaced by a Teflon-coated screw cap, then the reaction must be under  $N_2$  and the reaction vessel placed in an oil bath at 110 °C. After stirring the mixture at this temperature for 15 h, it was cooled to room temperature and diluted with ethyl acetate then washed with 0.5 mmol/L NaOH aqueous solution (5.0 mL×3), dried over by  $MgSO_4$ . After the solvent was removed under reduced pressure, the residue was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (hexane/EtOAc, 4:1 to 6:1) to afford the desired product, (5,6-

dimethyl-1*H*-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)(phenyl)methanone (**3a**), 116 mg, 93% yield).

**(5,6-Dimethyl-1*H*-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)(phenyl)methanone (3a):** Yellow solid, mp 90.4–92.9 °C.  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 8.09 (s, 1H), 7.99 (s, 1H), 7.79–7.77 (m, 2H), 7.68–7.65 (m, 1H), 7.58–7.54 (m, 3H), 2.40 (s, 3H), 2.39 (s, 3H);  $^{13}C$  NMR (100 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 167.0, 142.4, 135.0, 134.2, 133.1, 132.9, 130.5, 129.4, 128.9, 120.5, 115.6, 20.5, 20.3. IR (KBr,  $cm^{-1}$ ): 1700 ( $\nu_{C=O}$ ). HRMS (ESI) ( $[M+H]^+$ ): Calcd. for  $C_{16}H_{15}N_2O$ : 251.1184. Found 251.1181.

**(5,6-Dimethyl-1*H*-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)(*o*-tolyl)methanone (3b):** Yellow solid, mp 83.6–84.9 °C.  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 8.00 (s, 1H), 7.84 (s, 1H), 7.58 (s, 1H), 7.52–7.49 (m, 1H), 7.45–7.43 (m, 1H), 7.39–7.34 (m, 2H), 2.42 (s, 3H), 2.41 (s, 3H), 2.39 (s, 3H);  $^{13}C$  NMR (100 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 167.6, 142.8, 142.3, 136.6, 135.1, 134.3, 133.3, 131.4, 131.3, 127.8, 126.0, 120.6, 115.7, 20.5, 20.3, 19.4. IR (KBr,  $cm^{-1}$ ): 1706 ( $\nu_{C=O}$ ). HRMS (ESI) ( $[M+H]^+$ ): Calcd. for  $C_{17}H_{17}N_2O$ : 265.1341. Found 265.1338.

**(5,6-Dimethyl-1*H*-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)(*m*-tolyl)methanone (3c):** Yellow oil.  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 8.09 (s, 1H), 8.00 (s, 1H), 7.59 (s, 1H), 7.57–7.55 (m, 2H), 7.48–7.42 (m, 2H), 2.45 (s, 3H), 2.41 (s, 3H), 2.39 (s, 3H);  $^{13}C$  NMR (100 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 167.2, 142.5, 139.0, 134.9, 134.2, 133.7, 133.1, 130.5, 129.9, 128.7, 126.6, 120.4, 115.6, 21.3, 20.5, 20.3. IR (KBr,  $cm^{-1}$ ): 1696 ( $\nu_{C=O}$ ). HRMS (ESI) ( $[M+H]^+$ ): Calcd. for  $C_{17}H_{17}N_2O$ : 265.1341. Found 265.1339.

**(5,6-Dimethyl-1*H*-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)(*p*-tolyl)methanone (3d):** White solid, mp 134.3–135.0 °C.  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 8.10 (s, 1H), 7.97 (s, 1H), 7.68 (d,  $J$  = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.56 (s, 1H), 7.34 (d,  $J$  = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 2.46 (s, 3H), 2.39 (s, 3H), 2.38 (s, 3H);  $^{13}C$  NMR (100 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 167.0, 143.9, 142.5, 142.4, 134.8, 134.0, 130.5, 130.2, 129.7, 129.6, 120.4, 115.6, 21.6, 20.5, 20.3. IR (KBr,  $cm^{-1}$ ): 1699 ( $\nu_{C=O}$ ). HRMS (ESI) ( $[M+H]^+$ ): Calcd. for  $C_{17}H_{17}N_2O$ : 265.1341. Found 265.1335.

**(5,6-Dimethyl-1*H*-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)(4-methoxyphenyl)methanone (3e):** Yellow solid, mp 140.3–142.6 °C.  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 8.14 (s, 1H), 7.94 (s, 1H), 7.80 (d,  $J$  = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.58 (s, 1H), 7.05 (d,  $J$  = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 3.92 (s, 3H), 2.41 (s, 3H), 2.40 (s, 3H);  $^{13}C$  NMR (100 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 166.4, 163.6, 142.5, 142.4, 134.7, 134.0, 132.0, 130.7, 125.0, 120.4, 115.4, 114.3, 55.6, 20.5, 20.3. IR (KBr,  $cm^{-1}$ ): 1688 ( $\nu_{C=O}$ ). HRMS (ESI) ( $[M+H]^+$ ): Calcd. for  $C_{17}H_{17}N_2O_2$ : 281.1290, Found 281.1294.

**(5,6-Dimethyl-1*H*-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)(4-fluorophenyl)methanone (3f):** White solid, mp 126.5–127.7 °C.  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 8.06 (s, 1H), 7.91 (s, 1H), 7.83–7.79 (m, 2H), 7.55 (s, 1H), 7.26–7.22 (m, 2H), 2.38 (s, 3H), 2.37 (s, 3H);  $^{13}C$  NMR (100 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 165.8, 165.5 (d,  $J$  = 254.1 Hz), 142.4, 142.0, 135.0, 134.3, 132.1 (d,  $J$  = 9.2 Hz), 130.4, 129.2 (d,  $J$  = 3.3 Hz), 120.5, 116.3 (d,  $J$  = 22.1 Hz), 115.5, 20.4, 20.2. IR (KBr,  $cm^{-1}$ ): 1702 ( $\nu_{C=O}$ ). HRMS (ESI) ( $[M+H]^+$ ): Calcd. for  $C_{16}H_{14}FN_2O$ : 269.1090. Found 269.1086.

**(4-Chlorophenyl)(5,6-dimethyl-1*H*-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)methanone (3g):** White solid, mp 165.2–166.3 °C.  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 8.09 (s, 1H), 7.95 (s, 1H), 7.74 (d,  $J$  = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.58 (s, 1H), 7.56 (d,  $J$  = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 2.41 (s, 3H), 2.40 (s, 3H);  $^{13}C$  NMR (100 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 165.9, 142.3, 142.0, 135.2, 134.5, 131.3, 130.9, 130.3, 129.3, 128.6, 120.5, 115.6, 20.5, 20.3. IR (KBr,  $cm^{-1}$ ): 1701 ( $\nu_{C=O}$ ). HRMS (ESI) ( $[M+H]^+$ ): Calcd. for  $C_{16}H_{14}ClN_2O$ : 285.0795. Found 285.0799.

- (4-Bromophenyl)(5,6-dimethyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)methanone (3h):** White solid, mp 185.5–186.2 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 8.05 (s, 1H), 7.95 (s, 1H), 7.72 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.66 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.57 (s, 1H), 2.40 (s, 3H), 2.39 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 166.0, 142.5, 141.9, 135.2, 134.5, 132.3, 131.8, 130.9, 130.3, 128.1, 120.6, 115.6, 20.5, 20.3. IR (KBr, cm<sup>-1</sup>): 1703 (ν<sub>C=O</sub>). HRMS (ESI) ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): Calcd. for C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>14</sub>BrN<sub>2</sub>O: 329.0290. Found 329.0285.
- (5,6-Dimethyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)(4-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl)methanone (3i):** Yellow solid, mp 186.3–187.7 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 7.99 (s, 1H), 7.96 (s, 1H), 7.89 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.84 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.55 (s, 1H), 2.40 (s, 3H), 2.39 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 165.7, 142.5, 141.7, 136.4, 135.3, 134.7, 134.5 (q, *J* = 32.9 Hz), 130.2, 129.7, 126.0 (q, *J* = 3.7 Hz), 123.3 (q, *J* = 271.2 Hz), 120.6, 115.6, 20.4, 20.2. IR (KBr, cm<sup>-1</sup>): 1706 (ν<sub>C=O</sub>). HRMS (EI) ([M]<sup>+</sup>): Calcd. for C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>13</sub>F<sub>3</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O: 318.0980, Found 318.0976.
- Methyl 4-(5,6-dimethyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazole-1-carbonyl)benzoate (3j):** White solid, mp 191.4–191.5 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 8.25 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 8.04 (s, 1H), 8.00 (s, 1H), 7.86 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.60 (s, 1H), 4.00 (s, 3H), 2.43 (s, 3H), 2.42 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 166.2, 165.7, 142.6, 141.9, 136.9, 135.3, 134.6, 134.0, 130.3, 130.1, 129.3, 120.7, 115.7, 52.6, 20.5, 20.3. IR (KBr, cm<sup>-1</sup>): 1731 (ν<sub>C=O</sub>). HRMS (ESI) ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): Calcd. for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>17</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>: 309.1239, Found 309.1237.
- Biphenyl-4-yl(5,6-dimethyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)methanone (3k):** White solid, mp 186.9–187.0 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 8.17 (s, 1H), 8.03 (s, 1H), 7.88 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.79 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.67 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.60 (s, 1H), 7.53–7.49 (m, 2H), 7.46–7.42 (m, 1H), 2.43 (s, 3H), 2.41 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 166.8, 145.9, 142.6, 142.3, 139.4, 135.0, 134.2, 131.6, 130.5, 130.1, 129.0, 128.5, 127.5, 127.3, 120.5, 115.7, 20.5, 20.3. IR (KBr, cm<sup>-1</sup>): 1692 (ν<sub>C=O</sub>). HRMS (ESI) ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): Calcd. for C<sub>22</sub>H<sub>19</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O: 327.1497, Found 327.1496.
- (5,6-Dimethyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)(4-(dimethylamino)phenyl)methanone (3l):** Yellow solid, mp 197.1–199.3 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 8.21 (s, 1H), 7.90 (s, 1H), 7.74 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.58 (s, 1H), 6.73 (d, *J* = 9.2 Hz, 2H), 3.09 (s, 6H), 2.40 (s, 3H), 2.39 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 166.5, 153.6, 142.6, 142.4, 134.3, 133.4, 132.3, 131.0, 120.2, 118.6, 115.3, 111.0, 40.0, 20.5, 20.2. IR (KBr, cm<sup>-1</sup>): 1675 (ν<sub>C=O</sub>). HRMS (ESI) ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): Calcd. for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>20</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O: 294.1606, Found 294.1601.
- Benzo[d][1,3]dioxol-5-yl(5,6-dimethyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)methanone (3m):** Yellow solid, mp 187.9–188.7 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 8.13 (s, 1H), 7.92 (s, 1H), 7.56 (s, 1H), 7.35–7.33 (m, 1H), 7.28 (s, 1H), 6.95–6.93 (m, 1H), 6.10 (s, 2H), 2.40 (s, 3H), 2.39 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 166.0, 151.9, 148.3, 142.5, 142.3, 134.8, 134.1, 130.6, 126.6, 125.6, 120.4, 115.4, 109.8, 108.3, 102.2, 20.4, 20.2. IR (KBr, cm<sup>-1</sup>): 1681 (ν<sub>C=O</sub>). HRMS (ESI) ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): Calcd. for C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>15</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>: 295.1083, Found 295.1082.
- (5,6-Dimethyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)(naphthalen-2-yl)methanone (3n):** Yellow solid, mp 155.0–156.7 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 8.28 (s, 1H), 8.18 (s, 1H), 8.04 (s, 1H), 8.02–7.99 (m, 1H), 7.96–7.93 (m, 2H), 7.85–7.83 (m, 1H), 7.68–7.60 (m, 3H), 2.42 (s, 3H), 2.41 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 167.1, 142.6, 142.5, 135.2, 135.0, 134.2, 132.2, 130.9, 130.6, 130.2, 129.1, 129.0, 128.8, 127.9, 127.4, 125.1, 120.5, 115.7, 20.5, 20.3. IR (KBr, cm<sup>-1</sup>): 1699 (ν<sub>C=O</sub>).
- HRMS (ESI) ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>):** Calcd. for C<sub>20</sub>H<sub>17</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O: 301.1341, Found 301.1341.
- (E)-1-(5,6-Dimethyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)-3-phenylprop-2-en-1-one (3o):** White solid, mp 222.7–223.9 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 8.46 (s, 1H), 8.12 (s, 1H), 8.09–8.05 (m, 1H), 7.68–7.67 (m, 2H), 7.58 (s, 1H), 7.48 (s, br, 3H), 7.23–7.19 (m, 1H), 2.43 (s, 3H), 2.39 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 162.8, 148.4, 142.5, 139.9, 135.0, 134.1, 133.8, 131.3, 130.2, 129.1, 128.6, 120.5, 116.0, 115.8, 20.5, 20.2. IR (KBr, cm<sup>-1</sup>): 1702 (ν<sub>C=O</sub>). HRMS (ESI) ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): Calcd. for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>17</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O: 277.1341, Found 277.1341.
- (5,6-Dimethyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)(pyridin-2-yl)methanone (3p):** Yellow solid, mp 128.9–130.0 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 9.27 (s, 1H), 8.79 (d, *J* = 4.4 Hz, 1H), 8.26 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.19 (s, 1H), 8.00–7.96 (m, 1H), 7.60–7.57 (m, 2H), 2.43 (s, 3H), 2.40 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 164.0, 150.5, 148.7, 144.0, 141.8, 137.6, 134.7, 134.2, 130.7, 127.0, 126.4, 120.4, 116.4, 20.5, 20.2. IR (KBr, cm<sup>-1</sup>): 1685 (ν<sub>C=O</sub>). HRMS (ESI) ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): Calcd. for C<sub>15</sub>H<sub>14</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O: 252.1137, Found 252.1133.
- (5,6-Dimethyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)(thiophen-2-yl)methanone (3q):** Yellow solid, mp 132.5–133.7 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 8.42 (s, 1H), 7.97 (s, 1H), 7.80 (d, *J* = 5.2 Hz, 1H), 7.76 (d, *J* = 3.2 Hz, 1H), 7.57 (s, 1H), 7.25–7.23 (m, 1H), 2.41 (s, 3H), 2.39 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 159.9, 142.4, 141.5, 135.9, 135.0, 134.28, 134.22, 134.0, 130.6, 128.1, 120.5, 115.5, 20.5, 20.3. IR (KBr, cm<sup>-1</sup>): 1677 (ν<sub>C=O</sub>). HRMS (ESI) ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): Calcd. for C<sub>14</sub>H<sub>13</sub>N<sub>2</sub>OS: 257.0749, Found 257.0748.
- 1-(5,6-Dimethyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)-3-methylbutan-1-one (3r):** Yellow solid, mp 78.1–80.3 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 8.26 (s, 1H), 8.02 (s, 1H), 7.52 (s, 1H), 2.82–2.80 (m, 2H), 2.39–2.33 (m, 7H), 1.08 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 6H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 169.7, 142.3, 140.2, 135.0, 133.8, 129.9, 120.4, 115.8, 44.5, 25.4, 22.5, 20.4, 20.1. IR (KBr, cm<sup>-1</sup>): 1724 (ν<sub>C=O</sub>). HRMS (ESI) ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): Calcd. for C<sub>14</sub>H<sub>19</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O: 231.1497, Found 231.1493.
- 1-(5,6-Dimethyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)heptan-1-one (3s):** Yellow oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 8.29 (s, 1H), 8.01 (s, 1H), 7.53 (s, 1H), 2.95 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 2.38 (s, 3H), 2.36 (s, 3H), 1.88–1.81 (m, 2H), 1.47–1.41 (m, 2H), 1.38–1.33 (m, 4H), 0.92–0.89 (m, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 170.4, 142.2, 140.2, 135.1, 133.8, 129.8, 120.4, 115.8, 35.8, 31.4, 28.7, 24.3, 22.4, 20.4, 20.1, 13.9. IR (KBr, cm<sup>-1</sup>): 1698 (ν<sub>C=O</sub>). HRMS (ESI) ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): Calcd. for C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>23</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O: 259.1810, Found 259.1810.
- (1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)(phenyl)methanone (3t):**<sup>19</sup> Yellow solid, mp 71.7–72.8 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 8.21 (s, 1H), 8.19–8.17 (m, 1H), 7.84–7.79 (m, 3H), 7.70–7.66 (m, 1H), 7.59–7.56 (m, 2H), 7.46–7.40 (m, 2H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 167.0, 144.0, 143.0, 133.1, 132.9, 132.1, 129.5, 129.0, 125.7, 125.2, 120.5, 115.4. IR (KBr, cm<sup>-1</sup>): 1699 (ν<sub>C=O</sub>).
- (2-Methyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)(phenyl)methanone (3u):**<sup>20</sup> Yellow solid, mp 83.3–84.7 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 7.75–7.74 (m, 2H), 7.70–7.66 (m, 2H), 7.54–7.50 (m, 2H), 7.25–7.23 (m, 1H), 7.08 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 6.81–6.78 (m, 1H), 2.70 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 168.6, 153.1, 142.4, 133.9, 133.8, 133.4, 129.8, 129.0, 123.9, 123.6, 119.4, 113.3, 17.0. IR (KBr, cm<sup>-1</sup>): 1705 (ν<sub>C=O</sub>).
- Phenyl(2-phenyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)methanone (3v):**<sup>17</sup> White solid, mp 147.3–149.8 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 7.89 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.70 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.62–7.60

(m, 2H), 7.52–7.46 (m, 2H), 7.41–7.37 (m, 1H), 7.35–7.27 (m, 6H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 169.1, 154.0, 142.9, 134.9, 134.0, 133.1, 130.5, 130.4, 129.8, 129.2, 128.7, 128.3, 124.6, 124.4, 120.2, 113.1. IR (KBr,  $\text{cm}^{-1}$ ): 1702 ( $\nu_{\text{C=O}}$ ).

**(2-(Methylthio)-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)(phenyl)methanone (3w):** White solid, mp 121.0–122.7 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 7.73–7.71 (m, 2H), 7.68–7.63 (m, 2H), 7.53–7.49 (m, 2H), 7.23 (t,  $J$  = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.01 (t,  $J$  = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 6.72–6.70 (m, 1H), 2.72 (s, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 167.9, 156.0, 143.9, 134.4, 133.5, 133.0, 129.5, 128.8, 124.2, 122.8, 118.4, 113.4, 15.6. IR (KBr,  $\text{cm}^{-1}$ ): 1698 ( $\nu_{\text{C=O}}$ ). HRMS (ESI) ( $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ ): Calcd. for  $\text{C}_{15}\text{H}_{13}\text{N}_2\text{OS}$ : 269.0749, Found 269.0753.

**Phenyl(2-(thiophen-3-yl)-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)methanone (3x):** Yellow solid, mp 124.6–124.9 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 7.86–7.84 (m, 1H), 7.78–7.76 (m, 2H), 7.62–7.58 (m, 1H), 7.45–7.41 (m, 2H), 7.38–7.33 (m, 2H), 7.27–7.23 (m, 3H), 6.92–6.90 (m, 1H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 169.0, 147.9, 142.7, 134.9, 134.4, 132.8, 132.0, 130.6, 130.0, 129.0, 128.9, 127.5, 124.5, 124.4, 120.0, 112.7. IR (KBr,  $\text{cm}^{-1}$ ): 1706 ( $\nu_{\text{C=O}}$ ). HRMS (EI) ( $[\text{M}]^+$ ): Calcd. for  $\text{C}_{18}\text{H}_{12}\text{N}_2\text{OS}$ : 304.0670, Found 304.0675.

**(5-Methyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)(phenyl)methanone and (6-methyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)(phenyl)methanone (3y and 3y') (1:1 ratio):** White solid.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 8.16 (s, 1H), 8.12 (s, 1H), 8.05–8.03 (m, 2H), 7.79–7.77 (m, 4H), 7.70–7.65 (m, 3H), 7.61 (s, 1H), 7.58–7.54 (m, 4H), 7.26–7.23 (m, 2H), 2.51 (s, 3H), 2.50 (s, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 167.1, 166.9, 144.3, 143.1, 142.6, 142.0, 136.0, 135.2, 133.07, 133.06, 133.03, 132.9, 132.3, 130.1, 129.5, 129.4, 128.9, 127.0, 126.6, 120.4, 119.9, 115.5, 114.9, 21.8, 21.5. HRMS (ESI) ( $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ ): Calcd. for  $\text{C}_{15}\text{H}_{13}\text{N}_2\text{O}$ : 237.1028. Found 237.1032.

**(5-Methyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)(p-tolyl)methanone and (6-methyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)(p-tolyl)methanone (3z and 3z') (1:1 ratio):** White solid.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 8.17 (s, 1H), 8.13 (s, 1H), 8.02–8.00 (m, 2H), 7.69–7.67 (m, 5H), 7.59 (s, 1H), 7.35–7.34 (m, 4H), 7.24–7.21 (m, 2H), 2.50 (s, 3H), 2.49 (s, 3H), 2.46 (s, 6H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 167.1, 166.9, 144.3, 144.08, 144.06, 143.1, 142.6, 142.1, 135.8, 135.0, 132.4, 130.17, 130.14, 130.0, 129.74, 129.71, 129.6, 126.8, 126.5, 120.3, 119.8, 115.4, 114.8, 21.8, 21.6, 21.5. HRMS (ESI) ( $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ ): Calcd. for  $\text{C}_{16}\text{H}_{15}\text{N}_2\text{O}$ : 251.1184. Found 251.1188.

**(4-Methoxyphenyl)(5-methyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)methanone and (4-methoxyphenyl)(6-methyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)methanone (3aa and 3a'a') (1:1 ratio):** White solid.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 8.21 (s, 1H), 8.17 (s, 1H), 7.99–7.97 (m, 2H), 7.80–7.78 (m, 4H), 7.69 (d,  $J$  = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.61 (s, 1H), 7.25–7.22 (m, 2H), 7.05–7.03 (m, 4H), 3.91 (s, 6H), 2.51 (s, 3H), 2.50 (s, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 166.5, 166.3, 163.69, 163.67, 144.3, 143.1, 142.6, 142.1, 135.7, 134.9, 132.5, 132.1, 132.0, 130.2, 126.8, 126.4, 124.95, 124.91, 120.3, 119.8, 115.2, 114.7, 114.3, 55.6, 21.8, 21.5. HRMS (ESI) ( $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ ): Calcd. for  $\text{C}_{16}\text{H}_{15}\text{N}_2\text{O}_2$ : 267.1134. Found 267.1135.

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## Supplementary data

Supplementary data associated with this article can be found in the online version, at doi:10.1016/j.tet.2014.xx.xxx. These data include MOL files and InChIKeys of the most important compounds described in this article.

## References and notes

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## Supplementary Information for Tetrahedron

**Metal-Free Cross-Dehydrogenative Coupling of  
Benzimidazoles with Aldehydes to  
N-Acylbenzimidazoles**Lin Yu,<sup>a</sup> Min Wang,<sup>\*,a</sup> and Lei Wang<sup>\*,a,b</sup>

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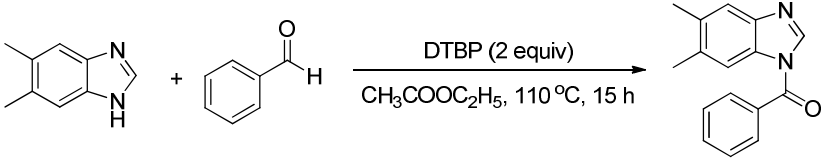
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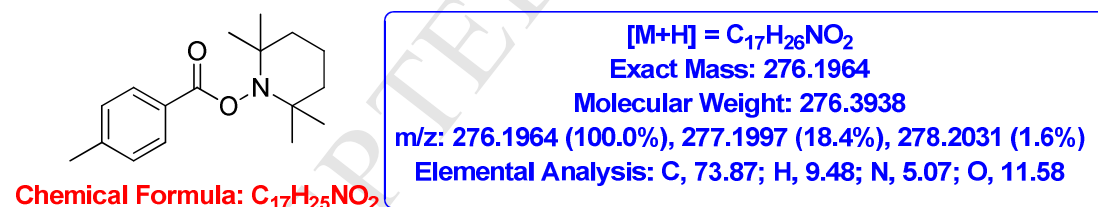
## 1. Effect of radical scavenger<sup>[a]</sup>

|  |              |                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Entry                                                                              | TEMPO (mol%) | Yield (%) <sup>[b]</sup> |
| 1                                                                                  | 0            | 93                       |
| 2                                                                                  | 10           | 60                       |
| 3                                                                                  | 20           | 54                       |
| 4                                                                                  | 30           | 55                       |
| 5                                                                                  | 50           | 48                       |
| 6                                                                                  | 100          | 27                       |
| 7                                                                                  | 200          | trace                    |
| 8                                                                                  | 300          | 0                        |

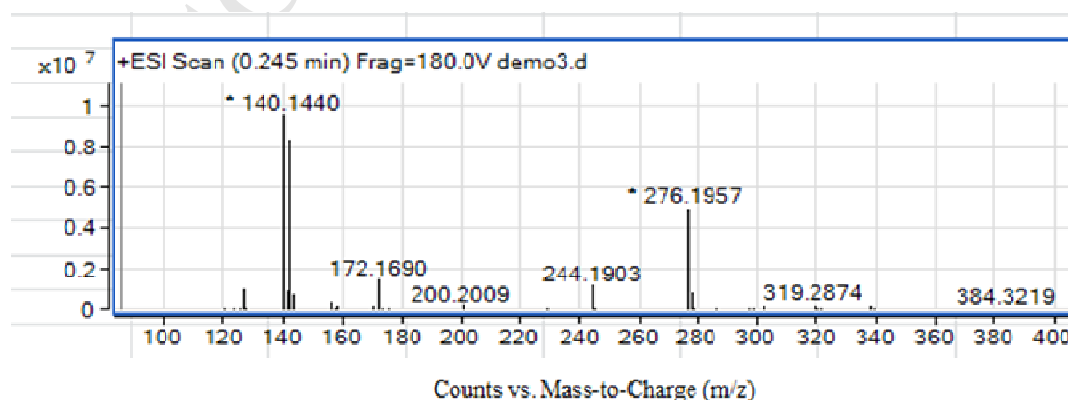
<sup>[a]</sup> Reaction conditions: benzimidazole (0.50 mmol), aldehyde (1.0 mmol), DTBP (1.0 mmol), 4 Å molecular sieves (50 mg), TEMPO (amount indicated in the above Table), sealed tube, 110 °C, under N<sub>2</sub>, 15 h.

<sup>[b]</sup> Yields of isolated products after flash chromatography.

## 2. HPLC-HRMS of TEMPO with aldehyde



**Calculated: [M+H]<sup>+</sup> = 276.1964, Found: [M+H]<sup>+</sup> = 276.1957**



3.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR and  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectra