Agreement on encouragement and reciprocal protection of investments between the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Republic of Estonia

The Government of the Republic of Estonia

And

The Govornment of the Kingdom of the Netherlands,

Hereinafter referred to as the Contracting Parties,

Desiring to strengthen the friendly relations between their countries, to extend and intensify the economic relations between them particularly with respect to investments by the nationals of one Contracting Party in the territory of the other Contracting Party,

Recognizing that agreement upon the treatment to be accorded to such investments will stimulate the flow of capital and technology and the economic development of the Contracting Parties and that fair and equitable treatment of investment is desirable.

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1.

For the purposes of the present Agreement:

(a) The term "investments" shall comprise every kind of asset and more particularly, though not exclusively:

(i) Movable and immovable property as well as any other rights in reim in respect of every kind of asset;in reim in respect of every kind of asset;

(ii) Rights derived from shares, bonds and other kinds of interests in companies and joint ventures;

(iii) Title to money, to other assets or to any performance having an economic value;

(iv) Rights in the field of intellectual property, technical processes, goodwill and know-how;

(v) Rights granted under public law, including rights to prospect, explore, extract and win natural resources.

(b) The term "nationals" shall comprise with regard to either Contracting Party:

(i) Natural persons having the nationality of that Contracting Party in accordance with its laws;

(ii) Legal persons constituted under the law of that Contracting Party;

(iii) Legal persons not constituted under the law of that Contracting Party but controlled, directly or indirectly, by natural persons as defined in (i) or by legal persons as defined in (ii) above.(i) or by legal persons as defined in (ii) above.

(c) The term "territory" includes the maritime areas adjacent to the coast of the State concerned, to the extent to which that State exercises sovereign rights or jurisdiction in those areas according to international law.

Article 2.

Either Contracting Party shall, within the framework of its laws and regulations, promote economic cooperation through the protection in its territory of investments of nationals of the other Contracting Party. Subject to its right to exercise powers

conferred by its laws or regulations, each Contracting Party shall admit such investments.

Article 3.

(1) Each Contracting Party shall ensure fair and equitable treatment of the investments of nationals of the other Contracting Party and shall not impair, by unreasonable or discriminatory measures, the operation, management, maintenance, use, enjoyment or disposal thereof by those nationals.

(2) More particularly, each Contracting Party shall accord to such investments full physical security and protection which in any case shall not be less than that accorded either to investments of its own nationals or to investments of nationals of any third State, whichever is more favourable to the national concerned.

If a Contracting Party has accorded special advantages to nationals of any third State by virtue of agreements establishing customs unions, economic unions, monetary unions or similar institutions, or on the basis of interim agreements leading to such unions or institutions, that Contracting Party shall not be obliged to accord such advantages to nationals of the other Contracting Party.

(4) Each Contracting Party shall observe any obligation it may have entered into with regard to investments of nationals of the other Contracting Party.

(5) If the provisions of law of either Contracting Party or obligations under international law existing at present or established hereafter between the Contracting Parties in addition to the present Agreement contain a regulation, whether general or specific, entitling investments by nationals of the other Contracting Party to a treatment more favourable than is provided for by the present Agreement, such regulation shall to the extent that it is more favourable prevail over the present Agreement.

Article 4.

With respect to taxes, fees, charges and to fiscal deductions and exemptions, each Contracting Party shall accord to nationals of the other Contracting Party who are engaged in any economic activity in its territory, treatment not less favourable than that accorded to its own nationals or to those of any third State, whichever is more favourable to the nationals concerned. For this purpose, however, there shall not be taken into account any special fiscal advantages accorded by that Party:

a) Under an agreement for the avoidance of double taxation; or

b) By virtue of its participation in a customs union, economic union or similar institution; or

c) On the basis of reciprocity with a third State.

Article 5.

The Contracting Parties shall guarantee that payments relating to an investment may be transferred. The transfers shall be made in a freely convertible currency, without undue restriction or delay. Such transfers include in particular though not exclusively:

a) Profits, interest, dividends and other current income;

b) Funds necessary

(i) For the acquisition of raw or auxiliary materials, semi-fabricated or finished products, or

(ii) To replace capital assets in order to safeguard the continuity of an investment.

c) Additional funds necessary for the development of an investment;

d) Funds in repayment of loans;

e) Royalties or fees;

f) Earnings of natural persons;

g) The proceeds of sale or liquidation of the investment.

Article 6.

Neither Contracting Party shall take any measures depriving, directly or indirectly, nationals of the other Contracting Party of their investments unless the following conditions are complied with:

a) The measures are taken in the public interest and under due process of law;

b) The measures are not discriminatory or contrary to any undertaking which the Contracting Party which takes such measures may have given;

c) The measures are taken against just compensation. Such compensation shall represent the genuine value of the investments affected, shall include interest at a normal commercial rate until the date of payment and shall, in order to be effective for the claimants, be paid and made transferable, without undue delay, to the country designated by the claimants concerned and in the currency of the country of which the claimants are nationals or in any freely convertible currency accepted by the claimants.

Article 7.

Nationals of the one Contracting Party who suffer losses in respect of their investments in the territory of the other Contracting Party owing to war or other armed conflict, revolution, a state of national emergency, revolt, insurrection or riot shall be accorded by the latter Contracting Party treatment, as regards restitution, indemnification, compensation or other settlement, no less favourable than that which that Contracting Party accords to its own nationals or to nationals of any third State, whichever is more favourable to the nationals concerned.

Article 8.

If the investments of a national of the one Contracting Party are insured against non-commercial risks under a system established by law, any subrogation of the insurer or re-insurer to the rights of the said national pursuant to the terms of such insurance shall be recognized by the other Contracting Party.

Article 9.

(1) Each Contracting Party hereby consents to submit any legal dispute arising between that Contracting Party and a national of the other Contracting Party concerning an investment of that national in the territory of the former Contracting Party to international conciliation or arbitration.

(2) Disputes mentioned in the first paragraph of this Article shall at the request of the national concerned be submitted to an international arbitral tribunal established under the Arbitration Rules of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law as adopted by the General Assembly on 15 December 1976.

(3) In case both Contracting Parties have become members of the Convention of 18 March 1965 on the Settlement of Investments Disputes between States and Nationals of other States, disputes mentioned in the first paragraph of this Article shall be submitted for settlement by conciliation or arbitration to the International Centre for the Sttlement of Investment Disputes.

(4) A legal person which has the nationality of one Contracting Party and which, before such a dispute arises, is controlled by nationals of another Contracting Party, shall for the purpose of article 25 (2)(b) of the Convention referred to in paragraph (3) above be treated as a national of that Contracting Party.

(5) The awards of arbitration shall be final and binding and shall be enforced in accordance with domestic law.

Article 10.

The provisions of this Agreement shall, from the date of entry into force thereof, also apply to investments which have been made before that date, but they will not apply to any dispute concerning an investment which arose before its entry into force.

Article 11.

Either Contracting Party may propose the other Party that consultations be held on any matter concerning the

interpretation or application of the Agreement. The other Party shall accord sympathetic consideration to the proposal and shall afford adequate opportunity for such consultations.

Article 12.

(1) Any dispute between the Contracting Parties concerning the interpretation or applicati on of the present Agreement, which cannot be settled within a reasonable lapse of time, by means of diplomatic negotiations, shall, unless the Parties have otherwise agreed, be submitted, at the request of either Party, to an arbitral tribunal, composed of three members. Each Party shall appoint one arbitrator and the two arbitrators thus appointed shall together appoint a third arbitrator as their chairman who is not a national of either Party.

(2) If one of the Parties fails to appoint its arbitrator and has not proceeded to do so within two months after an invitation from the other Party to make such appointment, the latter Party may invite the President of the International Court of Justice to make the necessary appointment.

(3) If the two arbitrators are unable to reach agreement, in the two months following their appointment, on the choice of the third arbitrator, either Party may invite the President of the International Court of Justice, to make the necessary appointment.

(4) If, in the cases provided for in the paragraphs (2) and (3) of this Article, the President of the International Court of Justice is prevented from discharging the said function or is a national of either Contracting Party, the Vice-President shall be invited to make the necessary appointments. If the Vice-President is prevented from discharging the said function or is a national of either Party the most senior member of the Court available who is not a national of either Party shall be invited to make the necessary appointments.

(5) The tribunal shall decide on the basis of respect for the law. Before the tribunal decides, it may at any stage of the proceedings propose to the Parties that the dispute be settled amicably. The foregoing provisions shall not prejudice the power of the tribunal to decide the dispute ex aequo et bono if the Parties so agree.

(6) Unless the Parties decide otherwise, the tribunal shall determine its own procedure.

(7) The tribunal shall reach its decision by a majority of votes. Such decision shall be final and binding on the Parties.

Article 13.

As regards the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the present Agreement shall apply to the part of the Kingdom in Europe, the Netherlands Antilles and to Aruba, unless the notification provided for in Article 14, paragraph (1) provides otherwise.

Article 14.

(1) The present Agreement shall enter into force on the first day of the second month following the date on which the Contracting Parties have notified each other in writing that the procedures constitutionally required therefor in their respective countries have been complied with, and shall remain in force for a period of twenty years.

(2) Unless notice of termination has been given by either Contracting Party at least six months before the date of expiry of its validity, the present Agreement shall be extended tacitly for periods of ten years, each Contracting Party reserving the right to terminate the Agreement upon notice of at least six months before the date of expiry of the current period of validity.

(3) In respect of investments made before the date of the termination of the present Agreement the foregoing Articles thereof shall continue to be effective for a further period of twenty years from that date.

(4) Subject to the period mentioned in paragraph (2) of this Article, the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands shall be entitled to terminate the application of the present Agreement separately in respect of any of the parts of the Kingdom.

DONE at .... on .... duplicate in the English language.

For the Government of the Republic of Estonia:

For the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands: