

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA AND CZECH REPUBLIC FOR THE PROMOTION AND RECIPROCAL PROTECTION OF INVESTMENTS

The Republic of Panama and Czech Republic (hereinafter referred to as the "Contracting Parties"),

Desiring to develop economic co-operation to the mutual benefit of both States,

Intending to create and maintain favourable conditions for investments of investors of one State in the territory of the other State, and

Conscious that the promotion and reciprocal protection of investments in terms of the present Agreement stimulates the business initiatives in this field,

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1. Definitions

For the purposes of this Agreement:

1. The term "investment" shall comprise every kind of asset invested in connection with economic activities by an investor of one Contracting Party in the territory of the other Contracting Party in accordance with the laws and regulations of the latter and shall include, in particular, though not exclusively: a) Movable and immovable property as well as any other property rights, such as mortgages, liens or pledges;

b) Shares, stocks and debentures of companies or corporations, or any other form of participation in any of them;

c) Claims to money or to any performance under contract having a financial value associated with an investment;

d) Intellectual property rights, including copyrights, trademarks, patents, industrial designs, technical processes, know-how, trade secrets, trade names and good will associated with an investment;

e) Any right conferred by laws or under contract and any licenses and permits pursuant to laws including the concessions to search for, extract, cultivate or exploit natural resources.

Any alteration of the form in which assets are invested shall not affect their character as investment.

2. The term "investor" shall mean any natural or legal person who invests in the territory of the other Contracting Party, as defined by the following: a) The term "natural person" shall mean any natural person having the nationality of either Contracting Party in accordance with its laws;

b) The term "legal person" shall mean: i) With respect to the Czech Republic any entity registered or constituted in accordance with, and recognized as a legal person by its laws, and having the permanent seat in the Czech Republic.

ii) With respect to the Republic of Panama any entity registered or constituted in accordance with, and recognized as a legal person by its laws, which is not a legal person of the Czech Republic or a legal person of any third State.

3. The term "returns" shall mean amounts yielded by an investment and in particular, though not exclusively, include profits, interest related to loans, capital gains, shares, dividends, royalties or fees.

4. The term "territory" shall mean: a) In respect of the Czech Republic, the territory of the Czech Republic over which it exercises sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction in accordance with international law;

b) In respect of the Republic of Panama, the territory of the Republic of Panama including the territorial sea and any maritime or submarine area over which the Republic of Panama exercises, in accordance with international law, sovereignty,

sovereign rights and jurisdiction for the purpose of exploration, exploitation and preservation of the sea-bed, subsoil and natural resources.

Article 2. Promotion and Protection of Investments

1. Each Contracting Party shall encourage and create favourable conditions for investors of the other Contracting Party to make investments in its territory and shall admit such investments in accordance with its laws and regulations.

2. Investments of investors of either Contracting Party shall at all times be accorded fair and equitable treatment and shall enjoy full protection and security in the territory of the other Contracting Party.

Article 3. National and Most Favoured-nation Treatment

1. Each Contracting Party shall in its territory accord to investments and returns of investors of the other Contracting Party treatment which is fair and equitable and not less favourable than that which it accords to investments and returns of its own investors or to investment and returns of investors of any third State, whichever is more favourable.

2. Each Contracting Party shall in its territory accord to investors of the other Contracting Party, as regards management, maintenance, use, enjoyment or disposal of their investment, treatment which is fair and equitable and not less favourable than that which it accords to its own investors or to investors of any third State, whichever is more favourable.

3. The provisions of paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article shall not be construed so as to oblige one Contracting Party to extend to the investors of the other the benefit or any treatment, preference or privilege by the former Contracting Party by virtue of:

a) Any customs union or free trade area or a monetary union or similar international agreements leading to such unions or institutions or other forms of regional cooperation to which either one of the Contracting Parties is or may become a party;

b) Any international agreement or arrangement relating wholly or mainly to taxation.

Article 4. Compensation for Losses

1. Where investments of investors of either Contracting Party suffer losses owing to war, armed conflict, a state of national or local emergency, revolt, insurrection, riot or other similar events in the territory of the other Contracting Party, such investors shall be accorded by the latter Contracting Party treatment, as regards restitution, indemnification, compensation or other settlement, not less favourable than that which the latter Contracting Party accords to its own investors or to investors of any third State.

2. Without prejudice to paragraph 1 of this Article, investors of one Contracting Party who in any of the events referred to in that paragraph suffer losses in the territory of the other Contracting Party resulting from:

a) Requisitioning of their property by the forces or authorities of the latter Contracting Party, or

b) Destruction of their property by the forces or authorities of the latter Contracting Party, which was not caused in combat action or was not required by the necessity of the situation,

Shall be accorded restitution or just and adequate compensation for the losses sustained during the period of the requisitioning or as a result of the destruction of the property. Resulting payments shall be freely transferable in a freely convertible currency without delay.

Article 5. Expropriation

1. Investments of investors of either Contracting Party shall not be nationalized, expropriated or subjected to measures having effect equivalent to nationalization or expropriation (hereinafter referred to as "expropriation") in the territory of the other Contracting Party except, in the case of the Czech Republic for a public purpose, and in the case of the Republic of Panama for a public or social interest.

The expropriation shall be carried out under due process of law, on a non-discriminatory basis and shall be accompanied by provisions for the payment of prompt, adequate and effective compensation. Such compensation shall amount to the market value of the investment expropriated immediately before expropriation or impending expropriation became public knowledge, shall include interest from the date of expropriation until the date of payment based on the average deposit rate prevailing in the National Banking System. This compensation shall be made without delay, be effectively realizable and

be freely transferable in a freely convertible currency. 2. The investor affected shall have a right to prompt review by a judicial or other independent authority of that Contracting Party in which territory the investment has been made of his or its case and of the valuation of his or its investment in accordance with the principles set out in this Article.

Article 6. Transfers

1. The Contracting Parties shall guarantee the transfer of payments related to investments and returns. The transfers shall be made in a freely convertible currency, without any restriction and undue delay. Such transfers shall include in particular, though not exclusively:

- a) Capital and additional amounts to maintain or increase the investment;
- b) Profits, interest, dividends and other current income;
- c) Funds in repayment of loans;
- d) Royalties or fees;
- e) Proceeds of sale or liquidation of the investment
- f) The earnings of personnel engaged from abroad who are employed and allowed to work in connection with an investment in the territory of the other Contracting Party.

2. For the purpose of this Agreement, the exchange rate shall be the prevailing market rate for current transactions at the date of transfer, unless otherwise agreed.

3. Transfers shall be considered to have been made "without any undue delay" in the sense of paragraph (1) of this Article when they have been made within the period normally necessary for the completion of the transfer.

Article 7. Subrogation

1. If a Contracting Party or its designated agency makes a payment to its own investors under a guarantee it has accorded in respect of an investment in the territory of the other Contracting Party, the latter Contracting Party shall recognize:

- a) The assignment whether under the law or pursuant to a legal transaction in that country, of any right or claim by the investor to the former Contracting Party or its designated agency, as well as,
- b) That the former Contracting Party or its designated agency is entitled by virtue of subrogation to exercise the rights and enforce the claims of that investor and shall assume the obligations related to the investment.

2. The subrogated rights or claims shall not exceed the original rights or claims of the investor.

Article 8. Settlement of Investment Disputes between a Contracting Party and an Investor of the other Contracting Party

1. Any dispute which may arise between an investor of one Contracting Party and the other Contracting Party in connection with an investment in the territory of that other Contracting Party shall be subject to negotiations between the parties to the dispute.

2. If any dispute between an investor of one Contracting Party and the other Contracting Party cannot be thus settled, the investor shall be entitled to submit the case, at his choice, for settlement to:

- a) The competent court or administrative tribunal of the Contracting Party which is the party to the dispute; or
- b) The International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) having regard to the applicable provisions of the Convention on the Settlement of Investment Disputes between States and Nationals of other States opened for signature at Washington D.C. on 18 March 1965; or
- c) An arbitrator or international ad hoc arbitral tribunal established under the Arbitration Rules of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL). The parties to the dispute may agree in writing to modify these Rules.

3. Once the investor has submitted the dispute to international arbitration, that submission shall be definitive. If the investor has submitted the dispute to the competent tribunals of the Contracting Party where the investment has been made, the investor may withdraw his claim according to the laws and regulations of that Contracting Party, provided that a final

decision has not been rendered, and submit the dispute to international arbitration as described in this article. This submission to an arbitration after the withdrawal from the national tribunals shall be definitive.

4. The arbitral awards shall be final and binding on both parties to the dispute and shall be enforceable in accordance with the legislation of the Contracting Party in which territory the investment has been made.

5. Each Contracting Party hereby gives its unconditional consent to the submission of a dispute to international arbitration in accordance with the provisions of this Article.

Article 9. Settlement of Disputes between the Contracting Parties

1. Disputes between the Contracting Parties concerning the interpretation or application of this Agreement shall, if possible, be settled through consultations or negotiations.

2. If the dispute cannot be thus settled within six months, it shall, upon the request of either Contracting Party, be submitted to an Arbitral Tribunal in accordance with the provisions of this Article.

3. The Arbitral Tribunal shall be constituted for each individual case in the following way: Within two months of the receipt of the request for arbitration, each Contracting Party shall appoint one member of the Tribunal. These two members shall then select a national of a third State who, on approval of the two Contracting Parties, shall be appointed Chairman of the Tribunal (hereinafter referred to as the "Chairman"). The Chairman shall be appointed within three months from the date of appointment of the other two members.

4. If within the periods specified in paragraph 3 of this Article the necessary appointments have not been made, a request may be made to the President of the International Court of Justice to make the appointments. If he happens to be a national of either Contracting Party, or if he is otherwise prevented from discharging the said function, the Vice-President shall be invited to make the appointments. If the Vice-President is a national of either Contracting Party or is prevented from discharging the said function, the member of the International Court of Justice next in seniority who is not a national of either Contracting Party shall be invited to make the appointments.

5. The Arbitral Tribunal shall reach its decision by a majority of votes. Such decision shall be binding. Each Contracting Party shall bear the cost of its own arbitrator and its representation in the arbitral proceedings; the cost of the Chairman and the remaining costs shall be borne in equal parts by both Contracting Parties. The Arbitral Tribunal shall determine its own procedure.

Article 10. Application of other Rules and Special Commitments

1. Where a matter is governed simultaneously both by this Agreement and by another international agreement to which both Contracting Parties are parties, nothing in this Agreement shall prevent either Contracting Party or any of its investors who own investments in the territory of the other Contracting Party from taking advantage of whichever rules are more favourable to his case.

2. If the treatment to be accorded by one Contracting Party to investors of the other Contracting Party in accordance with its laws and regulations or other specific provisions of contracts is more favourable than that accorded by the Agreement, the more favourable one shall be accorded.

Article 11. Applicability of this Agreement

The provisions of this Agreement shall apply to future investments made by investors of one Contracting Party in the territory of the other Contracting Party, and also to the investments existing in accordance with the laws of the Contracting Parties on the date this Agreement came into force. However, the provisions of this Agreement shall not apply to claims arising out of events which occurred, or to claims which had been settled, prior to its entry into force.

Article 12. Entry Into Force, Duration and Termination

1. Each of the Contracting Parties shall notify the other of the completion of the procedures required by its law for bringing this Agreement into force. This Agreement shall enter into force on the date of the second notification.

2. This Agreement shall remain in force for a period of fifteen years. Thereafter, it shall remain in force until the expiration of a twelve month period from the date either Contracting Party notifies the other in writing of its intention to terminate the Agreement.

3. In respect of investments made prior to the termination of this Agreement, the provisions of this Agreement shall continue to be effective for a period of fifteen years from the date of termination.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned duly authorized have signed this Agreement.

DONE in duplicate at Panama City, this 27th day of August, 1999, in the Spanish, Czech, and English languages, all texts being equally authentic. In case of any divergence of interpretation the English text shall prevail.

FOR THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA

FOR THE CZECH REPUBLIC