

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

The Kingdom of the Netherlands

And

The Republic of Belarus,

(hereinafter referred to as the Contracting Parties),

Desiring to strengthen the traditional ties of friendship between their countries, to extend and intensify the economic relations between them particularly with respect to investments by investors 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 this Agreement:

1) the term 'investors' refers with regard to either Contracting Party to:

(a) Natural persons, who according to the law of that Contracting Party, are its nationals and make investments in the territory of the other Contracting Party;

(b) Legal persons, such as enterprises and other organizations, which are constituted or otherwise duly organized and entitled to carryout investments under the law of that Contracting Party and which make investments in the territory of the other Contracting Party;

(c) Legal persons not constituted under the law of that Contracting Party but controlled by natural persons as defined in a) or by legal persons as defined in b) above.a) or by legal persons as defined in b) above.

2) The term 'investments' shall include every kind of asset and particularly though not exclusively:

(a) Movable and immovable property as well as any other rights in rem;

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

(c) Claims to money or to any performance having an economic value;

(d) Intellectual property rights (such as copyrights, patents, industrial designs or models, trade or service marks, trade names), know-how, goodwill, technical processes and other rights of the same nature.

(e) Rights granted under public law, including concessions to prospect, explore, extract and win natural resources, granted in accordance with legislation of the Contracting Parties concerned.

3) The term 'territory' means in respect of each State the territory under its sovereignty including land, internal waters and the territorial sea, and the sea, seabed and its subsoil over which that State exercises sovereign rights or jurisdiction in accordance with 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 investors 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 investors 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 investors. Each Contracting Party shall accord to such investments full physical security and protection.
- 2) More particularly, each Contracting Party shall accord to such investments treatment which in any case shall not be less favourable than that accorded either to investments of its own investors or to investments of investors of any third State, whichever is more favourable to the investor concerned.
- 3) If a Contracting Party has accorded special advantages to investors 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 investors of the other Contracting Party.
- 4) Each Contracting Party shall observe any obligation it may have entered into with regard to investments of investors 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 investors 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 investors 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 investors or to those of any third State that are in the same circumstances, whichever is more favourable to the investors 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 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. 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;
- (h) Any payments arising under the Articles 6 and 7.

Article 6.

Neither of the Contracting Parties shall take any measures of expropriation, nationalization or any other measures depriving, directly or indirectly, investors of the other Contracting Party of their investments unless the measures are taken in the public interest, on a non discriminatory basis, are not contrary to any obligations assumed by the Contracting Party taking such measures, and are taken under due process of law, and provided that provisions be made for compensation. Such compensation shall represent the fair market value of the investments affected, immediately before measures were taken or became known, whichever was the earliest, and shall include interest at a normal commercial rate until the date of payment.

Article 7.

Investors 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 investors or to investors of any third State, whichever is more favourable to the investors concerned.

Article 8.

If the investments of an investor of the one Contracting Party are insured against noncommercial risks or otherwise give rise to payment of indemnification in respect of such investments under a system established by law, regulation or government contract any subrogation of the insurer or re-insurer or Agency designated by the one Contracting Party to the rights of the said investor pursuant to the terms of such insurance or under any other indemnity given shall be recognized by the other Contracting Party.

Article 9.

Each Contracting Party hereby consents to submit any legal dispute arising between that Contracting Party and an investor of the other Contracting Party concerning an investment of that investor in the territory of the former Contracting Party to the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes for settlement by conciliation or arbitration under the Convention on the Settlement of Investment Disputes between States and Nationals of other States opened for signature at Washington on 18 March 1965. A legal person which is an investor of one Contracting Party and which before such a dispute arises is controlled by investors of the other Contracting Party shall in accordance with Article 25 (2)b) of the Convention for the purpose of the Convention be treated as an investor of the other Contracting Party.

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.

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 application of the present Agreement, which cannot be settled 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 1 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 settlement of 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 in their respective countries have been complied with, and shall remain in force for a period of fifteen years.

2) Unless notice of termination has been given by either Contracting Party at least six months before the date of the expiry of its validity, the present Agreement shall be extended tacitly for periods of ten years, whereby each Contracting Party reserves 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 shall continue to be effective for a further period of fifteen 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. 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 in duplicate at (place), on (date), in the Netherlands, Belarusian and English languages, the three texts being equally authentic. In case of difference of interpretation the English text will prevail.

For the Kingdom of the Netherlands:

For the Republic of Belarus: