

GOVERNMENT NOTICE
SOUTH AFRICAN REVENUE SERVICE

No. 421

27 May 2015

INCOME TAX ACT, 1962

**AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA AND
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN FOR THE EXCHANGE OF
INFORMATION RELATING TO TAX MATTERS**

In terms of section 108(2) of the Income Tax Act, 1962 (Act No 58 of 1962), read in conjunction with section 231(4) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act No 108 of 1996), it is hereby notified that the Agreement for the exchange of information relating to tax matters set out in the Schedule to this Notice has been entered into with the Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein and has been approved by Parliament in terms of section 231(2) of the Constitution.

It is further notified in terms of Article 12 of the Agreement, that the date of entry into force is 23 May 2015.

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN FOR THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION RELATING TO TAX MATTERS

PREAMBLE

The Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein, hereinafter referred to as “the Contracting Parties”, –

WHEREAS the Contracting Parties recognise that the well-developed economic ties between the Contracting Parties call for further cooperation;

WHEREAS the Contracting Parties wish to develop their relationship further by cooperating to their mutual benefits in the field of taxation;

WHEREAS the Contracting Parties wish to strengthen the ability of both Contracting Parties to enforce their respective tax laws; and

WHEREAS the Contracting Parties wish to establish the terms and conditions governing the exchange of information on tax matters –

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

ARTICLE 1

OBJECT AND SCOPE OF THE AGREEMENT

The competent authorities of the Contracting Parties shall provide assistance through exchange of information that is foreseeably relevant to the administration and enforcement of the domestic laws of the Contracting Parties concerning taxes covered by this Agreement, including information that is foreseeably relevant to the determination, assessment and collection of such taxes with respect to persons subject to such taxes, the recovery and enforcement of tax claims, or the investigation or prosecution of tax matters in relation to such persons. Information shall be exchanged in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement and shall be treated as confidential in the manner provided in Article 8. The rights and safeguards secured to persons by the laws or administrative practice of the requested Party remain applicable to the extent that they do not unduly prevent or delay effective exchange of information.

ARTICLE 2

JURISDICTION

A requested Party is not obligated to provide information which is neither held by its authorities nor in the possession or control of persons who are within its territorial jurisdiction.

ARTICLE 3

TAXES COVERED

1. The taxes which are the subject of this Agreement are:
 - (a) in the Principality of Liechtenstein:
 - (i) the personal income tax (Erwerbssteuer);
 - (ii) the corporate income tax (Ertragssteuer);
 - (iii) the corporation taxes (Gesellschaftssteuern);
 - (iv) the real estate capital gains tax (Grundstücksgewinnsteuer);
 - (v) the wealth tax (Vermögenssteuer);
 - (vi) the coupon tax (Couponsteuer); and
 - (vii) the value added tax (Mehrwertsteuer).
 - (b) in the Republic of South Africa:
 - (i) the normal tax;
 - (ii) the secondary tax on companies;
 - (iii) the withholding tax on royalties;
 - (iv) the dividend tax;
 - (v) the tax on foreign entertainers and sportspersons;
 - (vi) the value-added tax; and
 - (vii) the withholding tax on interest.

2. This Agreement shall apply also to any identical or substantially similar taxes that are imposed after the date of signature of this Agreement in addition to, or in place of, the existing taxes, if the competent authorities of the Contracting Parties so agree. The competent authorities of the Contracting Parties shall notify each other of any substantial changes to the taxes covered by this Agreement and the related information gathering measures.

ARTICLE 4

DEFINITIONS

1. For the purposes of this Agreement, unless otherwise defined,
 - (a) the term "Principality of Liechtenstein" means, when used in a geographical sense, the area of the sovereign territory of the Principality of Liechtenstein;
 - (b) the term "South Africa" means the Republic of South Africa and, when used in a geographical sense, includes the territorial sea thereof as well as any area outside the territorial sea, including the continental shelf, which has been or may hereafter be designated, under the laws of South Africa and in accordance with international law, as an area within which South Africa may exercise sovereign rights of jurisdiction;

- (c) the term “competent authority” means:
 - (i) in the case of the Principality of Liechtenstein, the Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein or its authorised representative; and
 - (ii) in the case of South Africa, the Commissioner of the South African Revenue Service or an authorised representative of the Commissioner;
- (d) the term “person” includes an individual, a company, a dormant inheritance and any other body of persons;
- (e) the term “company” means any body corporate as well as entities and special asset dedications that are treated as a body corporate for tax purposes;
- (f) the term “publicly traded company” means any company whose principal class of shares is listed on a recognised stock exchange, in the case of Liechtenstein, that fulfils the material requirements of Article 4 of the directive 2004/39/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 April 2004, provided its listed shares can be readily purchased or sold by the public. Shares can be purchased or sold “by the public” if the purchase or sale of shares is not implicitly or explicitly restricted to a limited group of investors;
- (g) the term “principal class of shares” means the class or classes of shares representing a majority of the statutory capital and value of the company;
- (h) the term “recognised stock exchange” means any stock exchange agreed upon by the competent authorities of the Parties;
- (i) the term “collective investment fund or scheme” means any pooled investment vehicle, irrespective of legal form. The term “public collective investment fund or scheme” means any collective investment fund or scheme provided the units, shares or other interests in the fund or scheme can be readily purchased, sold or redeemed by the public. Units, shares or other interests in the fund or scheme can be readily purchased, sold or redeemed “by the public” if the purchase, sale or redemption is not implicitly or explicitly restricted to a limited group of investors;
- (j) the term “tax” means any tax to which this Agreement applies;
- (k) the term “applicant Party” means the Contracting Party requesting information;
- (l) the term “requested Party” means the Contracting Party requested to provide information;

- (m) the term “information gathering measures” means laws and administrative or judicial procedures that enable a Contracting Party to obtain and provide the requested information;
- (n) the term “information” means any fact, statement or record in any form whatever;
- (o) the term “tax matters” means all tax matters, including criminal tax matters;
- (p) the term “national” means:
 - (i) with regard to Liechtenstein, any individual possessing “Landesbürgerrechte” according to the “Bürgerrechtsgesetz” (LGBl. 1960, No. 23) and any person other than an individual deriving its status as such from the laws in force in Liechtenstein;
 - (ii) with regard to South Africa, any individual possessing the nationality or citizenship of South Africa and any legal person or association deriving its status as such from the laws in force in South Africa.

2. As regards the application of this Agreement at any time by a Contracting Party, any term not defined in this Agreement, unless the context otherwise requires or the competent authorities agree to a common meaning pursuant to the provisions of Article 10 of this Agreement, shall have the meaning that it has at that time under the laws of that Contracting Party, any meaning under the applicable tax laws of that Contracting Party prevailing over a meaning given to the term under other laws of that Contracting Party.

ARTICLE 5

EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION UPON REQUEST

1. The competent authority of the requested Party shall provide upon request of the applicant Party information for the purposes referred to in Article 1. Such information shall be exchanged without regard to whether the requested Party needs such information for its own tax purposes or whether the conduct being investigated would constitute a crime under the laws of the requested Party if such conduct occurred in the territory of the requested Party. The competent authority of the applicant Party shall only make a request for information pursuant to this Article when it is unable to obtain the requested information by other means, except where recourse to such means would give rise to disproportionate difficulty.

2. If the information in the possession of the competent authority of the requested Party is not sufficient to enable it to comply with the request for information, that Party shall use all relevant information gathering measures to provide the applicant Party with the information requested, notwithstanding that the requested Party may not, at that time, need such information for its own tax purposes.

3. If specifically requested by the competent authority of an applicant Party, the competent authority of the requested Party shall provide information under this Article, to the extent allowable under its domestic laws, in the form of depositions of witnesses and authenticated copies of original records.

4. Each Contracting Party shall ensure that its competent authorities, in accordance with the terms of this Agreement, have the authority to obtain and provide upon request:

- (a) information held by banks, other financial institutions, and any person, acting in an agency or fiduciary capacity including nominees and trustees;
- (b) information regarding the ownership of companies, partnerships and other persons, including:
 - (i) in the case of collective investment funds or schemes information on the units, shares or other interests in the fund or scheme;
 - (ii) in the case of trusts, information on settlors, trustees and beneficiaries; and in the case of foundations, information on founders, members of the foundation council and beneficiaries;

provided that this Agreement does not create an obligation on the Contracting Parties to obtain or provide ownership information with respect to publicly traded companies or public collective investment funds or schemes unless such information can be obtained without giving rise to disproportionate difficulties.

5. Any request for information shall be formulated with the greatest detail possible and shall in all cases specify in writing:

- (a) the identity of the person under examination or investigation;
- (b) the taxable period for which the information is sought;
- (c) a statement of the information sought including its nature and the form in which the applicant Party wishes to receive the information from the requested Party;
- (d) the matter under the applicant Party's tax law with respect to which the information is sought;
- (e) the reasons for believing that the information requested is foreseeably relevant to the administration and enforcement of the domestic tax laws of the applicant Party, with regard to the person specified in subparagraph a) of this paragraph;
- (f) grounds for believing that the information requested is held in the requested Party or is in the possession or control of a person within the jurisdiction of the requested Party;

- (g) to the extent known, the name and address of any person believed to be in possession or control of the requested information;
- (h) a statement that the request is in conformity with the law and administrative practices of the applicant Party, that if the requested information was within the jurisdiction of the applicant Party then the competent authority of the applicant Party would be able to obtain the information under the laws or in the normal course of administrative practice of the applicant Party and that it is in conformity with this Agreement; and
- (i) a statement that the applicant Party has pursued all means available in its own territory to obtain the information, except those that would give rise to disproportionate difficulties.

6. The competent authority of the requested Party shall forward the requested information as promptly as possible to the applicant Party. To ensure a prompt response, the competent authority of the requested Party shall:

- (a) Confirm receipt of a request in writing to the competent authority of the applicant Party and shall notify the competent authority of the applicant Party of deficiencies in the request, if any, within 60 days of the receipt of the request;
- (b) If the competent authority of the requested Party has been unable to obtain and provide the information within 90 days of receipt of the request, including if it encounters obstacles in furnishing the information or it refuses to furnish the information, it shall immediately inform the applicant Party, explaining the reason for its inability, the nature of the obstacles or the reasons for its refusal.

ARTICLE 6

TAX EXAMINATIONS ABROAD

1. By reasonable notice given in advance, the applicant Party may request that the requested Party allows representatives of the competent authority of the applicant Party to enter the territory of the requested Party, to the extent permitted under its laws, to interview individuals and examine records with the prior written consent of the individuals or other persons concerned. The competent authority of the requested Party shall notify the competent authority of the applicant Party of the time and place of the meeting with the individuals concerned.

2. At the request of the competent authority of the applicant Party, the competent authority of the requested Party may allow representatives of the competent authority of the applicant Party to be present at the appropriate part of a tax examination in the territory of the requested Party.

3. If the request referred to in paragraph 2 is acceded to, the competent authority of the requested Party conducting the examination shall, as soon as possible, notify the competent authority of the applicant Party about the time and place of the examination, the authority or official designated to carry out the examination and the procedures and conditions required by the requested Party for the conduct of the examination. All decisions with respect to the conduct of the tax examination shall be made by the requested Party conducting the examination.

ARTICLE 7

POSSIBILITY OF DECLINING A REQUEST

1. The competent authority of the requested Party may decline a request of the applicant Party, where:
 - (a) the request is not made in conformity with this Agreement and, in particular, where the requirements of Article 5 are not met; or
 - (b) the applicant Party has not pursued all means available in its own territory to obtain the information, except where recourse to such means would give rise to disproportionate difficulty; or
 - (c) the disclosure of the information requested would be contrary to the public policy (ordre public) of the requested Party.
2. This Agreement shall not impose upon a requested Party any obligation:
 - (a) to provide information subject to legal privilege, or any trade, business, industrial, commercial or professional secret or trade process, provided that information described in Article 5, paragraph 4, shall not by reason of that fact alone be treated as such a secret or trade process; or
 - (b) to supply information on manufacturing costs or other cost information unless and until such date when there is a comprehensive tax convention on income and capital in force between the Contracting Parties providing for a mechanism for the resolution of transfer pricing disputes; or
 - (c) to carry out administrative measures at variance with its laws and administrative practices, provided that nothing in this subparagraph shall affect the obligations of a Contracting Party under Article 5, paragraph 4 of this Agreement.
3. A request for information shall not be refused on the ground that the tax claim giving rise to the request is disputed.
4. The requested Party shall not be required to obtain and provide information which, the applicant Party would be unable to obtain under its own laws or in the normal course of administrative practice in response to a valid request made in similar circumstances from the requested Party under this Agreement.

5. The requested Party may decline a request for information if the information is requested by the applicant Party to administer or enforce a provision of the tax law of the applicant Party, or any requirement connected therewith, which discriminates against a national of the requested Party as compared with a national of the applicant Party in the same circumstances.

ARTICLE 8

CONFIDENTIALITY

1. All information provided and received by the competent authorities of the Contracting Parties shall be kept confidential.

2. This information may be disclosed only to persons or authorities (including courts and administrative bodies) of the Contracting Parties concerned with the purposes specified in Article 1 including the determination of any appeal, and used by such persons or authorities only for such purposes. For these purposes, information may be used in public court proceedings or in judicial decisions.

3. Such information may not be used for any purpose other than for the purposes stated in Article 1 without the express written consent of the competent authority of the requested Party.

4. Information received under this Agreement must not be disclosed to any other State or sovereign territory not party to this Agreement without the express written consent of the competent authority of the requested Party.

5. Personal data may be transmitted to the extent necessary for carrying out the provisions of this Agreement and subject to the provisions of the law of the requested Party.

ARTICLE 9

COSTS

The applicant Party shall reimburse the requested Party for all direct costs incurred in providing information pursuant to this Agreement. The respective competent authorities shall consult from time to time with regard to this Article, and in particular the competent authority of the requested Party shall consult with the competent authority of the applicant Party in advance if the costs of providing information with respect to a specific request are expected to be significant.

ARTICLE 10

MUTUAL AGREEMENT PROCEDURE

1. Where difficulties or doubts arise between the Contracting Parties regarding the implementation or interpretation of this Agreement, the competent authorities shall endeavour to resolve the matter by mutual agreement.
2. In addition to the agreements referred to in paragraph 1, the competent authorities of the Contracting Parties may mutually agree on the procedures to be used under this Agreement.
3. The competent authorities of the Contracting Parties may communicate with each other directly for purposes of reaching agreement under this Article.
4. The Contracting Parties may also agree on other forms of dispute resolution.

ARTICLE 11

PROTOCOL

The attached Protocol shall be an integral part of this Agreement.

ARTICLE 12

ENTRY INTO FORCE

1. This Agreement shall enter into force one month from the date on which the Contracting Parties have notified each other in writing that their respective legal requirements for the entry into force of this Agreement have been fulfilled. The relevant date shall be the day on which the last notification is received.
2. Upon the date of entry into force, this Agreement shall have effect for all requests made but only in respect of taxable periods beginning on or after January 1, 2014.

ARTICLE 13

TERMINATION

1. This Agreement shall remain in force until terminated. Either Contracting Party may terminate this Agreement by serving a notice of termination in writing to the other Contracting Party through the diplomatic channel.
2. Such termination shall become effective on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of receipt of notice of termination by the other Contracting Party.

3. After termination of this Agreement, both Contracting Parties shall remain bound by the provisions of Article 8 with respect to any information provided and received under this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, being duly authorised thereto by their respective Governments, have signed this Agreement in the German and English language, both texts being equally authentic. In case of diversion of interpretation the English text shall prevail.

DONE at Vadzu on 29th day of November in the year 2013.

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN**

PROTOCOL

To the Agreement between the Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein and the Government of the Republic of South Africa on the exchange of information on tax matters

On the occasion of the signing of the Agreement between the Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein and the Government of the Republic of South Africa (the "Contracting Parties") on the exchange of information on tax matters, the Contracting Parties have agreed upon the following provisions, which are an integral part of the Agreement:

1. With respect to Article 5 paragraph 1, it is understood that the taxpayer is to be informed about the intention to make a request for information unless the request is in relation to a criminal investigation or would jeopardise the purpose of the investigation.
2. With respect to Article 5 paragraph 5 subparagraph a, it is understood that it is not necessary to provide the name of the taxpayer in order to define its identity, if the identity of the taxpayer can be deduced from equivalent elements.
3. In Article 9 the term "direct costs" shall be interpreted as follows:
 - (a) Examples of the "direct costs" include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - (i) reasonable costs of reproducing and transporting documents or records to the competent authority of the applicant Party;
 - (ii) reasonable fees imposed by a financial institution or other record keeper for copying records and research related to a specific request for information;
 - (iii) reasonable costs for stenographic reports and interviews, depositions or testimony;
 - (iv) reasonable fees and expenses, determined in accordance with amounts allowed under applicable law, on the person who voluntarily appears in the territory of one of the Contracting Parties for interview, deposition or testimony relating to a particular information request;
 - (v) reasonable legal fees for non-government counsel appointed or retained, with the approval of the competent authority of the applicant Party, for litigation;
 - (b) "Direct costs" do not include ordinary administrative and overhead expenses incurred by the requested Party in reviewing and responding to information requests submitted by the applicant Party.
 - (c) If the direct costs pertaining to a specific request are expected to exceed 500 Swiss Francs, the competent authority of the requested Party shall contact the competent authority of the applicant Party to determine whether the applicant Party wants to pursue the request and bear the costs.

4. Any communications regarding requests for information will be in writing between the authorised representatives of the the competent authorities. In the case of Liechtenstein the authorised representative of the Government is the Fiscal Authority. Each Contracting Party will notify the other of any change of authorised competent authority.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, being duly authorised thereto by their respective Governments, have signed this Protocol in the German and English language, both texts being equally authentic. In case of diversion of interpretation the English text shall prevail.

DONE at Vadzu on 29th day of November in the year 2013.

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN**