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L.N. 120 of 2013

**INCOME TAX ACT
(CAP. 123)**

Exchange of Information (Tax Matters) (Bermuda) Order, 2013

IN exercise of the powers conferred by article 76 of the Income Tax Act, the Minister of Finance, the Economy and Investment has made the following order:-

Citation.

1. The title of this order is the Exchange of Information (Tax Matters) (Bermuda) Order, 2013.

Arrangements to have effect.

2. It is hereby declared:

(a) that the arrangements specified in the Agreement set out in the Schedule to this Order have been made with the Government of Bermuda with a view to preventing fiscal evasion in relation to taxes of every kind and description imposed by the laws of Bermuda;

(b) that it is expedient that those arrangements should have effect;

(c) that the Agreement has entered into force on 5th November 2012.

SCHEDULE

(Article 2)

AGREEMENT BETWEEN
THE GOVERNMENT OF MALTA AND
THE GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA
FOR THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION RELATING TO TAX MATTERS

The Government of Malta and the Government of Bermuda, desiring to facilitate the exchange of information with respect to taxes 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. Such information shall include information that is foreseeably relevant to the determination, assessment and collection of such taxes, the recovery and enforcement of tax claims, or the investigation or prosecution of tax matters. 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 case of Malta:
 - the income tax;
 - (b) In the case of Bermuda:

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- direct taxes of every kind and description.

2. This Agreement shall also apply to any identical taxes imposed after the date of signature of the Agreement in addition to or in place of the existing taxes. This Agreement shall also apply to any substantially similar taxes imposed after the date of signature of the Agreement in addition to or in place of the existing taxes if the competent authorities' Parties so agree. Furthermore, the taxes covered may be expanded or modified by mutual agreement of the Contracting Parties in the form of an exchange of letters. The competent authorities of the Contracting Parties shall notify each other of any substantial changes to the taxation and related information gathering measures covered by the Agreement.

Article 4

Definitions

1. For the purposes of this Agreement, unless otherwise defined:
 - (a) the term "Malta" means the Republic of Malta and, when used in a geographical sense, means the Island of Malta, the Island of Gozo and the other islands of the Maltese archipelago including the territorial waters thereof, as well as any area of the sea-bed, its sub-soil and the superjacent water column adjacent to the territorial waters, wherein Malta exercises sovereign rights, jurisdiction, or control in accordance with international law and its national law, including its legislation relating to the exploration of the continental shelf and exploitation of its natural resources;
 - (b) the term "Bermuda" means the islands of Bermuda;
 - (c) the term "applicant Party" means the Contracting Party requesting information;
 - (d) the term "company" means any body corporate or any entity that is treated as a body corporate for tax purposes;
 - (e) the term "competent authority" means:
 - (i) in the case of Malta: the Minister responsible for finance or his authorised representative;
 - (ii) in the case of Bermuda, the Minister of Finance or his authorised representative;
 - (f) the term "Contracting Party" means Malta or Bermuda as the context requires;
 - (g) the term "criminal laws" means all criminal laws designated as such under domestic law irrespective of whether contained in the tax laws,

the criminal code or other statutes;

(h) the term "criminal tax matters" means tax matters involving intentional conduct which is liable to prosecution under the criminal laws of the applicant Party;

(i) the term "information gathering measures" means laws and administrative or judicial procedures that enable a Contracting Party to obtain and provide the information requested;

(j) the term "information" means any fact, statement or record in any form whatever;

(k) the term "person" includes an individual, a company and any other body of persons;

(l) the term "principal class of shares" means the class or classes of shares representing a majority of the voting power and value of the company;

(m) the term "publicly traded company" means any company whose principal class of shares is listed on a recognised stock exchange 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;

(n) 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;

(o) the term "recognised stock exchange" means any stock exchange agreed upon by the competent authorities of the Contracting Parties;

(p) the term "requested Party" means the Contracting Party requested to provide information;

(q) the term "tax" means any tax to which this Agreement applies.

2. As regards the application of this Agreement at any time by a Contracting Party, any term not defined therein shall, unless the context otherwise requires, have the meaning that it has at that time under the law of that Party, any meaning under the applicable tax laws of that Party prevailing over a meaning given to the term under other laws of that Party.

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Article 5

Exchange of Information Upon Request

1. The competent authority of the requested Party shall provide upon request information for the purposes referred to in Article 1. Such information shall be exchanged without regard to whether the conduct being investigated would constitute a crime under the laws of the requested Party if such conduct occurred in the requested Party.

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 need such information for its own tax purposes.

3. If specifically requested by the competent authority of the 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 for the purposes specified in Article 1 of the 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, trusts, foundations, "Anstalten" and other persons, including, within the constraints of Article 2, ownership information on all such persons in an ownership chain; 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. Further, 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. The competent authority of the applicant Party shall provide the following information to the competent authority of the requested Party when making a request for information under the Agreement to demonstrate the foreseeable relevance of the information to the request:

(a) the identity of the person under examination or investigation;

(b) 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;

(c) the tax purpose for which the information is sought;

(d) 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;

(e) to the extent known, the name and address of any person believed to be in possession of the requested information;

(f) 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 of the applicant Party or in the normal course of administrative practice and that it is in conformity with this Agreement;

(g) 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. A Contracting Party may allow representatives of the competent authority of the other Contracting Party to enter the territory of the first-mentioned Party to interview individuals and examine records with the written consent of the persons concerned. The competent authority of the second-mentioned Party shall notify the competent authority of the first-mentioned Party of the time and place of

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the meeting with the individuals concerned.

2. At the request of the competent authority of one Contracting Party, the competent authority of the other Contracting Party may allow representatives of the competent authority of the first-mentioned Party to be present at the appropriate part of a tax examination in the second-mentioned Party.

3. If the request referred to in paragraph 2 is acceded to, the competent authority of the Contracting Party conducting the examination shall, as soon as possible, notify the competent authority of the other 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 first-mentioned Party for the conduct of the examination. All decisions with respect to the conduct of the tax examination shall be made by the Party conducting the examination.

Article 7

Possibility of Declining a Request

1. The requested Party shall not be required to obtain or provide information that the applicant Party would not be able to obtain under its own laws for purposes of the administration or enforcement of its own tax laws. The competent authority of the requested Party may decline to assist where the request is not made in conformity with this Agreement.

2. The provisions of this Agreement shall not impose on a Contracting Party the obligation to supply information which would disclose any trade, business, industrial, commercial or professional secret or trade process. Notwithstanding the foregoing, information of the type referred to in Article 5, paragraph 4 shall not be treated as such a secret or trade process merely because it meets the criteria in that paragraph.

3. The provisions of this Agreement shall not impose on a Contracting Party the obligation to obtain or provide information, which would reveal confidential communications between a client and an attorney, solicitor or other admitted legal representative where such communications are:

(a) produced for the purposes of seeking or providing legal advice or

(b) produced for the purposes of use in existing or contemplated legal proceedings.

4. The requested Party may decline a request for information if the disclosure of the information would be contrary to public policy (*ordre public*).

5. A request for information shall not be refused on the ground that the tax claim giving rise to the request is disputed.

6. 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

Any information received by a Contracting Party under this Agreement shall be treated as confidential and may be disclosed only to persons or authorities (including courts and administrative bodies) in the jurisdiction of the Contracting Party concerned with the assessment or collection of, the enforcement or prosecution in respect of, or the determination of appeals in relation to, the taxes covered by this Agreement. Such persons or authorities shall use such information only for such purposes. They may disclose the information in public court proceedings or in judicial decisions. The information may not be disclosed to any other person or entity or authority or any other jurisdiction without the express written consent of the competent authority of the requested Party.

Article 9

Costs

Incidence of costs incurred in providing assistance shall be agreed by the Contracting Parties. The respective competent authorities shall consult from time to time with regard to this Article so as to establish a procedure for ordinary costs and extra ordinary costs whereby ordinary costs are borne by the requested Party and extraordinary costs are borne by the applicant Party.

Article 10

Implementation of Legislation

The Contracting Parties shall enact any legislation necessary to comply with, and give effect to, the terms of the Agreement.

Article 11

Mutual Agreement Procedure

1. Where difficulties or doubts arise between the Contracting Parties regarding the implementation or interpretation of the 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

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used under Articles 5 and 6.

Article 12

Entry into Force

This Agreement shall enter into force when each Party has notified the other in writing of the completion of its necessary internal procedures for entry into force. Upon entry into force, it shall have effect:

(a) for criminal tax matters, as from that date; and

(b) for all other matters covered in Article 1, as from that date, but only in respect of taxable periods beginning on or after that date, or, where there is no taxable period, all charges to tax arising on or after that date.

Article 13

Termination

1. This Agreement shall remain in force until terminated by either Party.

2. Either Party may terminate this Agreement by giving notice of termination in writing, through diplomatic channels, to the other Party.. Such termination shall become effective on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of six months after the date of receipt of notice of termination by the other Party.

3. If the Agreement is terminated the Parties shall remain bound by the provisions of Article 8 with respect to any information obtained under this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned being duly authorised in that behalf by the respective Parties, have signed the Agreement.

Done at London on the 24th day of November 2011.

Joseph Zammmit Tabona

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF
MALTA

Paula Cox

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF
OF BERMUDA

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
THE GOVERNMENT OF MALTA
AND
THE GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA
CONCERNING
THE INTERPRETATION OR APPLICATION OF THE AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
THE GOVERNMENT OF MALTA
AND THE GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA (AS AUTHORISED BY THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND)
FOR THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON TAX MATTERS

The Government of Malta and the Government of Bermuda, desiring to facilitate the exchange of information with respect to taxes, have reached the following understanding:

1. This Memorandum of Understanding is not intended to create legal rights, obligations or relations either in international law or the domestic law of the country of either party.

2. Pursuant to Article 1 of the Agreement it is mutually decided that the phrase "foreseeably relevant" and "foreseeable relevance" has the meaning referred to in paragraph numbered 4 of the OECD 2002 Commentary to Article 1 of the 2002 OECD Model TIEA and this meaning applies to the phrase "foreseeably relevant" and "foreseeable relevance" wherever it is used in the Agreement.

3. Pursuant to Article 3 of the Agreement information exchanged shall not be used for the purposes of taxes other than those covered by Article 3.

4. By entering into this Agreement, Bermuda will be exempt from legislation with regard to prohibitive measures imposed upon jurisdictions which do not have Exchange of Information mechanisms in place or are low- or no-income tax jurisdictions.

5. Pursuant to Article 5 of the Agreement it is mutually decided that while the competent authorities acknowledge that legal requirements, consistent with such international standards as may be relevant and, in particular, such standards in relation to financial services, in the jurisdiction of the requested Party may not require certain records to be kept for longer than a specified period, the competent authorities will, nevertheless, use all relevant information-gathering measures to provide any information requested, when that information is, in fact, kept.

6. By entering into the Agreement, Bermuda is not considered to be engaging in any harmful tax practices and is not considered to be a tax haven.

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For the Government of Malta

For the Government of Bermuda

Signature:
Joseph Zammit Tabona

Signature:
Paula Cox

Date: 24 November 2011

Date: 24 November 2011

