

Swiss Withholding Tax—Distributions to Shareholders

A Swiss withholding tax of 35 percent is due on dividends and similar distributions to our shareholders from us, regardless of the place of residency of the shareholder, subject to the exceptions discussed under “—Exemption from Swiss Withholding Tax—Distributions to Shareholders” below. We will be required to withhold at such rate and remit on a net basis any payments made to a holder of our shares and pay such withheld amounts to the Swiss federal tax authorities. See “—Refund of Swiss Withholding Tax on Dividends and Other Distributions.”

Exemption from Swiss Withholding Tax—Distributions to Shareholders

Distributions to shareholders in relation to a reduction of par value are exempt from Swiss withholding tax. Since January 1, 2011, distributions to shareholders out of qualifying additional paid-in capital for Swiss statutory purposes are also exempt from the Swiss withholding tax. On December 31, 2011, the aggregate amount of par value of our outstanding shares was CHF 5.5 billion, equivalent to \$5.9 billion, and the aggregate amount of qualifying additional paid-in capital of our outstanding shares was at least CHF 9.8 billion, equivalent to at least \$10.4 billion, at an exchange rate of \$1.00 to CHF 0.94 on December 31, 2011. Consequently, we expect that a substantial amount of any potential future distributions may be exempt from Swiss withholding tax.

Repurchases of Shares

Repurchases of shares for the purposes of capital reduction are treated as a partial liquidation subject to the 35 percent Swiss withholding tax. However, for shares repurchased for capital reduction, the portion of the repurchase price attributable to the par value of the shares repurchased will not be subject to the Swiss withholding tax. Since January 1, 2011, the portion of the repurchase price that is according to Swiss tax law and practice attributable to the qualifying additional paid-in capital for Swiss statutory reporting purposes of the shares repurchased will also not be subject to the Swiss withholding tax. We would be required to withhold at such rate the tax from the difference between the repurchase price and the related amount of par value and, since January 2011, the related amount of qualifying additional paid-in capital, if any. We would be required to remit on a net basis the purchase price with the Swiss withholding tax deducted to a holder of our shares and pay the withholding tax to the Swiss federal tax authorities.

With respect to the refund of Swiss withholding tax from the repurchase of shares, see “—Refund of Swiss Withholding Tax on Dividends and Other Distributions” below.

In most instances, Swiss companies listed on the SIX carry out share repurchase programs through a second trading line on the SIX. Swiss institutional investors typically purchase shares from shareholders on the open market and then sell the shares on the second trading line back to the company. The Swiss institutional investors are generally able to receive a full refund of the withholding tax. Due to, among other things, the time delay between the sale to the company and the institutional investors' receipt of the refund, the price companies pay to repurchase their shares has historically been slightly higher (but less than one percent) than the price of such companies' shares in ordinary trading on the SIX first trading line. Because our shares are listed on the SIX, we may repurchase our shares from institutional investors who are generally able to receive a full refund of the Swiss withholding tax via a second trading line on the SIX. There may not be sufficient liquidity in our shares on the SIX to repurchase the amount of shares that we would like to repurchase using the second trading line on the SIX. In relation to the U.S. market, we may therefore repurchase such shares using an alternative procedure pursuant to which we repurchase our shares via a "virtual second trading line" from market players, such as banks and institutional investors, who are generally entitled to receive a full refund of the Swiss withholding tax. Currently, our ability to use the "virtual second trading line" will be limited to the share repurchase program currently approved by our shareholders, and any use of the "virtual second trading line" with respect to future share repurchase programs will require approval of the competent Swiss tax and other authorities. We may not be able to repurchase as many shares as we would like to repurchase for purposes of capital reduction on either the "virtual second trading line" or a SIX second trading line without subjecting the selling shareholders to Swiss withholding taxes. The repurchase of shares for purposes other than for cancellation, such as to retain as treasury shares for use in connection with stock incentive plans, convertible debt or other instruments within certain periods, will generally not be subject to Swiss withholding tax.

Refund of Swiss Withholding Tax on Dividends and Other Distributions

Swiss holders—A Swiss tax resident, corporate or individual, can recover the withholding tax in full if such resident is the beneficial owner of our shares at the time the dividend or other distribution becomes due and provided that such resident reports the gross distribution received on such resident's income tax return, or in the case of an entity, includes the taxable income in such resident's income statement.

Non-Swiss holders—If the shareholder that receives a distribution from us is not a Swiss tax resident, does not hold our shares in connection with a permanent establishment or a fixed place of business maintained in Switzerland, and resides in a country that has concluded a treaty for the avoidance of double taxation with Switzerland for which the conditions for the application and protection of and by the treaty are met, then the shareholder may be entitled to a full or partial refund of the withholding tax described above. The procedures for claiming treaty refunds, and the time frame required for obtaining a refund, may differ from country to country.

Switzerland has entered into bilateral treaties for the avoidance of double taxation with respect to income taxes with numerous countries, including the U.S., whereby under certain circumstances all or part of the withholding tax may be refunded.