

GOVERNMENT NOTICE
SOUTH AFRICAN REVENUE SERVICE

No. 756

28 July 2017

INCOME TAX ACT, 1962

**AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA AND
THE GOVERNMENT OF SAMOA 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, 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 Samoa and has been approved by Parliament in terms of section 231(2) of the Constitution.

It is further notified in terms of Article 11 of the Agreement, that the date of entry into force is 28 May 2017.

SCHEDULE

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

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Government of Samoa (“the Parties”) have long been active in international efforts in the fight against financial and other crimes, including the targeting of terrorist financing;

WHEREAS the Parties wish to enhance and facilitate the terms and conditions governing the exchange of information relating to taxes;

DESIRING THEREFORE the Parties in concluding the following Agreement which contains obligations on the part of the Parties only,

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

ARTICLE 1

SCOPE OF THE AGREEMENT

1. The Parties through their competent authorities shall provide assistance through exchange of information that is foreseeably relevant to the administration and enforcement of the domestic laws of the Parties concerning the taxes covered by this Agreement, including information that is foreseeably relevant to the determination, assessment, enforcement or collection of tax with respect to persons subject to such taxes, or to the investigation of tax matters or the prosecution of criminal tax matters in relation to such persons. The rights and safeguards secured to persons by the laws or administrative practice of the requested Party remain applicable. The requested Party shall use its best endeavours to ensure that the effective exchange of information is not unduly prevented or delayed.

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

ARTICLE 2

TAXES COVERED

1. The taxes which are the subject of this Agreement are taxes of every kind and description imposed by the Parties at the date of signature of the Agreement.

2. This Agreement shall apply also to any identical taxes imposed after the date of signature of the Agreement in addition to or in place of the existing taxes, or any substantially similar taxes if the Parties so agree. The competent authority of each Party shall notify the other of substantial changes in laws which may affect the obligations of that Party pursuant to this Agreement.

ARTICLE 3

GENERAL DEFINITIONS

1. In this Agreement:
 - (a) the term "Samoa" means the Independent State of Samoa and the territorial waters thereof;
 - (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 "company" means any body corporate or any entity that is treated as a body corporate for tax purposes;
 - (d) the term "competent authority" means:
 - (i) in the case of Samoa, the Minister of Revenue or an authorised representative of the Minister of Revenue; and
 - (ii) in the case of South Africa, the Commissioner of the South African Revenue Service or an authorised representative of the Commissioner;
 - (e) the term "criminal laws" means all criminal laws designated as such under domestic law, irrespective of whether such are contained in the tax laws, the criminal code or other statutes;
 - (f) the term "criminal tax matters" means tax matters involving intentional conduct whether before or after the entry into force of this Agreement which is liable to prosecution under the criminal laws of the requesting Party;
 - (g) the term "information" means any fact, statement, document or record in whatever form;
 - (h) the term "information gathering measures" means laws and administrative or judicial procedures enabling a requested Party to obtain and provide the information requested;
 - (i) the term "person" includes an individual, a company or any other body or group of persons;
 - (j) 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;
 - (k) 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;

- (l) the term "recognised stock exchange" means any stock exchange agreed upon by the competent authorities of the Parties;
- (m) the term "public collective investment scheme" means any scheme or fund, in which the purchase, sale or redemption of shares or other interests is not implicitly or explicitly restricted to a limited group of investors;
- (n) the term "requested Party" means the Party to this Agreement which is requested to provide or has provided information in response to a request;
- (o) the term "requesting Party" means the Party to this Agreement submitting a request for or having received information from the requested Party; and
- (p) the term "tax" means any tax covered by this Agreement.

2. As regards the application of this Agreement at any time by a Party, any term not defined therein shall, unless the context otherwise requires, have the meaning that it has at that time under the laws 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.

ARTICLE 4

EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION UPON REQUEST

1. The competent authority of the requested Party shall provide upon request by the requesting 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 the conduct being investigated would constitute a crime under the laws of the requested Party if it had occurred in the territory of the requested Party. The competent authority of the requesting 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, the requested Party shall use the information gathering measures it considers relevant to provide the requesting 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 requesting 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 Party shall ensure that it has the authority, subject to the terms of Article 1, to obtain and provide, through its competent authority and upon request:

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

5. This Agreement does not create an obligation for a Party to obtain or provide ownership information with respect to publicly traded companies or public collective investment schemes, unless such information can be obtained without giving rise to disproportionate difficulties.

6. The competent authority of the requesting Party shall provide the following information to the competent authority of the requested Party when making a request for information under this Agreement to demonstrate the foreseeable relevance of the information to the request:

- (a) the identity of the person under examination or investigation;
- (b) the period for which the information is requested;
- (c) a statement of the information sought including its nature and the form in which the requesting Party wishes to receive the information from the requested Party;
- (d) the tax purpose for which the information is sought;
- (e) the reasons for believing that the information requested is foreseeably relevant to tax administration and enforcement of the requesting Party, with respect to the person identified in subparagraph (a) of this paragraph;
- (f) grounds for believing that the information requested is present in the requested Party or is in the possession of or obtainable by 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 able to obtain the information requested;
- (h) a statement that the request is in conformity with the laws and administrative practices of the requesting Party, that if the requested information was within the jurisdiction of the requesting Party then the competent authority of the requesting Party would be able to obtain the information under the laws of the requesting Party or in the normal course of administrative practice and that it is in conformity with this Agreement;

- (i) a statement that the requesting Party has pursued all means available in its own territory to obtain the information, except where that would give rise to disproportionate difficulty.

7. The competent authority of the requested Party shall forward the requested information as promptly as possible to the requesting Party. To ensure prompt response the competent authority of the requested Party shall:

- (a) confirm receipt of a request in writing to the competent authority of the requesting Party and shall notify the competent authority of the requesting Party of deficiencies in the request, if any, within 60 days of the receipt of the request; and
- (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 requesting Party thereof and explain the reason for its inability, the nature of the obstacles or the reasons for its refusal.

ARTICLE 5

TAX EXAMINATIONS ABROAD

1. With reasonable notice, the requesting Party may request that the requested Party allow representatives of the competent authority of the requesting Party to enter the territory of the requested Party, to the extent permitted under its domestic laws, to interview individuals and examine records with the prior written consent of the individuals or other persons concerned. The competent authority of the requesting Party shall notify the competent authority of the requested Party of the time and place of the intended meeting with the individuals concerned.

2. At the request of the competent authority of the requesting Party, the competent authority of the requested Party may permit representatives of the competent authority of the requesting Party to attend a tax examination in the territory of the requested Party.

3. If the request referred to in paragraph 2 is granted, the competent authority of the requested Party conducting the examination shall, as soon as possible, notify the competent authority of the requesting Party of the time and place of the examination, the authority or person authorised to carry out the examination and the procedures and conditions required by the requested Party for the conduct of the examination. All decisions regarding the conduct of the examination shall be made by the requested Party conducting the examination.

ARTICLE 6

POSSIBILITY OF DECLINING A REQUEST

1. The competent authority of the requested Party may decline to assist:
 - (a) where the request is not made in conformity with this Agreement;
 - (b) where the requesting 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) where the disclosure of the information requested would be contrary to public policy of the requested Party.
2. This Agreement shall not impose upon a requested 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 paragraph 4 of Article 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 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. A request for information shall not be refused on the ground that the tax claim giving rise to the request is disputed.
5. The requested Party shall not be required to obtain and provide information which, if the requested information was within the jurisdiction of the requesting Party, the competent authority of the requesting Party would not be able to obtain under its laws or in the normal course of administrative practice.
6. The requested Party may decline a request for information if the information is requested by the requesting Party to administer or enforce a provision of the tax law of the requesting Party, or any requirement connected therewith, which discriminates against a national or citizen of the requested Party as compared with a national or citizen of the requesting Party in the same circumstances.

ARTICLE 7

CONFIDENTIALITY

1. All information provided and received by the competent authorities of the Parties shall be kept confidential.
2. Such information shall be disclosed only to persons or authorities (including courts and administrative bodies) concerned with the purposes specified in Article 1, and used by such persons or authorities only for such purposes, including the determination of any appeal. For these purposes, information may be disclosed 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 provided to a requesting Party under this Agreement may not be disclosed to any other jurisdiction.

ARTICLE 8

COSTS

Unless the competent authorities of the Parties otherwise agree, indirect costs incurred in providing assistance shall be borne by the requested Party, and direct costs incurred in providing assistance (including costs of engaging external advisors in connection with litigation or otherwise) shall be borne by the requesting Party. 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 requesting Party in advance if the costs of providing information with respect to a specific request are expected to be significant.

ARTICLE 9

MUTUAL AGREEMENT PROCEDURE

1. Where difficulties or doubts arise between the Parties regarding the implementation or interpretation of this Agreement, the respective competent authorities shall use their best efforts to resolve the matter by mutual agreement.
2. In addition to the agreements referred to in paragraph 1, the competent authorities of the Parties may mutually agree on the procedures to be used under Articles 4, 5 and 8.
3. The competent authorities of the Parties may communicate with each other directly for purposes of reaching agreement under this Article.
4. The Parties shall agree on other forms of dispute resolution should this become necessary.

ARTICLE 10

IMPLEMENTATION LEGISLATION

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

ARTICLE 11

ENTRY INTO FORCE

This Agreement shall enter into force 30 days after receipt of written notification by the latter Party of completion of all legal formalities required for entry into force. Upon the date of entry into force, it shall have effect:

- (a) for criminal tax matters on that date; and
- (b) for all other matters covered in Article 1 on 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 12

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 the diplomatic channel. 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. All requests received up to the effective date of termination will be dealt with in accordance with the terms of this Agreement.
3. If the Agreement is terminated the Parties shall remain bound by the provisions of Article 7 with respect to any information obtained under this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, being duly authorised by their respective Governments, have signed and sealed this Agreement in two originals in the English language, both texts being equally authentic.

DONE at Apia, on 26th day of July in the year 2012.

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

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT
OF SAMOA**