

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF FINLAND AND THE ISLE OF MAN FOR THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION RELATING TO TAX MATTERS

Whereas the Government of the Republic of Finland and the Government of the Isle of Man (“the Parties”) have long been active in international efforts in the fight against financial and other crimes, including the targeting of terrorist financing;

Whereas it is acknowledged that the Isle of Man under the terms of its Entrustment from the United Kingdom has the right to negotiate, conclude, perform and subject to the terms of this Agreement terminate a tax information exchange agreement with the Republic of Finland;

Whereas the Isle of Man entered into a political commitment to the OECD’s principles of effective exchange of information;

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

Now, therefore, the Parties have agreed to conclude the following Agreement which contains obligations on the part of the Parties only:

Article 1 Scope of the Agreement

The Parties shall provide assistance through exchange of information that is foreseeably relevant to the administration and enforcement of the domestic laws of the Parties concerning taxes covered by this Agreement, including information that is foreseeably relevant to the determination, assessment and collection of such taxes, the recovery and enforcement of tax claims with respect to persons liable to such taxes, or to the investigation or prosecution of tax matters in relation to such persons. A requested Party is not obliged to provide information which is neither held by its authorities nor in the possession of nor obtainable by persons who are within its territorial jurisdiction. 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.

Article 2 Taxes Covered

1. This Agreement shall apply to the following taxes imposed by the Parties:

a) in the case of Finland:

- (i) the state income taxes;
- (ii) the corporate income tax;
- (iii) the communal tax;
- (iv) the church tax,
- (v) the tax withheld at source from interest;
- (vi) the tax withheld at source from non-residents’ income;

- (vii) the withholding tax for foreign employees;
 - b) in the case of Isle of Man:
 - taxes on income or profit.
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. 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 Parties so agree. Furthermore, the taxes covered may be expanded or modified by mutual agreement of the Parties in the form of an exchange of letters. 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

Definitions

1. In this Agreement:
- a) “Finland” means the Republic of Finland and, when used in a geographical sense, means the territory of the Republic of Finland, and any area adjacent to the territorial waters of the Republic of Finland within which, under the laws of Finland and in accordance with international law, the rights of Finland with respect to the exploration for and exploitation of the natural resources of the sea bed and its sub-soil and of the superjacent waters may be exercised;
 - b) “Isle of Man” means the island of the Isle of Man;
 - c) “company” means any body corporate or any entity that is treated as a body corporate for tax purposes;
 - d) “competent authority” means, in the case of Finland, the Ministry of Finance, its authorised representative or the authority which, by the Ministry of Finance, is designated as competent authority; and in the case of the Isle of Man, the Assessor of Income Tax or his delegate;
 - e) “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) “criminal tax matters” means tax matters involving intentional conduct which is liable to prosecution under the criminal laws of the requesting Party;
 - g) “information gathering measures” means laws and administrative or judicial procedures enabling a requested Party to obtain and provide the information requested;
 - h) “information” means any fact, statement, document or record in whatever form;
 - i) “legal privilege” means

- i) communications between a professional legal advisor and his client or any person representing his client made in connection with the giving of legal advice to the client;
- ii) communications between a professional legal advisor and his client or any person representing his client or between such an advisor or his client or any such representative and any other person made in connection with, or in contemplation of, legal proceedings and for the purposes of such proceedings; and
- iii) items enclosed with or referred to in such communications and made
 - a) in connection with the giving of legal advice; or
 - b) in connection with, or in contemplation of, legal proceedings and for the purposes of such proceedings, when they are in the possession of a person who is entitled to possession of them.

Items held with the intention of furthering a criminal purpose are not subject to legal privilege;

- j) “person” means a natural person, a company or any other body or group of persons;
 - k) “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;
 - l) “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;
 - m) “principal class of shares” means the class or classes of shares representing a majority of the voting power and value of the company;
 - n) “recognised stock exchange” means any stock exchange agreed upon by the competent authorities of the Parties;
 - o) “requested Party” means the Party to this Agreement which is requested to provide or has provided information in response to a request;
 - p) “requesting Party” means the Party to this Agreement submitting a request for or having received information from the requested Party;
 - q) “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 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.

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 at its own discretion use all relevant information gathering measures necessary 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, for the purposes referred to in 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 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.

Further, 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.

5. Any request for information shall be formulated with the greatest detail possible in specifying in writing;
 - a) the identity of the person under examination or investigation;
 - b) the period for which the information is requested;
 - c) the nature of the information requested and the form in which the requesting Party would prefer to receive it;

- 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 held 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 control of 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 those that would give rise to disproportionate difficulty.
6. The competent authority of the requested Party shall acknowledge receipt of the request to the competent authority of the requesting Party and shall use its best endeavours to forward the requested information to the requesting Party as soon as possible.

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 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 (ordre public).
2. This Agreement shall not impose upon a requested Party any obligation to provide items subject to legal privilege, or any trade, business, industrial, commercial or professional secret or trade process, provided that information described in Article 4(4) shall not by reason of that fact alone be treated as such a secret or trade process.
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, 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.
5. 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, ordinary costs incurred in providing assistance shall be borne by the requested Party, and extraordinary 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 Language

Requests for assistance and responses thereto shall be drawn up in English.

Article 10 Mutual Agreement Procedure

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.

Article 11 Entry into force

This Agreement shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the later of the dates on which each of the Parties has notified the other in writing that the procedures required by its law have been complied with. The Agreement 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 any tax year beginning on or after the first day of January of the year next following that in which this Agreement enters into force or, where there is no tax year, all charges to tax arising on or after that date.

Article 12 Termination

1. This Agreement shall remain in force until terminated by a Party. Either Party may terminate the Agreement by giving written notice of termination at least six months before the end of any calendar year. In such event, the Agreement shall cease to have effect on taxes chargeable for any tax year beginning on or after the first day of January of the year next following the end of the six months period. All requests received up to the effective date of termination will be dealt with in accordance with the terms of this Agreement.

2. 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 thereto have signed this Agreement.

Done at Oslo, this 30th day of October 2007, in duplicate in the English language

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF FINLAND:**

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF
THE ISLE OF MAN:**