

## 10.C Material contracts

In April 2007, we entered into an agreement with Nestlé S.A. of Switzerland to divest our Gerber Business Unit for \$5.5 billion. This transaction was completed in September 2007.

In April 2008, we entered into an agreement with Nestlé S.A. of Switzerland under which we obtained the right to acquire majority ownership in Alcon Inc. (NYSE: ACL) in two steps. The potential value of these two steps is approximately \$39 billion. The first step was completed on July 7, 2008, when we acquired an initial 25% stake (74 million shares) from Nestlé for \$10.4 billion in cash. This investment reflects a price of \$143.18 per share. In the optional second step, we had the right to acquire Nestlé's remaining 52% majority stake in Alcon between January 1, 2010 and July 31, 2011 for a fixed price of \$181.00 per share, or approximately \$28 billion. On January 4, 2010, we announced our intention to gain full ownership of Alcon Inc. by first completing the April 2008 agreement with Nestlé S.A. and acquiring Nestlé's remaining 52% majority stake in Alcon, and subsequently entering into an all-share direct merger with Alcon for the remaining 23% minority stake. The acquisition of the 52% majority stake is subject to required regulatory approvals. The merger, which will be implemented under the Swiss Merger Act, will be conditional on the closing of the 52% stake acquisition from Nestlé and would require approval by the Boards of Directors of Novartis and Alcon. The merger would also require two-thirds approval by the shareholders of Novartis and Alcon voting at their respective meetings. Under Swiss law, Novartis has the right to vote its Alcon stake in favor of the proposed merger.

## 10.D Exchange controls

There are no Swiss governmental laws, decrees or regulations that restrict the export or import of capital, including any foreign exchange controls, or that affect the remittance of dividends or other payments to non-residents or non-citizens of Switzerland who hold Novartis' shares.

## 10.E Taxation

The taxation discussion set forth below is intended only as a descriptive summary and does not purport to be a complete analysis or listing of all potential tax effects relevant to the ownership or disposition of our shares or ADSs. The statements of US and Swiss tax laws set forth below are based on the laws and regulations in force as of the date of this 20-F, including the current Convention Between the United States and the Swiss Confederation for the Avoidance of Double Taxation with Respect to Taxes on Income, entered into force on December 19, 1997 (the "Treaty"), and the US Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code"), Treasury regulations, rulings, judicial decisions and administrative pronouncements, and may be subject to any changes in US and Swiss law, and in any double taxation convention or treaty between the United States and Switzerland occurring after that date, which changes may have retroactive effect.

### Swiss Taxation

#### Swiss Residents

*Withholding Tax on Dividends and Distributions.* Dividends which we pay and similar cash or in-kind distributions which we may make to a holder of shares or ADSs (including distributions of liquidation proceeds in excess of the nominal value, stock dividends and, under certain circumstances, proceeds from repurchases of shares by us in excess of the nominal value) are subject to a Swiss federal withholding tax (the "Withholding Tax") at a current rate of 35%. We are required to withhold this Withholding Tax from the gross distribution and to pay the Withholding Tax to the Swiss Federal Tax Administration. The Withholding Tax is refundable in full to Swiss residents who are the beneficial owners of the taxable distribution at the time it is resolved and duly report the gross distribution received on their personal tax return or in their financial statements for tax purposes, as the case may be.

*Income Tax on Dividends.* A Swiss resident who receives dividends and similar distributions (including stock dividends and liquidation surplus) on shares or ADSs is required to include such amounts in the shareholder's personal income tax return. A corporate shareholder may claim substantial relief from taxation of dividends and similar distributions received if the shares held represent a fair market value of at least CHF 2 million.

*Capital Gains Tax upon Disposal of shares.* Under current Swiss tax law, the gain realized on shares held by a Swiss resident who holds shares or ADSs as part of his private property is generally not subject to any federal, cantonal or municipal income taxation on gains realized on the sale or other disposal of shares or ADSs. However, gains realized upon a repurchase of shares by us may be characterized as taxable dividend income if certain conditions are met. Book gains realized on shares or ADSs held by a Swiss corporate entity or by a Swiss resident individual as part of the shareholder's business property are, in general, included in the taxable income of such person. However, the Federal Law on the Direct Federal Tax of December 14, 1990 and several cantonal laws on direct cantonal taxes provide for exceptions for Swiss corporate entities holding more than 20% of our voting stock for more than one year.

#### ***Residents of Other Countries***

Recipients of dividends and similar distributions on the shares who are neither residents of Switzerland for tax purposes nor holding shares as part of a business conducted through a permanent establishment situated in Switzerland ("Non-resident Holders") are not subject to Swiss income taxes in respect of such distributions. Moreover, gains realized by such recipients upon the disposal of shares are not subject to Swiss income taxes.

Non-resident Holders of shares are, however, subject to the Withholding Tax on dividends and similar distributions mentioned above and under certain circumstances to the Stamp Duty described below. Such Non-resident Holders may be entitled to a partial refund of the Withholding Tax if the country in which they reside has entered into a bilateral treaty for the avoidance of double taxation with Switzerland. Non-resident Holders should be aware that the procedures for claiming treaty refunds (and the time frame required for obtaining a refund) may differ from country to country. Non-resident Holders should consult their own tax advisors regarding receipt, ownership, purchase, sale or other dispositions of shares or ADSs and the procedures for claiming a refund of the Withholding Tax.

As of January 1, 2010, Switzerland has entered into bilateral treaties for the avoidance of double taxation with respect to income taxes with the following countries, whereby a part of the above-mentioned Withholding Tax may be refunded (subject to the limitations set forth in such treaties):

Armenia	Finland	Kuwait	Russia
Albania	France	Kyrgyzstan	Serbia and
Algeria	Germany	Latvia Lithuania	Montenegro
Australia	Ghana	Luxembourg	Singapore
Austria	Greece	Macedonia	Slovak Republic
Azerbaijan	Hungary	Malaysia	Slovenia
Bahrain	Iceland	Mexico	South Africa
Bangladesh	India	Moldavia	Spain
Belarus	Indonesia	Mongolia	Sri Lanka
Belgium	Iran	Morocco	Sweden
Bulgaria	Israel	Netherlands	Thailand
Canada	Italy	New Zealand	Trinidad and Tobago
China	Ivory Coast	Norway	Tunisia
Croatia	Republic of Ireland	Pakistan	Ukraine
Czech Republic	Jamaica	Philippines	United Kingdom
Denmark	Japan	Poland	United States of America
Ecuador	Kazakhstan	Portugal	Uzbekistan
Egypt	Republic of Korea	Romania	Venezuela
Estonia	(South Korea)		Vietnam

Tax treaty negotiations are under way, or have been concluded, with Argentina (treaty not yet in force but provisionally applicable as from January 1, 2001), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Georgia, Libya, Malta, North Korea, Peru, Qatar, Senegal, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, and Zimbabwe.

A Non-resident Holder of shares or ADSs will not be liable for any Swiss taxes other than the Withholding Tax described above and, if the transfer occurs through or with a Swiss bank or other Swiss securities dealer, the Stamp Duty described below. If, however, the shares or ADSs of Non-resident Holders can be attributed to a permanent establishment or a fixed place of business maintained by such person within Switzerland during the relevant tax year, the shares or ADSs may be subject to Swiss income taxes in respect of income and gains realized on the shares or ADSs and such person may qualify for a full refund of the Withholding Tax based on Swiss tax law.

*Residents of the United States.* A Non-resident Holder who is a resident of the United States for purposes of the Treaty is eligible for a reduced rate of tax on dividends equal to 15% of the dividend, provided that such holder (i) qualifies for benefits under the Treaty, (ii) holds, directly and indirectly, less than 10% of our voting stock, and (iii) does not conduct business through a permanent establishment or fixed base in Switzerland to which the shares or ADSs are attributable. Such an eligible holder must apply for a refund of the amount of the Withholding Tax in excess of the 15% Treaty rate. A Non-resident Holder who is a resident of the United States for purposes of the Treaty is eligible for a reduced rate of tax on dividends equal to 5% of the dividend, provided that such holder (i) is a company, (ii) qualifies for benefits under the Treaty, (iii) holds directly at least 10% of our voting stock, and (iv) does not conduct business through a permanent establishment or fixed place of business in Switzerland to which the shares or ADSs are attributable. Such an eligible holder must apply for a refund of the amount of the Withholding Tax in excess of the 5% Treaty rate. Claims for refunds must be filed on Swiss Tax Form 82 (82C for corporations; 82I for individuals; 82E for other entities), which may be obtained from any Swiss

Consulate General in the United States or from the Federal Tax Administration of Switzerland at the address below, together with an instruction form. Four copies of the form must be duly completed, signed before a notary public of the United States, and sent to the Federal Tax Administration of Switzerland, Eigerstrasse 65, CH-3003 Berne, Switzerland. The form must be accompanied by suitable evidence of deduction of Swiss tax withheld at source, such as certificates of deduction, signed bank vouchers or credit slips. The form may be filed on or after July 1 or January 1 following the date the dividend was payable, but no later than December 31 of the third year following the calendar year in which the dividend became payable. For US resident holders of ADSs, JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A., as Depositary, will comply with these Swiss procedures on behalf of the holders, and will remit the net amount to the holders.

*Stamp Duty upon Transfer of Securities.* The sale of shares, whether by Swiss residents or Non-resident Holders, may be subject to federal securities transfer Stamp Duty of 0.15%, calculated on the sale proceeds, if the sale occurs through or with a Swiss bank or other Swiss securities dealer, as defined in the Swiss Federal Stamp Duty Act. The Stamp Duty has to be paid by the securities dealer and may be charged to the parties in a taxable transaction who are not securities dealers. Stamp Duty may also be due if a sale of shares occurs with or through a non-Swiss bank or securities dealer, provided (i) such bank or dealer is a member of the SWX, and (ii) the sale takes place on the SWX. In addition to this Stamp Duty, the sale of shares by or through a member of the SWX may be subject to a minor stock exchange levy.

## **United States Federal Income Taxation**

The following is a general discussion of the material US federal income tax consequences of the ownership and disposition of our shares or ADSs that may be relevant to you if you are a US Holder (as defined below). Because this discussion does not consider any specific circumstances of any particular holder of our shares or ADSs, persons who are subject to US taxation are strongly urged to consult their own tax advisers as to the overall US federal, state and local tax consequences, as well as to the overall Swiss and other foreign tax consequences, of the ownership and disposition of our shares or ADSs. In particular, additional or different rules may apply to US expatriates, banks and other financial institutions, regulated investment companies, traders in securities who elect to apply a mark-to-market method of accounting, dealers in securities or currencies, tax-exempt entities, insurance companies, broker-dealers, investors liable for alternative minimum tax, investors that hold shares or ADSs as part of a straddle, hedging or conversion transaction, holders whose functional currency is not the US dollar, partnerships or other pass through entities, persons who acquired our shares pursuant to the exercise of employee stock options or otherwise as compensation and persons who hold directly, indirectly or by attribution, 10% or more of the voting power of our outstanding shares. This discussion generally applies only to US Holders who hold the shares or ADSs as a capital asset (generally, for investment purposes), and whose functional currency is the US dollar. Investors are urged to consult their own tax advisors concerning whether they are eligible for benefits under the Treaty.

For purposes of this discussion, a "US Holder" is a beneficial owner of our shares or ADSs who is (i) an individual who is a citizen or resident of the United States for US federal income tax purposes, (ii) a corporation (or other entity taxable as a corporation for US federal income tax purposes) created or organized in or under the laws of the US or a state thereof or the District of Columbia, (iii) an estate the income of which is subject to US federal income taxation regardless of its source, or (iv) a trust (i) subject to the primary supervision of a US court and the control of one or more US persons or (ii) that has a valid election in place to be treated as a US person. If a partnership (or other entity treated as a partnership for US federal income tax purposes) holds shares or ADSs, the tax treatment of a partner generally will depend upon the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. Partners in a partnership that holds shares or ADSs are urged to consult their own tax advisor regarding the specific tax consequences of the owning and disposing of such shares or ADSs by the partnership.

For US federal income tax purposes, a US Holder of ADSs generally will be treated as the beneficial owner of our shares represented by the ADSs. However, see the discussion below under "—Dividends" regarding certain statements made by the US Treasury concerning depository arrangements.

This discussion assumes that each obligation in the Deposit Agreement and any related agreement will be performed in accordance with its terms.

*Dividends.* US Holders will be required to include in gross income, as an item of ordinary income, the full amount (including the amount of any Withholding Tax) of a dividend paid with respect to our shares or ADSs at the time that such dividend is received by the US Holder, in the case of shares, or by the Depository, in the case of ADSs. For this purpose, a "dividend" will include any distribution paid by us with respect to our shares or ADSs (other than certain pro rata distributions of our capital stock) paid out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits, as determined under US federal income tax principles. To the extent the amount of a distribution by us exceeds our current and accumulated earnings and profits, such excess will first be treated as a tax-free return of capital to the extent of a US Holder's tax basis in the shares or ADSs (with a corresponding reduction in such tax basis), and thereafter will be treated as capital gain, which will be long-term capital gain if the US Holder held our shares or ADSs for more than one year. Under the Code, dividend payments by us on the shares or ADSs are not eligible for the dividends received deduction generally allowed to corporate shareholders.

Dividend income in respect of our shares or ADSs will constitute income from sources outside the United States for US foreign tax credit purposes. Subject to the limitations and conditions provided in the Code, US Holders generally may claim as a credit against their US federal income tax liability, any Withholding Tax withheld from a dividend. The rules governing the foreign tax credit are complex. Each US Holder is urged to consult its own tax advisor concerning whether, and to what extent, a foreign tax credit will be available with respect to dividends received from us. Alternatively, a US Holder may claim the Withholding Tax as a deduction for the taxable year within which the Withholding Tax is paid or accrued, provided a deduction is claimed for all of the foreign income taxes the US Holder pays or accrues in the particular year. A deduction does not reduce US tax on a dollar-for-dollar basis like a tax credit. The deduction, however, is not subject to the limitations applicable to foreign tax credits.

The US Treasury has expressed concern that parties to whom ADSs are released may be taking actions inconsistent with the claiming of foreign tax credits for US Holders of ADSs. Accordingly, the summary above of the creditability of the Withholding Tax could be affected by future actions that may be taken by the US Treasury.

In general, a US Holder will be required to determine the amount of any dividend paid in Swiss francs, including the amount of any Withholding Tax imposed thereon, by translating the Swiss francs into US dollars at the spot rate on the date the dividend is actually or constructively received by a US Holder, in the case of shares, or by the Depository, in the case of ADSs, regardless of whether the Swiss francs are in fact converted into US dollars. If a US Holder converts the Swiss francs so received into US dollars on the date of receipt, the US Holder generally should not recognize foreign currency gain or loss on such conversion. If a US Holder does not convert the Swiss francs so received into US dollars on the date of receipt, the US Holder will have a tax basis in the Swiss francs equal to the US dollar value on such date. Any foreign currency gain or loss that a US Holder recognizes on a subsequent conversion or other disposition of the Swiss francs generally will be treated as US source ordinary income or loss.

For a non-corporate US Holder, the US dollar amount of any dividends paid to it prior to January 1, 2011 that constitute qualified dividend income generally will be taxable at a maximum rate of 15%, provided that the US Holder meets certain holding period and other requirements. We currently believe that dividends paid with respect to our shares and ADSs will constitute qualified dividend income for US federal income tax purposes. However, the US Treasury and the US Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") have announced their intention to promulgate rules pursuant to which US Holders of shares and ADSs, among others, will be permitted to rely on certifications from issuers to establish that dividends are

treated as qualified dividends. US Holders of shares or ADSs are urged to consult their own tax advisors regarding the availability to them of the reduced dividend rate in light of their own particular situation and the computations of their foreign tax credit limitation with respect to any qualified dividends paid to them, as applicable.

*Sale or Other Taxable Disposition.* Upon a sale or other taxable disposition of shares or ADSs, US Holders generally will recognize capital gain or loss in an amount equal to the difference between the US dollar value of the amount realized on the disposition and the US Holder's tax basis (determined in US dollars) in the shares or ADSs. This capital gain or loss generally will be US source gain or loss and will be treated as long-term capital gain or loss if the holding period in the shares or ADSs exceeds one year. In the case of certain US Holders (including individuals), any long term capital gain generally will be subject to US federal income tax at preferential rates, which rates are currently scheduled to increase on January 1, 2011. The deductibility of capital losses is subject to significant limitations under the Code. Deposits or withdrawals of our shares by US Holders in exchanges for ADSs will not result in the realization of gain or loss for US federal income tax purposes.

*United States Information Reporting and Backup Withholding.* Dividend payments with respect to shares or ADSs and proceeds from the sale, exchange or other disposition of shares or ADSs received in the United States or through US-related financial intermediaries, may be subject to information reporting to the IRS and possible US backup withholding at a current rate of 28%. Certain exempt recipients (such as corporations) are not subject to these information reporting and backup withholding requirements. Backup withholding will not apply to a US Holder who furnishes a correct taxpayer identification number and makes any other required certification or who is otherwise exempt from backup withholding. Any US Holders required to establish their exempt status generally must provide a properly-executed IRS Form W-9 (Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification). Backup withholding is not an additional tax. Amounts withheld as backup withholding may be credited against a US Holder's US federal income tax liability, and a US Holder may obtain a refund of any excess amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules by timely filing the appropriate claim for refund with the IRS and furnishing any required information.

#### **10.F Dividends and paying agents**

Not applicable.

#### **10.G Statement by experts**

Not applicable.

#### **10.H Documents on display**

Any statement in this Form 20-F about any of our contracts or other documents is not necessarily complete. If the contract or document is filed as an exhibit to the Form 20-F the contract or document is deemed to modify the description contained in this Form 20-F. You must review the exhibits themselves for a complete description of the contract or document.

You may review a copy of our filings with the SEC, as well as other information furnished to the SEC, including exhibits and schedules filed with it, at the SEC's public reference room at 100 F Street, N.E., Room 1580, Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information. In addition, the SEC maintains an Internet site at <http://www.sec.gov> that contains reports and other information regarding issuers that file electronically with the SEC. These SEC filings are also available to the public from commercial document retrieval services.

We are required to file or furnish reports and other information with the SEC under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 and regulations under that act. As a foreign private issuer, we are exempt from the rules under the Exchange Act prescribing the form and content of proxy statements and our officers, directors and principal shareholders are exempt from the reporting and short swing profit recovery provisions contained in Section 16 of the Exchange Act.

**10.I Subsidiary Information**

Not applicable.