

average price on the Brazilian stock exchange on which the most preferred shares were traded in the fifteen trading sessions immediately preceding such withdrawal. The U.S. dollar equivalent will be determined on the basis of the average commercial market rates quoted by the Central Bank on such date or dates.

An electronic registration has been issued in the name of the depositary with respect to the ADSs and is maintained by the custodian on behalf of the depositary. Pursuant to the registration, the custodian and the depositary are able to convert dividends and other distributions with respect to the preferred shares represented by ADSs into foreign currency and remit the proceeds outside Brazil. In the event that a holder of ADSs exchanges such ADSs for preferred shares, such holder will be entitled to continue to rely on the depositary's registration for five business days after such exchange, following which such holder must seek to obtain its own electronic registration with the Central Bank. Thereafter, any holder of preferred shares may not be able to convert into foreign currency and remit outside Brazil the proceeds from the disposition of, or distributions with respect to, such preferred shares, unless such holder is a duly qualified investor under Resolution 2,689 and obtains its own electronic registration.

If the holder appoints a representative in Brazil to act directly in the Brazilian market to acquire preferred shares, the holder will be subject to a less favorable Brazilian tax treatment than a holder of ADSs. Regardless of registration under Resolution 2,689, residents in tax havens are subject to less favorable tax treatment than other foreign investors. See "Taxation—Brazilian Tax Considerations."

Under current Brazilian legislation, the federal government may impose temporary restrictions on remittances of foreign capital abroad in the event of a serious imbalance or an anticipated serious imbalance of Brazil's balance of payments. For approximately six months in 1989 and early 1990, the federal government froze all dividend and capital repatriations held by the Central Bank that were owed to foreign equity investors, in order to conserve Brazil's foreign currency reserves. These amounts were subsequently released in accordance with federal government directives. There can be no assurance that the federal government will not impose similar restrictions on foreign repatriations in the future.

E. Taxation

The following discussion contains a description of the material Brazilian and U.S. federal income tax consequences of the acquisition, ownership and disposition of preferred shares or ADSs by certain holders. This summary is based upon the tax laws of Brazil and the United States as in effect on the date of this annual report, which are subject to change, possibly with retroactive effect, and to differing interpretations. You should consult your own tax advisors as to the Brazilian, U.S. federal or other tax consequences of the acquisition, ownership and disposition of preferred shares or ADSs, including, in particular, the effect of any state, local or non-U.S., non-Brazilian tax laws.

Although there is presently no income tax treaty between Brazil and the United States, the tax authorities of the two countries have had discussions that may culminate in such a treaty. No assurance can be given, however, as to whether or when a treaty will enter into force or how it will affect the U.S. holders of preferred shares or ADSs.

Brazilian Tax Considerations

The following discussion mainly summarizes the principal Brazilian tax consequences of the acquisition, ownership and disposition of preferred shares or ADSs by a U.S. holder not deemed to be domiciled in Brazil for Brazilian tax purposes (a "U.S. holder"). This discussion does not address all the Brazilian tax considerations that may be applicable to any particular non-Brazilian holder, and each non-Brazilian holder should consult its own tax advisor about the Brazilian tax consequences of investing in preferred shares or ADSs.

Taxation of Dividends

Dividends paid by us in cash or in kind from profits generated on or after January 1, 1996 (i) to the depositary in respect of preferred shares underlying ADSs or (ii) to a U.S. holder or non-Brazilian holder in respect of preferred shares will generally not be subject to Brazilian withholding tax. We do not have any undistributed profits generated before January 1, 1996.

Distributions of Interest on Capital

Brazilian corporations may make payments to shareholders characterized as interest on capital as an alternative form of making dividend distributions. The rate of interest may not be higher than the federal government's long-term interest rate, or the TJLP, as determined by the Central Bank from time to time (10% per annum for the three month period

beginning January 2004). The total amount distributed as interest on capital may not exceed the greater of (i) 50% of net income (before taking the distribution and any deductions for income taxes into account) for the year in respect of which the payment is made or (ii) 50% of retained earnings for the year prior to the year in respect of which the payment is made. Payments of interest on capital are decided by the shareholders on the basis of recommendations of the company's board of directors.

Distributions of interest on capital paid to Brazilian and non-Brazilian holders of preferred shares, including payments to the depositary in respect of preferred shares underlying ADSs, are deductible by us for Brazilian corporate income tax purposes. These payments to U.S. holders or non-Brazilian holders are subject to Brazilian withholding tax at the rate of 15%. If the recipient of the payment is domiciled in a tax haven jurisdiction (i.e., a country that does not impose any income tax or that imposes tax at a rate of less than 20%), the rate will be 25%.

No assurance can be given that our Board of Directors will not recommend that future distributions of profits will be made by means of interest on capital instead of by means of dividends.

Amounts paid as interest on capital (net of applicable withholding tax) may be treated as payments in respect of the dividends we are obligated to distribute to our shareholders in accordance with our by-laws (*estatuto social*) and Brazilian Corporate Law. Distributions of interest on capital in respect of the preferred shares, including distributions to the depositary in respect of preferred shares underlying ADSs, may be converted into U.S. dollars and remitted outside of Brazil, subject to applicable exchange controls.

Taxation of Gains

Gains realized outside Brazil by a U.S. holder or a non-Brazilian holder on the disposition of property located in Brazil, including preferred shares, to another U.S. holder or non-Brazilian holder are subject to Brazilian tax, as of February 2004. In this case, gains would be subject to a 15% withholding tax rate, except if the beneficiary is located in a low-tax jurisdiction, as defined by Brazilian law, in which case the applicable rate would be 25%.

Our understanding is that ADSs do not qualify as property located in Brazil and, therefore, are not subject to Brazilian taxes upon disposition to other non-Brazilian or U.S. holders. Insofar as the regulatory norm referred to in Article 26 is recent and generic and has not been tested through the administrative or judicial courts, we are unable to evaluate what the final ruling on the matter will be.

Gains realized by a U.S. holder or a non-Brazilian holder on dispositions of preferred shares in Brazil or in transactions with Brazilian residents may be free of Brazilian tax, taxed at a rate of 25% or taxed at a rate of 15%, depending on the circumstances.

- Gains on the disposition of preferred shares obtained upon cancellation of ADSs are not taxed in Brazil if the disposition is made and the proceeds are remitted abroad within five business days after cancellation, unless the investor is a resident of a jurisdiction that, under Brazilian law, is deemed to be a tax haven.
- Gains realized on preferred shares through transactions with Brazilian residents or through transactions in Brazil off of the Brazilian stock exchanges are generally subject to tax at a rate of 15%.
- Gains realized on preferred shares through transactions on Brazilian stock exchanges are generally subject to tax at a rate of 15%, as of January 2005, unless the investor is entitled to tax-free treatment for the transaction under Resolution 2,689 of the National Monetary Council Regulations, described immediately below.

Resolution 2,689, which as of March 31, 2000 superseded the Annex IV Regulations that previously provided tax benefits to foreign investors, extends favorable tax treatment to a U.S. holder or non-Brazilian holder of preferred shares who has (i) appointed a representative in Brazil with power to take action relating to the investment in preferred shares, (ii) registered as a foreign investor with the CVM and (iii) registered its investment in preferred shares with the Central Bank. Under Resolution 2,689 securities held by foreign investors must be maintained under the custody of, or in deposit accounts with, financial institutions duly authorized by the Central Bank and the CVM. In addition, the trading of securities is restricted under Resolution 2,689 to transactions on Brazilian stock exchanges or qualified over-the-counter markets. The preferential treatment generally afforded under Resolution 2,689 and afforded to investors in ADSs is not available to residents of tax havens. All preferred shares underlying ADSs qualify under Resolution 2,689.

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There can be no assurance that the current preferential treatment for U.S. holders and non-Brazilian holders of ADSs and U.S. holders and non-Brazilian holders of preferred shares under Resolution 2,689 will be maintained.

Gain on the disposition of preferred shares is measured by the difference between the amount in Brazilian currency realized on the sale or exchange and the acquisition cost of the shares sold, measured in Brazilian currency, without any correction for inflation. Although there is controversy surrounding this issue, there are arguments to sustain the position that the acquisition cost of shares registered as an investment with the Central Bank is calculated on the basis of the foreign currency amount registered with the Central Bank. See “–Registered Capital.”

Gains realized by a U.S. holder and non-Brazilian holder upon the redemption of preferred shares will be treated as gains from the disposition of such preferred shares to a Brazilian resident occurring off of a stock exchange and will accordingly be subject to tax at a rate of 15%. In case the non-Brazilian holder is domiciled in a tax haven jurisdiction, the applicable rate would be 25%.

As of January 1, 2005, the purchase price of preferred shares sold on the Brazilian stock exchange is subject to withholding tax at a rate of 0.005%, except in the case of non-Brazilian holders that invest through Resolution No. 2,689. This tax may be offset against the 15% income tax due on the gains realized upon the sale of the shares.

Any exercise of preemptive rights relating to the preferred shares or ADSs will not be subject to Brazilian taxation. Gains on the sale or assignment of preemptive rights relating to the preferred shares will be treated differently for Brazilian tax purposes depending on (i) whether the sale or assignment is made by the depositary or the investor and (ii) whether the transaction takes place on a Brazilian stock exchange. Gains on sales or assignments made by the depositary on a Brazilian stock exchange are not taxed in Brazil, but gains on other sales or assignments may be subject to tax at rates up to 15%.

The deposit of preferred shares in exchange for the ADSs is not subject to Brazilian income tax if the preferred shares are registered under Resolution 2,689 and the respective holder is not in a tax haven jurisdiction. If the preferred shares are not so registered or the holder is in a tax haven jurisdiction, the deposit of preferred shares in exchange for ADSs may be subject to Brazilian capital gains tax at a rate of 15%.

The withdrawal of preferred shares in exchange for ADSs is not subject to Brazilian tax. On receipt of the underlying preferred shares, a U.S. holder or non-Brazilian holder entitled to benefits under Resolution 2,689 will be entitled to register the U.S. dollar value of such shares with the Central Bank as described above, under “–Registered Capital.” If a U.S. holder or non-Brazilian holder does not qualify under Resolution 2,689, he will be subject to the less favorable tax treatment described above in respect of exchanges of preferred shares. Brazil’s tax treaties do not grant relief from taxes on gains realized on sales or exchanges of preferred shares.

Beneficiaries Residing or Domiciled in Tax Havens or Low Tax Jurisdictions

Law No. 9,779, dated as of January 19, 1999, states that, with the exception of limited circumstances, any income derived from operations by a beneficiary that resides or is domiciled in a country considered to be a tax haven is subject to income tax to be withheld by the source at a rate of 25%. Accordingly, if the distribution of interest attributed to shareholders’ equity is made to a beneficiary residing or domiciled in a tax haven, the applicable income tax will be at a rate of 25% instead of 15%. The increased rate also applies for capital gains paid to residents of low-tax jurisdictions as of February 2004.

In accordance with Law No. 9,959, non-Brazilian holders of ADSs or preferred shares who are residents of tax havens have been excluded from the tax incentives granted to holders of ADSs and investors under Resolution No. 2,689 since January 1, 2000 and are subject to the same tax treatment applicable to holders that are residents of or domiciled in Brazil.

Other Brazilian Taxes

There are no Brazilian inheritance, gift or succession taxes applicable to the ownership, transfer or disposition of preferred shares or ADSs by a non-Brazilian holder except for gift and inheritance taxes levied by some states in Brazil on gifts made or inheritances bestowed by individuals or entities not resident or domiciled in Brazil or in the relevant state to individuals or entities that are resident or domiciled within this state in Brazil. There are no Brazilian stamp, issue, registration, or similar taxes or duties payable by holders of preferred shares or ADSs.

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A financial transaction tax, or the IOF tax, may be imposed on a variety of transactions, including the conversion of Brazilian currency into foreign currency (e.g., for purposes of paying dividends and interest). The IOF tax rate on such conversions is currently 0%, but the Minister of Finance has the legal power to increase the rate to a maximum of 25%. Any increase will be applicable only prospectively.

The IOF may also be levied on transactions involving bonds or securities, or IOF/Títulos, even if the transactions are effected on Brazilian stock, futures or commodities exchanges. The rate of the IOF/Títulos with respect to preferred shares and ADSs is currently 0%. The minister of finance, however, has the legal power to increase the rate to a maximum of 1.5% of the amount of the taxed transaction per each day of the investor's holding period, but only to the extent of gain realized on the transaction and only on a prospective basis.

In addition to the IOF tax, a second, temporary tax that applies to the removal of funds from accounts at banks and other financial institutions, the CPMF tax, will be imposed on distributions in respect of ADSs at the time these distributions are converted into U.S. dollars and remitted abroad by the Custodian. The CPMF tax is due to expire on December 31, 2007. It is currently imposed at a rate of 0.38%. Transactions conducted through the Brazilian stock exchanges in current accounts specified for stock exchange transactions have been exempt from the CPMF tax since July 13, 2002. Additionally, as of August 2004, Brazilian holders may elect to make investments through a special investment account, which is exempt from CPMF. In this case, the tax only applies upon the transfer of funds from the banking account to the investment account. Once deposited in this account, funds may be withdrawn without the CPMF. However, funds deposited in the investment account must only be used for investments.

U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations

The following discussion is a summary of the material U.S. federal income tax consequences of the acquisition, ownership and disposition of our preferred shares or our ADSs by U.S. Holders, as defined below. This summary is based on the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (referred to herein as the "Code"), final, temporary and proposed Treasury regulations, administrative pronouncements of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (the "IRS") and judicial decisions, all as currently in effect and all of which are subject to change (possibly with retroactive effect), and to different interpretations. It is also based in part on representations by the depository and assumes that each obligation under the Deposit Agreement and any related agreement will be performed in accordance with its terms. This discussion deals only with preferred shares and ADSs held as capital assets (generally, for investment purposes). It does not discuss all of the tax consequences that may be relevant to a U.S. Holder in light of the U.S. Holder's particular circumstances or to U.S. Holders subject to special rules, such as financial institutions, insurance companies, tax-exempt entities, dealers in securities or foreign currencies, partnerships and other pass-through entities, investors liable for the alternative minimum tax, persons who hold preferred shares or ADSs as part of an integrated investment (including a hedge, straddle or conversion transaction) comprised of a preferred share or ADS and one or more other positions for tax purposes, persons whose functional currency is not the U.S. dollar or persons who actually or constructively own (directly or indirectly) 10% or more of our voting stock or persons who acquired preferred shares or ADSs pursuant to the exercise of any employee stock option or otherwise as compensation. Holders of preferred shares or ADSs should consult their own tax advisors with regard to the application of the U.S. federal income tax laws to their particular situations as well as any tax consequences arising under the laws of any state, local or non-U.S. taxing jurisdiction.

As used herein, the term "U.S. Holder" means a beneficial owner of preferred shares or ADSs that is, for U.S. federal income tax purposes, (1) a citizen or individual resident of the United States, (2) a corporation (or other entity treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes) organized under the laws of the United States or of any political subdivision thereof or (3) an estate or trust the income of which is subject to U.S. federal income taxation regardless of its source. The U.S. federal income tax treatment of a partner in a partnership that holds our preferred shares or ADSs will depend on the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. Partners in such partnerships should consult their own tax advisors.

THE SUMMARY OF U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES SET OUT BELOW IS INTENDED FOR GENERAL INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY. PROSPECTIVE PURCHASERS OF PREFERRED SHARES OR ADSs ARE URGED TO CONSULT WITH THEIR OWN TAX ADVISORS WITH RESPECT TO THE PARTICULAR TAX CONSEQUENCES TO THEM OF ACQUIRING, OWNING OR DISPOSING OF PREFERRED SHARES OR ADSs, INCLUDING THE APPLICABILITY AND EFFECT OF STATE, LOCAL, NON-U.S. AND OTHER TAX LAWS AND POSSIBLE CHANGES IN TAX LAWS.

General

In general, for U.S. federal income tax purposes, holders of American depositary receipts evidencing ADSs will be treated as the beneficial owners of the preferred shares represented by those ADSs. Deposits and withdrawals of preferred shares in exchange for ADSs will not result in the realization of gain or loss for U.S. federal income tax purposes.

The U.S. Treasury Department has expressed concerns that parties to whom depositary shares such as the ADSs are released may be taking actions that are inconsistent with the claiming of foreign tax credits by U.S. Holders of the ADSs. Such actions would also be inconsistent with the claiming of the reduced rate of tax, described below, applicable to dividends received by certain non-corporate holders. Accordingly, the analysis of the creditability of Brazilian taxes and the availability of the reduced tax rate for dividends received by certain non-corporate holders, each described below, could be affected by future actions taken by the U.S. Treasury.

Taxation of Dividends

Distributions made by us of cash or property (including distributions of interest on capital) generally will constitute a taxable dividend to the extent paid out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits, as determined under U.S. federal income tax principles. The full amount of any dividend paid in respect of our preferred shares or ADSs (including the amount of Brazilian withholding taxes imposed on such dividend) will be included in the gross income of a U.S. Holder, as ordinary income from sources outside the United States, at the time that the dividend is received by the U.S. Holder, in the case of our preferred shares, or by the depositary, in the case of ADSs. If a distribution made by us exceeds our current and accumulated earnings and profits, as determined under U.S. federal income tax principles, such excess will be treated first as a nontaxable return of capital to the extent of the U.S. Holder's adjusted tax basis in our preferred shares or ADSs, and thereafter as capital gain.

The amount of any dividend paid in *reais* generally will be measured by reference to the spot rate for converting *reais* into U.S. dollars in effect on the date that the dividend is received by the U.S. Holder, in the case of our preferred shares, or by the depositary, in the case of ADSs. A U.S. Holder may recognize foreign currency gain or loss, which would be treated as ordinary gain or loss, upon a subsequent conversion of *reais* into U.S. dollars. U.S. Holders should consult their own tax advisors regarding the calculation and U.S. federal income tax treatment of foreign currency gain or loss. The amount of any distribution of property other than cash will be the fair market value of such property on the date of distribution. Dividends paid by us will not be eligible for the dividends received deduction allowed to corporations under the Code. The amount of a dividend will include any amounts withheld by us or our paying agent in respect of Brazilian taxes. Dividends paid by us will be treated as foreign source dividend income to you and will not be eligible for the dividends received deduction generally allowed to U.S. corporations under the Code.

Subject to certain exceptions for short-term and hedged positions, and subject to the discussion above regarding concerns expressed by the U.S. Treasury, the U.S. dollar amount of dividends received by an individual prior to January 1, 2009 with respect to the ADSs will be subject to taxation at a maximum rate of 15% if the dividends represent "qualified dividend income." Dividends paid on the ADSs will be treated as qualified dividend income if (i) the ADSs are readily tradable on an established securities market in the United States and (ii) we were not in the year prior to the year in which the dividend was paid, and are not in the year in which the dividend is paid, a passive foreign investment company ("PFIC"), foreign personal holding company ("FPHC") or foreign investment company ("FIC"). The ADSs are listed on the New York Stock Exchange, and may qualify as readily tradable on an established securities market in the United States so long as they are so listed. However, no assurances can be given that the ADSs will be or remain readily tradable.

Based on existing guidance, it is not entirely clear whether dividends received with respect to the preferred shares will be treated as qualified dividends, because the preferred shares are not themselves listed on a United States exchange. In addition, the United States Treasury Department has announced its intention to promulgate rules pursuant to which holders of ADSs or preferred stock and intermediaries through whom such securities are held will be permitted to rely on certifications from issuers to establish that dividends are treated as qualified dividends. Because such procedures have not yet been issued, we are not certain that we will be able to comply with them. U.S. Holders of ADSs and preferred shares should consult their own tax advisors regarding the availability of the reduced dividend tax rate in the light of their own particular circumstances.

Subject to certain limitations and restrictions, and subject to the discussion above regarding concerns expressed by the U.S. Treasury, a U.S. Holder will be entitled to a foreign tax credit against its U.S. federal income tax liability, or a deduction in computing its U.S. federal taxable income, for Brazilian income taxes withheld by us. The limitation on foreign taxes eligible for credit is determined separately with respect to specific classes of income. For this purpose,

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dividends paid by us with respect to our preferred shares or ADSs will generally constitute “passive income” or, in the case of certain U.S. Holders, “financial services income” from sources outside the United States. The rules relating to the calculation of foreign tax credits and the applicable limitations are complex. U.S. Holders should consult their own advisors concerning the implications of the foreign tax credit rules in light of their particular circumstances.

Taxation of Capital Gains or Losses

Upon a sale or other taxable disposition of preferred shares or ADSs, a U.S. Holder will recognize capital gain or loss for U.S. federal income tax purposes equal to the difference, if any, between the amount realized on the sale or other taxable disposition and the U.S. Holder’s adjusted tax basis in the preferred shares or ADSs. Such gain or loss will be capital gain or loss and will be long-term capital gain or loss if the U.S. Holder’s holding period in the preferred shares or ADSs exceeds one year at the time of the sale or other taxable disposition. Certain U.S. Holders (including individuals) may be eligible for preferential rates of U.S. federal income tax in respect of long-term capital gains. The deductibility of capital losses is subject to limitations under the Code.

Gain or loss derived from the sale or other disposition of our preferred shares or ADSs generally will be treated as U.S. source income or loss for foreign tax credit purposes. Consequently, if a Brazilian withholding tax is imposed on the sale or disposition of preferred shares or ADSs, and a U.S. Holder does not receive significant foreign source income from other sources, such U.S. Holder may not be able to derive effective U.S. foreign tax credit benefits in respect of such Brazilian withholding tax. If a Brazilian tax is withheld on the sale or disposition of preferred shares or ADSs, a U.S. Holder’s amount realized will include the gross amount of the proceeds of such sale or disposition before deduction of the Brazilian tax. See “–Brazilian Tax Considerations–Taxation of Gains” for a description of when a disposition may be subject to taxation by Brazil.

Passive Foreign Investment Company Rules

We believe that we will not be considered a “passive foreign investment company,” or PFIC, for U.S. federal income tax purposes. However, because the determination of whether the preferred shares or ADSs constitute shares of a PFIC will be based upon the composition of our income and assets, and entities in which we hold a 25% interest, from time to time, there can be no assurance that the preferred shares or ADSs will not be considered shares of a PFIC for any taxable year. If we were treated as a PFIC for any taxable year during which a U.S. Holder held a preferred share or ADS, certain adverse consequences could apply to the U.S. Holder, including the imposition of higher amounts of tax than would otherwise apply to a U.S. Holder and additional tax form filing requirements. U.S. Holders are urged to consult their tax advisors regarding the consequences to them if we were considered to be a PFIC, as well as the availability and advisability of making an election to avoid the adverse United States federal income tax consequences of PFIC status should we be classified as a PFIC for any taxable year. Moreover, dividends on our ADSs would no longer be “qualified dividend income” subject to preferential rates of U.S. federal income tax, as described above. Based on our operations and business plans, we do not believe that we are currently a PFIC and do not expect to become a PFIC in the foreseeable future.

Information Reporting and Backup Withholding

Payment of dividends and sales proceeds that are made within the United States or through certain U.S.-related financial intermediaries generally are subject to information reporting and to backup withholding unless (i) you are a corporation or other exempt recipient or (ii) in the case of backup withholding, you provide a correct taxpayer identification number and certify that you are not subject to backup withholding. Backup withholding is not an additional tax. The amount of any backup withholding from a payment to a U.S. Holder will be allowed as a credit against such U.S. Holder’s U.S. federal income tax liability, if any, and may entitle such U.S. Holder to a refund, provided that the required information is timely furnished to the IRS.

U.S. HOLDERS AND PROSPECTIVE PURCHASERS OF OUR PREFERRED SHARES OR ADSs SHOULD CONSULT THEIR OWN TAX ADVISORS AS TO THE BRAZILIAN, U.S. FEDERAL, STATE, LOCAL AND OTHER TAX CONSEQUENCES OF THE ACQUISITION, OWNERSHIP AND DISPOSITION OF OUR PREFERRED SHARES OR ADSs BASED UPON THEIR PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES.

F. Dividends and Paying Agents

Not applicable.