

Item 3.D. Risk Factors

You should carefully consider the risks described below.

The global economic downturn may adversely affect our business and performance. While the rate of deterioration of the global economy slowed in the second half of 2009 and the global economy showed some signs of stabilization and improvement in recent years, there can be no assurance that such recovery will continue.

Difficulties affecting the European Union and global financial sectors, adverse conditions and volatility in the European Union and worldwide credit and financial markets, fluctuations in oil and commodity prices and the general weakness of the European Union and global economy have increased the uncertainty of global economic prospects in general and have adversely affected the global and Korean economies. The global economic downturn in recent years had a pronounced negative effect on the global demand for steel products and their prices in 2008 and 2009. In addition, the level of trading activities between Korea and other countries tends to fluctuate based on general conditions in the Korean and global economies. While the rate of deterioration of the global economy slowed in the second half of 2009 and the global economy showed some signs of stabilization and improvement in recent years, the overall prospects for the Korean and global economy in 2013 and beyond remain uncertain.

In response to sluggish demand from our customers in industries adversely impacted by the deteriorating global economic conditions in the second half of 2008, such as the automotive and construction industries, we reduced our crude steel production and sales prices in December 2008 and the first quarter of 2009. Signs that the pace of deterioration in market conditions had slowed began to appear in the second quarter of 2009, however, and demand from certain segments of our customer base, including the domestic automotive and construction industries, showed signs of recovery starting in the second quarter of 2009. In response, we began to incrementally increase our crude steel production starting in April 2009 and our production level normalized in the second half of 2009. Our crude steel production decreased from 34.7 million tons in 2008 to 31.1 million tons in 2009, but rebounded to 35.4 million tons in 2010, 39.1 million tons in 2011 and 39.7 million tons in 2012. Prices of our steel products gradually recovered starting in the third quarter of 2009, but our export prices fell substantially in the second half of 2011 and decreased further in 2012 due to uncertainties in the global economy caused by financial difficulties affecting European countries including Greece, Spain, Portugal and Italy. Our domestic sales prices remained relatively stable in the second half of 2011 but decreased in 2012.

We believe that global demand for steel products will remain relatively weak in 2013, and we plan to decrease our steel production to approximately 37 million tons in 2013. We may decide to further adjust our future crude steel production or our sales prices on an on-going basis subject to market demand for our products, the production outlook of the global steel industry and global economic conditions in general. In addition, economic downturns in the Korean and global economies could result in market conditions characterized by weaker demand and falling prices for export and import products and reduced trade levels. Deterioration of market conditions may result in changes in assumptions underlying the carrying value of certain assets, which in turn could result in impairment of such assets, including intangible assets such as goodwill. We expect fluctuation in demand for our steel products and trading services to continue to prevail at least in the near future, which may adversely affect our business, results of operations or financial condition.

Korea is our most important market, and our current business and future growth could be materially and adversely affected if economic conditions in Korea deteriorate.

We are incorporated in Korea, and a substantial portion of our operations and assets are located in Korea. Korea is our most important market, accounting for 52.0% of our total revenue from steel products produced and sold by us in 2012. Domestic demand for our products is affected by the

Table of Contents

condition of major steel consuming industries, such as construction, shipbuilding, automotive, electrical appliances and downstream steel processors, and the Korean economy in general. In addition, the trading operations of Daewoo International Corporation ("Daewoo International"), our consolidated subsidiary in which we hold a 60.3% interest, are affected by the general level of trade between Korea and other countries, which in turn tends to fluctuate based on general conditions in the Korean and global economies. As a result, we are subject to political, economic, legal and regulatory risks specific to Korea.

The economic indicators in Korea in recent years have shown mixed signs, and future growth of the Korean economy is subject to many factors beyond our control, including developments in the global economy.

Due to recent liquidity and credit concerns and volatility in the global financial markets, the value of the Won relative to the Dollar and the stock prices of Korean companies have fluctuated significantly in recent years. In particular, there has been increased volatility following the downgrading by Standard & Poor's Rating Services of the long-term sovereign credit rating of the United States to "AA+" from "AAA" in August 2011 as well as increasing financial difficulties affecting European countries including Greece, Spain, Portugal and Italy, and the overall prospects for the Korean and global economies in 2013 and beyond remain uncertain. Any future deterioration of the Korean and global economies could adversely affect our business, results of operations and financial condition.

Developments that could have an adverse impact on Korea's economy include:

- difficulties in the financial sectors in Europe and elsewhere and increased sovereign default risks in select countries and the resulting adverse effects on the global financial markets;
- declines in consumer confidence and a slowdown in consumer spending;
- adverse changes or volatility in foreign currency reserve levels, commodity prices (including oil prices), exchange rates (including fluctuation of the Dollar, the Euro or the Yen exchange rates or revaluation of the Renminbi), interest rates, inflation rates or stock markets;
- continuing adverse conditions in the economies of countries and regions that are important export markets for Korea, such as the United States, Europe, Japan and China, or in emerging market economies in Asia or elsewhere;
- increasing delinquencies and credit defaults by retail and small- and medium-sized enterprise borrowers;
- the continued emergence of the Chinese economy, to the extent its benefits (such as increased exports to China) are outweighed by its costs (such as competition in export markets or for foreign investment and the relocation of the manufacturing base from Korea to China);
- the economic impact of any pending or future free trade agreements;
- social and labor unrest;
- substantial decreases in the market prices of Korean real estate;
- a decrease in tax revenues and a substantial increase in the Government's expenditures for fiscal stimulus measures, unemployment compensation and other economic and social programs that, together, would lead to an increased government budget deficit;
- financial problems or lack of progress in the restructuring of Korean conglomerates, other large troubled companies, their suppliers or the financial sector;
- loss of investor confidence arising from corporate accounting irregularities and corporate governance issues concerning certain Korean conglomerates;

- geo-political uncertainty and risk of further attacks by terrorist groups around the world;
- the occurrence of severe health epidemics in Korea and other parts of the world;
- deterioration in economic or diplomatic relations between Korea and its trading partners or allies, including deterioration resulting from trade disputes or disagreements in foreign policy;
- political uncertainty or increasing strife among or within political parties in Korea;
- hostilities or political or social tensions involving oil producing countries in the Middle East and North Africa and any material disruption in the global supply of oil or increase in the price of oil;
- the occurrence of severe earthquakes, tsunamis and other natural disasters in Korea and other parts of the world, particularly in trading partners (such as the March 2011 earthquake in Japan, which also resulted in the release of radioactive materials from a nuclear plant that had been damaged by the earthquake); and
- an increase in the level of tensions or an outbreak of hostilities between North Korea and Korea or the United States.

We rely on export sales for a significant portion of our total sales. Adverse economic and financial developments in Asia in the future may have an adverse effect on demand for our products in Asia and increase our foreign exchange risks.

Our export sales and overseas sales to customers abroad accounted for 48.0% of our total revenue from steel products produced and sold by us in 2012. Our export sales volume to customers in Asia, including China, Japan, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia, accounted for 69.7% of our total export sales revenue from steel products produced and exported by us in 2012, and we expect our sales to these countries, especially to China, to remain important in the future. Accordingly, adverse economic and financial developments in these countries may have an adverse effect on demand for our products. Economic weakness in Asia may also adversely affect our sales to the Korean companies that export to the region, especially companies in the construction, shipbuilding, automotive, electrical appliances and downstream steel processing industries. Weaker demand in these countries, combined with addition of new steel production capacity, particularly in China, may also reduce export prices in Dollar terms of our principal products. We attempt to maintain and expand our export sales to generate foreign currency receipts to cover our foreign currency purchases and debt service requirements. Consequently, any decrease in our export sales could also increase our foreign exchange risks.

Depreciation of the value of the Won against the Dollar and other major foreign currencies may have a material adverse effect on the results of our operations and on the price of the ADSS.

Our consolidated financial statements are prepared from our local currency denominated financial results, assets and liabilities and our subsidiaries around the world, which are then translated into Won. A substantial proportion of our consolidated financial results is accounted for in currencies other than the Won. Accordingly, our consolidated financial results and assets and liabilities may be materially affected by changes in the exchange rates of foreign currencies. In 2012, 48.0% of our total revenue from steel products produced and sold by us was in overseas markets outside of Korea. To the extent that we incur costs in one currency and make sales in another, our profit margins may be affected by changes in the exchange rates between the two currencies. Since the currency in which sales are recorded may not be the same as the currency in which expenses are incurred, foreign exchange rate fluctuations may materially affect our results of operations. Depreciation of the Won may materially affect the results of our operations because, among other things, it causes:

- an increase in the amount of Won required for us to make interest and principal payments on our foreign currency-denominated debt;

- an increase in Won terms in the costs of raw materials and equipment that we purchase from overseas sources and a substantial portion of our freight costs, which are denominated primarily in Dollars; and
- foreign exchange translation losses on liabilities, which lower our earnings for accounting purposes.

Appreciation of the Won against major currencies, on the other hand, causes:

- our export products to be less competitive by raising our prices in Dollar, Yen and Renminbi terms; and
- a reduction in net sales and accounts receivables in Won from export sales, which are primarily denominated in Dollars and to a lesser extent in Yen and Renminbi.

We strive to naturally offset our foreign exchange risk by matching foreign currency receivables with our foreign currency payables and our overseas subsidiaries have sought to further mitigate the adverse impact of exchange rate fluctuations by conducting business transactions in the local currency of the respective market in which the transactions occur. In particular, Daewoo International's exposure to fluctuations in exchange rates, including the Won/Dollar exchange rate, is limited because trading transactions typically involve matched purchase and sale contracts, which result in limited settlement exposure, and because Daewoo International's contracts with domestic suppliers of products for export and with domestic purchasers of imported products are generally denominated in Dollars. Although the impact of exchange rate fluctuations is partially mitigated by such strategies, we and our subsidiaries, particularly Daewoo International and POSCO Engineering & Construction Co., Ltd. ("POSCO E&C") also periodically enter into derivative contracts, primarily foreign currency swaps and forward exchange contracts, to further hedge our foreign exchange risks. However, our results of operations have historically been affected by exchange rate fluctuations and there can be no assurance that such strategies will be sufficient to reduce or eliminate the adverse impact of such fluctuations in the future. Because of the larger positive effects of the appreciation of the Won (i.e., the reverse of the negative effects caused by the depreciation of the Won, as discussed above), depreciation of the Won generally has a negative impact on our results of operations.

Fluctuations in the exchange rate between the Won and the Dollar will also affect the Dollar equivalent of the Won price of the shares of our common stock on the KRX KOSPI Market and, as a result, will likely affect the market price of the ADSs. These fluctuations will also affect the Dollar conversion by the depositary for the ADRs of cash dividends, if any, paid in Won on shares of common stock represented by the ADSs.

We are dependent on imported raw materials, and significant increases in market prices of essential raw materials could adversely affect our margins and profits.

We purchase substantially all of the principal raw materials we use from sources outside Korea, including iron ore and coal. POSCO imported approximately 51.0 million dry metric tons of iron ore and 27.4 million wet metric tons of coal in 2012. Iron ore is imported primarily from Australia, Brazil and South Africa. Coal is imported primarily from Australia, Canada and the United States. Although we have not experienced significant unanticipated supply disruptions in the past, supply disruptions, which could be caused by political or other events in the countries from which we import these materials, could adversely affect our operations.

In addition, we are particularly exposed to increases in the prices of coal, iron ore and nickel, which represent the largest components of our cost of goods sold. The prices of our key raw materials have fluctuated significantly in recent years. For example, the average market price of coal per wet metric ton (benchmark free on board price of Australian premium hard coking coal) was US\$191 in 2010, US\$289 in 2011 and US\$209 in 2012. The average market price of iron ore per dry metric ton

Table of Contents

(free on board price of Platts Iron Ore index with iron (Fe) 62% content) was US\$135 in 2010, US\$160 in 2011 and US\$122 in 2012. Our long-term supply contracts generally have terms of three to ten years and provide for periodic price adjustments to the then-market prices. We typically adjust the prices on a quarterly basis and maintain approximately one month of inventory of raw materials. Such price negotiations are driven by various factors, including the global economic outlook, global market prices of raw materials and steel products, supply and demand outlook of raw materials and production costs of raw materials. Typically, globally influenced buyers and sellers of raw materials determine benchmark prices of raw materials, based on which other buyers and sellers negotiate their prices after taking into consideration the quality of raw materials and other factors. In case of iron ore, if we fail to agree on the quarterly price adjustment within a predetermined deadline, the supplier and we typically agree on the purchase price based on the price formula that reflects the spot market price as well as the quality of iron ore and transportation expense. As of December 31, 2012, 217 million tons of iron ore and 27 million tons of coal remained to be purchased under long-term supply contracts. Future increases in prices of our key raw materials and our inability to pass along such increases to our customers could adversely affect our margins and profits. Increased prices may also cause potential customers to defer purchase of steel products, which would have an adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

We operate in the highly competitive steel, trading and constructing industries, and our failure to successfully compete would adversely affect our market position and business.

Steel. The markets for our steel products are highly competitive and we face intense global competition. In recent years, driven in part by strong growth in steel consumption in the developing world, particularly in China, the global steel industry has experienced renewed interest in expansion of steel production capacity. China is the largest steel producing country in the world by a significant margin, with the balance between its domestic production and demand being an important factor in the determination of global steel prices. In addition, the global steel industry has experienced consolidation in recent years, including through the merger of Mittal and Arcelor in 2006 that created a company with approximately 10% of global steel production capacity. Competition from global steel manufacturers with expanded production capacity such as ArcelorMittal S.A. and new market entrants, especially from China and India, have resulted in significant price competition and may result in declining margins and reductions in revenue. Our larger competitors may use their resources, which may be greater than ours, against us in a variety of ways, including by making additional acquisitions, investing more aggressively in product development and capacity and displacing demand for our export products.

The increased production capacity, combined with a decrease in demand due to the recent slowdown of the global economy, has resulted in production over-capacity in the global steel industry. Production over-capacity in the global steel industry may intensify if the slowdown of the global economy is prolonged or demand from developing countries that have experienced significant growth in the past several years does not meet the recent growth in production capacity. Production over-capacity in the global steel industry is likely to:

- reduce export prices in Dollar terms of our principal products, which in turn may reduce our sales prices in Korea;
- increase competition in the Korean market as foreign producers seek to export steel products to Korea as other markets experience a slowdown;
- negatively affect demand for our products abroad and our ability to expand export sales; and
- affect our ability to increase steel production in general.

Steel also competes with other natural and synthetic materials that may be used as steel substitutes, such as aluminum, cement, composites, glass, plastic and wood. Government regulatory

initiatives mandating the use of such materials instead of steel, whether for environmental or other reasons, as well as the development of attractive alternative substitutes for steel products, may reduce demand for steel products and increase competition in the global steel industry.

As part of our strategy to compete in this challenging landscape, we will continue to invest in developing innovative products that offer the greatest potential returns and enhance the overall quality of our products, as well as make additional investments in the development of new manufacturing technologies. However, there is no assurance that we will be able to continue to compete successfully in this economic environment or that the prolonged slowdown of the global economy or production over-capacity will not have a material adverse effect on our business, results of operations or financial condition.

Trading. Daewoo International competes principally with six other Korean general trading companies, each of which is affiliated with a major domestic business group, as well as global trading companies based in other countries. In the domestic market, competition for export transactions on behalf of domestic suppliers and import transactions on behalf of domestic purchasers was limited, as most affiliated general trading companies of large Korean business groups generally relied on affiliate transactions for the bulk of their trading business. However, in recent years, many of these Korean general trading companies have reduced their reliance on their affiliated business group and transactions carried out on behalf of their member companies and instead have generally evolved to focus on segments of the import and export markets in which they have a competitive advantage. As a result, competition among Korean general trading companies in the area of traditional trade has become more intense.

The overseas trading markets in which Daewoo International operates are also highly competitive. Daewoo International's principal competitors in the overseas trading markets include Korean trading companies that operate in various international markets, as well as foreign trading companies, particularly those based in Japan. As Daewoo International diversifies into businesses other than traditional trading such as natural resources development, it also increasingly competes with other Korean and international companies involved in these businesses. Some of Daewoo International's competitors may be more experienced and have greater financial resources and pricing flexibility than Daewoo International, as well as more extensive global networks and wider access to customers. There is no assurance that Daewoo International will be able to continue to compete successfully in this economic environment or that the prolonged slowdown of the global economy will not have a material adverse effect on its business, results of operations or financial condition.

Construction. POSCO E&C, our consolidated subsidiary in which we hold an 89.5% interest, operates in the highly competitive construction industry. Competition is based primarily on price, reputation for quality, reliability, punctuality and financial strength of contractors. Intense competition among construction companies may result in, among other things, a decrease in the price POSCO E&C can charge for its services, difficulty in winning bids for construction projects, an increase in construction costs and difficulty in obtaining high-quality contractors and qualified employees.

In Korea, POSCO E&C's main competition in the construction of residential and non-residential buildings, EPC (or engineering, procurement and construction) projects, urban planning and development projects and civil works projects consists of approximately ten major domestic construction companies, all of which are member companies of other large business groups in Korea and are capable of undertaking larger-scale, higher-value-added projects that offer greater potential returns. A series of measures introduced by the Government over the past few years to regulate housing prices in Korea, as well as an increasing popularity of low-bid contracts in civil works project mandates, have contributed to increased competition in the Korean construction industry in recent years.

Competition for new project awards in overseas markets is also intense. In these markets, POSCO E&C faces competition from local construction companies, as well as international construction companies from other countries, including other major Korean construction companies with overseas operations. Construction companies from developed countries may be more

experienced, have greater financial resources and possess more sophisticated technology than POSCO E&C, while construction companies from developing countries often have the advantage of lower wage costs. Some of these competitors have achieved higher market penetration than POSCO E&C has in specific markets in which it competes, and POSCO E&C may need to accept lower margins in order for it to compete successfully against them. POSCO E&C's failure to successfully compete in the domestic or overseas construction markets could adversely affect its market position and its results of operations and financial condition.

We may not be able to successfully execute our diversification strategy.

In part to prepare for the eventual maturation of the Korean steel market, our overall strategy includes securing new growth engines by diversifying into new businesses related to our steel operations that we believe will offer greater potential returns, such as participation in EPC projects in the steel sector and natural resources development, as well as entering into new businesses not related to our steel operations such as power generation and alternative energy solutions, production of comprehensive materials such as lithium, silicon, carbon and magnesium, information and technology consulting services, and automation and system integration engineering services. From time to time, we may selectively acquire or invest in companies to pursue such diversification strategy. For example, on September 20, 2010, we acquired a controlling interest in Daewoo International for Won 3.37 trillion. Daewoo International is a global trading company that primarily engages in trading of steel and raw materials as well as investing in energy and mineral development projects. It also manufactures and sells textiles, operates a department store in Korea.

The success of the overall diversification strategy will depend, in part, on our ability to realize the growth opportunities and anticipated synergies. The realization of the anticipated benefits depends on numerous factors, some of which are outside our control, including the availability of qualified personnel, establishment of new relationships and expansion of existing relationships with various customers and suppliers, procurement of necessary technology and know-how to engage in such businesses and access to investment capital at reasonable costs. The realization of the anticipated benefits may be impeded, delayed or reduced as a result of numerous factors, some of which are outside our control. These factors include:

- difficulties in integrating the operations of the acquired business, including information and accounting systems, personnel, policies and procedures, and in reorganizing or reducing overlapping operations, marketing networks and administrative functions, which may require significant amounts of time, financial resources and management attention;
- unforeseen contingent risks or latent liabilities relating to the acquisition that may become apparent in the future;
- difficulties in managing a larger business; and
- loss of key management personnel or customers.

Accordingly, we cannot assure you that our diversification strategy can be completed profitably or that the diversification efforts will not adversely affect our combined business, financial condition and results of operations.

Expansion of our production operations abroad is important to our long-term success, and our limited experience in the operation of our business outside Korea increases the risk that our international expansion efforts will not be successful.

We conduct international trading and construction operations abroad, and our business relies on a global trading network comprised of overseas subsidiaries, branches and representative offices. Although many of our subsidiaries and overseas branches are located in developed countries, we also

operate in numerous countries with developing economies. In addition, we intend to continue to expand our steel production operations internationally by carefully seeking out promising investment opportunities, particularly in China, India, Southeast Asia and Latin America, in part to prepare for the eventual maturation of the Korean steel market. We may enter into joint ventures with foreign steel producers that would enable us to rely on these businesses to conduct our operations, establish local networks and coordinate our sales and marketing efforts abroad. To the extent that we enter into these arrangements, our success will depend in part on the willingness of our partner companies to dedicate sufficient resources to their partnership with us.

In other situations, we may decide to establish manufacturing facilities by ourselves instead of relying on partners. The demand and market acceptance for our products produced abroad are subject to a high level of uncertainty and are substantially dependent upon the market condition of the global steel industry. We cannot assure you that our international expansion plan will be profitable or that we can recoup the costs related to such investments.

Expansion of our trading, construction and production operations abroad requires management attention and resources. In addition, we face additional risks associated with our expansion outside Korea, including:

- challenges caused by distance, language and cultural differences;
- higher costs associated with doing business internationally;
- legal and regulatory restrictions, including foreign exchange controls that might prevent us from repatriating cash earned in countries outside Korea;
- longer payment cycles in some countries;
- credit risk and higher levels of payment fraud;
- currency exchange risks;
- potentially adverse tax consequences;
- political and economic instability; and
- seasonal reductions in business activity during the summer months in some countries.

We may from time to time engage in acquisitions for which we may be required to seek additional sources of capital.

From time to time, we may selectively acquire or invest in companies or businesses that may complement our business. In order to finance these acquisitions, we intend to use cash on hand, funds from operations, issuances of equity and debt securities, and, if necessary, financings from banks and other sources as well as entering into consortiums with financial investors. However, no assurance can be given that we will be able to obtain sufficient financing for such acquisitions or investments on terms commercially acceptable to us or at all. We also cannot assure you that such financings and related debt payment obligations will not have a material adverse impact on our financial condition, results of operations or cash flow.

Further increases in, or new impositions of, anti-dumping or countervailing duty proceedings may have an adverse impact on our export sales.

We are subject to a number of anti-dumping duties in India, Russia, Indonesia, Australia and Malaysia and a number of anti-dumping investigations in Brazil, Australia, Thailand, Mexico and Taiwan. Our products that have been subject to anti-dumping or countervailing duty proceedings in the aggregate have not accounted for a material portion of our total sales in recent years. However, there

can be no assurance that increases in, or new impositions of, anti-dumping duties, countervailing duties, quotas or tariffs on our exports of products abroad may not have a material adverse impact on our exports in the future. See “Item 4. Information on the Company – Item 4.B. Business Overview – Markets – Exports.”

We participate in overseas natural resources exploration, development and production projects abroad, which expose us to various risks.

As part of consortia or through acquisitions of minority interests, we engage in overseas natural resources exploration, development and production projects in various locations, including a gas field exploration project in Myanmar, in which Daewoo International had invested approximately Won 1,126 billion as of December 31, 2012 and plans to make substantial further investments in the future. Daewoo International expects to generate revenue from the Myanmar gas field project starting in May 2013. We may also selectively acquire or invest in companies or businesses that engage in such activities. As part of our efforts to diversify our operations, we intend to continue to expand our operations by carefully seeking out promising exploration, development and production opportunities abroad. To the extent that we enter into these arrangements, our success in these endeavors will depend in part on the willingness of our partner companies to dedicate sufficient resources to their partnership with us.

The demand and market acceptance for such activities abroad are subject to a substantially higher level of uncertainty than our traditional steel business and are substantially dependent upon the market condition of the global natural resources industry as well as the political and social environment of the target countries. The performance of projects in which we participate may be adversely affected by the occurrence of military hostility, political unrest or acts of terrorism. In addition, some of our current exploration, development and production projects involve drilling exploratory wells on properties with no proven amount of natural resource reserves. Although all drilling, whether developmental or exploratory, involves risks, exploratory drilling involves greater risks of dry holes or failure to find commercial quantities of natural resources. We have limited experience in this business, and we cannot assure you that our overseas natural resources exploration, development and production projects will be profitable, that we will be able to meet the financing requirements for such projects, or that we can recoup the costs related to such investments, which in turn could materially and adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations.

We may encounter problems with joint overseas natural resources exploration, development and production projects and large-scale infrastructure projects, which may materially and adversely affect our business.

In recent years, we have begun to focus increasingly on overseas natural resources exploration, development and production projects. We typically pursue these natural resources exploration, development and production projects jointly with consortium partners or through acquisition of minority interests in such projects, and we expect to be involved in other joint projects in the future. We sometimes hold a majority interest in the projects among the consortium partners, but we often lack a controlling interest in the joint projects. Therefore, we may not be able to require that our joint ventures sell assets or return invested capital, make additional capital contributions or take any other action without the vote of at least a majority of our consortium partners. If there are disagreements between our consortium partners and us regarding the business and operations of the joint projects, we cannot assure you that we will be able to resolve them in a manner that will be in our best interests. Certain major decisions, such as selling a stake in the joint project, may require the consent of all other partners. These limitations may adversely affect our ability to obtain the economic and other benefits we seek from participating in these projects.

In addition, our consortium partners may:

- have economic or business interests or goals that are inconsistent with us;
- take actions contrary to our instructions, requests, policies or objectives;

- be unable or unwilling to fulfill their obligations;
- have financial difficulties; or
- have disputes with us as to their rights, responsibilities and obligations.

Any of these and other factors may have a material adverse effect on the performance of our joint projects and expose us to a number of risks, including the risk that the partners may be incapable of providing the required financial support to the partnerships and the risk that the partners may not be able to fulfill their other obligations, resulting in disputes not only between our partners and us, but also between the joint ventures and their customers. Such a material adverse effect on the performance of our joint projects may in turn materially and adversely affect our business, results of operations and financial condition.

Cyclical fluctuations based on macroeconomic factors may adversely affect POSCO E&C's business and performance.

In order to complement our steel operations, we engage in engineering and construction activities through POSCO E&C, an 89.5%-owned subsidiary. The construction segment, which accounted for approximately 7.4% of our consolidated sales in 2012 after adjusting for inter-company sales, is highly cyclical and tends to fluctuate based on macroeconomic factors, such as consumer confidence and income, employment levels, interest rates, inflation rates, demographic trends and policies of the Government. Although we believe that POSCO E&C's strategy of focusing on high-value-added plant construction and urban planning and development projects such as Songdo New City has enabled it to be exposed to a lesser degree to general economic conditions in Korea in comparison to some of its domestic competitors, our construction revenues have fluctuated in the past depending on the level of domestic construction activity including new construction orders. POSCO E&C's construction operations could suffer in the future in the event of a general downturn in the construction market resulting in weaker demand, which could adversely affect POSCO E&C's business, results of operations or financial condition.

Many of POSCO E&C's domestic and overseas construction projects are on a fixed-price basis, which could result in losses for us in the event that unforeseen additional expenses arise with respect to the project.

Many of POSCO E&C's domestic and overseas construction projects are carried out on a fixed-price basis according to a predetermined timetable, pursuant to the terms of a fixed-price contract. Under such fixed-price contracts, POSCO E&C retains all cost savings on completed contracts but is also liable for the full amount of all cost overruns and may be required to pay damages for late delivery. The pricing of fixed-price contracts is crucial to POSCO E&C's profitability, as is its ability to quantify risks to be borne by it and to provide for contingencies in the contract accordingly.

POSCO E&C attempts to anticipate costs of labor, raw materials, parts and components in its bids on fixed-price contracts. However, the costs incurred and gross profits realized on a fixed-price contract may vary from its estimates due to factors such as:

- unanticipated variations in labor and equipment productivity over the term of a contract;
- unanticipated increases in labor, raw material, parts and components, subcontracting and overhead costs, including as a result of bad weather;
- delivery delays and corrective measures for poor workmanship; and
- errors in estimates and bidding.

If unforeseen additional expenses arise over the course of a construction project, such expenses are usually borne by POSCO E&C, and its profit from the project will be correspondingly

reduced or eliminated. If POSCO E&C experiences significant unforeseen additional expenses with respect to its fixed price projects, it may incur losses on such projects, which could have a material adverse effect on its financial condition and results of operations.

POSCO E&C's domestic residential property business is highly dependent on the real estate market in Korea.

The performance of POSCO E&C's domestic residential property business is highly dependent on the general condition of the real estate market in Korea. The construction industry in Korea is experiencing a downturn due to excessive investment in recent years in residential property development projects, stagnation of real property prices and reduced demand for residential property, especially in areas outside of Seoul. In addition, as liquidity and credit concerns and volatility in the global financial markets increased significantly starting in September 2008, there has been a general decline in the willingness by banks and other financial institutions in Korea to engage in project financing and other lending activities to construction companies, which may adversely impact POSCO E&C's ability to meet its desired funding needs. The Government has taken measures to support the Korean construction industry, including easing of regulations imposed on redevelopment of apartment buildings and resale restrictions in the metropolitan areas, as well as reductions in property taxes. Although the Korean real estate market temporarily recovered in the second half of 2009 and into 2010, declines in demand and price took place in the Korean real estate market in 2011 and 2012 due to the downturn of the domestic economic cycle and financial risk in Europe, and the overall prospects for the Korean real estate market in 2013 and beyond remain uncertain.

We are subject to environmental regulations, and our operations could expose us to substantial liabilities.

We are subject to national and local environmental laws and regulations, including increasing pressure to reduce emission of carbon dioxide relating to our manufacturing process, and our steel manufacturing and construction operations could expose us to risk of substantial liability relating to environmental or health and safety issues, such as those resulting from discharge of pollutants and carbon dioxide into the environment, the handling, storage and disposal of solid or hazardous materials or wastes and the investigation and remediation of contaminated sites. We may be responsible for the investigation and remediation of environmental conditions at currently and formerly operated manufacturing or construction sites. We may also be subject to associated liabilities, including liabilities for natural resource damage, third party property damage or personal injury resulting from lawsuits brought by the Government or private litigants. In the course of our operations, hazardous wastes may be generated at third party-owned or operated sites, and hazardous wastes may be disposed of or treated at third party-owned or operated disposal sites. If those sites become contaminated, we could also be held responsible for the cost of investigation and remediation of such sites, for any associated natural resource damage, and for civil or criminal fines or penalties.

Failure to protect our intellectual property rights could impair our competitiveness and harm our business and future prospects.

We believe that developing new steel manufacturing technologies that can be differentiated from those of our competitors, such as FINEX, strip casting and silicon steel manufacturing technologies, is critical to the success of our business. We take active measures to obtain protection of our intellectual property by obtaining patents and undertaking monitoring activities in our major markets. However, we cannot assure you that the measures we are taking will effectively deter competitors from improper use of our proprietary technologies. Our competitors may misappropriate our intellectual property, disputes as to ownership of intellectual property may arise and our intellectual property may otherwise become known or independently developed by our competitors. Any failure to protect our intellectual property could impair our competitiveness and harm our business and future prospects.

We rely on trade secrets and other unpatented proprietary know-how to maintain our competitive position, and unauthorized disclosure of our trade secrets or other unpatented proprietary know-how could negatively affect our business.

We rely on trade secrets and unpatented proprietary know-how and information. We enter into confidentiality agreements with each of our employees and consultants upon the commencement of an employment or consulting relationship. These agreements generally provide that all inventions, ideas, discoveries, improvements and patentable material made or conceived by the individual arising out of the employment or consulting relationship and all confidential information developed or made known to the individual during the term of the relationship is our exclusive property. We cannot assure the enforceability of these types of agreements, or that they will not be breached. We also cannot be certain that we will have adequate remedies for any breach. The disclosure of our trade secrets or other know-how as a result of such a breach could adversely affect our business.

We face the risk of litigation proceedings relating to infringement of intellectual property rights of third parties, which, if determined adversely to us, could cause us to lose significant rights, pay significant damage awards or suspend the sale of certain products.

Our success depends largely on our ability to develop and use our technology and know-how in a proprietary manner without infringing the intellectual property rights of third parties. The validity and scope of claims relating to technology and patents involve complex scientific, legal and factual questions and analysis and, therefore, may be highly uncertain. In addition, because patent applications in many jurisdictions are kept confidential for an extended period before they are published, we may be unaware of other persons' pending patent applications that relate to our products or manufacturing processes. Accordingly, we face the risk of litigation proceedings relating to infringement of intellectual property rights of third parties. See "Item 8.A. Consolidated Statements and Other Financial Information – Legal Proceedings."

The plaintiffs in actions relating to infringement of intellectual property rights typically seek injunctions and substantial damages. Although patent and other intellectual property disputes are often settled through licensing or similar arrangements, there can be no assurance that such licenses can be obtained on acceptable terms or at all. Accordingly, regardless of the scope or validity of disputed patents or the merits of any patent infringement claims by potential or actual litigants, we may have to engage in protracted litigation. The defense and prosecution of intellectual property suits, patent opposition proceedings and related legal and administrative proceedings can be both costly and time consuming and may significantly divert the efforts and resources of our technical and management personnel. An adverse determination in any such litigation or proceedings could subject us to pay substantial damages to third parties, require us to seek licenses from third parties and pay ongoing royalties or redesign certain products, or subject us to injunctions prohibiting the manufacture and sale of our products or the use of technologies in certain jurisdictions. The occurrence of any of the foregoing could have a material adverse effect on our reputation, business, financial condition and results of operations.

Escalations in tensions with North Korea could have an adverse effect on us and the market value of our common shares and ADSs.

Relations between Korea and North Korea have been tense throughout Korea's modern history. The level of tension between the two Koreas has fluctuated and may increase abruptly as a result of future events. In particular, since the death of Kim Jong-il in December 2011, there has been increased uncertainty with respect to the future of North Korea's political leadership and concern regarding its implications for political and economic stability in the region. Although Kim Jong-il's third son, Kim Jong-eun, has assumed power as his father's designated successor, the long-term outcome of such leadership transition remains uncertain.

Table of Contents

In addition, there have been heightened security concerns in recent years stemming from North Korea's nuclear weapon and long-range missile programs as well as its hostile military and other actions against Korea. Some of the significant incidents in recent years include the following:

- In early April 2013, North Korea blocked access to the inter-Korean industrial complex in its border city of Gaeseong to South Koreans, while the U.S. deployed nuclear-capable stealth bombers and destroyers to Korean air and sea space.
- In late March 2013, North Korea stated that it had entered "a state of war" with Korea, declaring the 1953 armistice invalid, and put its artillery at the highest level of combat readiness to protest the Korea-United States allies' military drills and additional sanctions imposed on North Korea for its missile and nuclear tests.
- North Korea renounced its obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in January 2003 and conducted three rounds of nuclear tests between October 2006 to February 2013, which increased tensions in the region and elicited strong objections worldwide. In response, the United Nations Security Council unanimously passed resolutions that condemned North Korea for the nuclear tests and expanded sanctions against North Korea, most recently in March 2013.
- In December 2012, North Korea launched a satellite into orbit using a long-range rocket, despite concerns in the international community that such a launch would be in violation of the agreement with the United States as well as the United Nations Security Council resolutions that prohibit North Korea from conducting launches that use ballistic missile technology.
- In March 2010, a Korean naval vessel was destroyed by an underwater explosion, killing many of the crewmen on board. The Government formally accused North Korea of causing the sinking, while North Korea denied responsibility. Moreover, in November 2010, North Korea fired more than one hundred artillery shells that hit Korea's Yeonpyeong Island near the Northern Limit Line, which acts as the de facto maritime boundary between Korea and North Korea on the west coast of the Korean peninsula, causing casualties and significant property damage. The Government condemned North Korea for the attack and vowed stern retaliation should there be further provocation.

North Korea's economy also faces severe challenges. For example, in November 2009, the North Korean government redenominated its currency at a ratio of 100 to 1 as part of a currency reform undertaken in an attempt to control inflation and reduce income gaps. In tandem with the currency redenomination, the North Korean government banned the use or possession of foreign currency by its residents and closed down privately run markets, which led to severe inflation and food shortages. Such developments may further aggravate social and political tensions within North Korea.

There can be no assurance that the level of tension on the Korean peninsula will not escalate in the future. Any further increase in tensions, which may occur, for example, if North Korea experiences a leadership crisis, high-level contacts between Korea and North Korea break down or military hostilities occur, could have a material adverse effect on our business, results of operations and financial condition and the market value of our common shares and ADSs.

If you surrender your ADRs to withdraw shares of our common stock, you may not be allowed to deposit the shares again to obtain ADRs.

Under the deposit agreement, holders of shares of our common stock may deposit those shares with the ADR depository's custodian in Korea and obtain ADRs, and holders of ADRs may surrender ADRs to the ADR depository and receive shares of our common stock. However, under current Korean laws and regulations, the depository bank is required to obtain our prior consent for the number of

shares to be deposited in any given proposed deposit that exceeds the difference between (i) the aggregate number of shares deposited by us for the issuance of ADSs (including deposits in connection with the initial and all subsequent offerings of ADSs and stock dividends or other distributions related to these ADSs) and (ii) the number of shares on deposit with the depository bank at the time of such proposed deposit. It is possible that we may not give the consent. As a result, if you surrender ADRs and withdraw shares of common stock, you may not be able to deposit the shares again to obtain ADRs. See “Item 10. Additional Information – Item 10.D. Exchange Controls.”

You may not be able to exercise preemptive rights for additional shares of common stock and may suffer dilution of your equity interest in us.

The Commercial Code and our articles of incorporation require us, with some exceptions, to offer shareholders the right to subscribe for new shares in proportion to their existing ownership percentage whenever new shares are issued. If we issue new shares to persons other than our shareholders (See “Item 10.B. Memorandum and Articles of Association – Preemptive Rights and Issuance of Additional Shares”), a holder of our ADSs will experience dilution of such holding. If none of these exceptions is available, we will be required to grant preemptive rights when issuing additional common shares under Korean law. Under the deposit agreement governing the ADSs, if we offer any rights to subscribe for additional shares of our common stock or any rights of any other nature, the ADR depository, after consultation with us, may make the rights available to you or use reasonable efforts to dispose of the rights on your behalf and make the net proceeds available to you. The ADR depository, however, is not required to make available to you any rights to purchase any additional shares unless it deems that doing so is lawful and feasible and:

- a registration statement filed by us under the Securities Act is in effect with respect to those shares; or
- the offering and sale of those shares is exempt from or is not subject to the registration requirements of the Securities Act.

We are under no obligation to file any registration statement under the Securities Act to enable you to exercise preemptive rights in respect of the common shares underlying the ADSs, and we cannot assure you that any registration statement would be filed or that an exemption from the registration requirement under the Securities Act would be available. Accordingly, if a registration statement is required for you to exercise preemptive rights but is not filed by us, you will not be able to exercise your preemptive rights for additional shares and may suffer dilution of your equity interest in us.

U.S. investors may have difficulty enforcing civil liabilities against us and our directors and senior management.

We are incorporated in Korea with our principal executive offices located in Seoul. The majority of our directors and senior management are residents of jurisdictions outside the United States, and the majority of our assets and the assets of such persons are located outside the United States. As a result, U.S. investors may find it difficult to effect service of process within the United States upon us or such persons or to enforce outside the United States judgments obtained against us or such persons in U.S. courts, including actions predicated upon the civil liability provisions of the U.S. federal securities laws. It may also be difficult for an investor to enforce in U.S. courts judgments obtained against us or such persons in courts in jurisdictions outside the United States, including actions predicated upon the civil liability provisions of the U.S. federal securities laws. It may also be difficult for a U.S. investor to bring an action in a Korean court predicated upon the civil liability provisions of the U.S. federal securities laws against our directors and senior management and non-U.S. experts named in this annual report.

We could be adversely affected if the U.S. government were to determine that our affiliate's Iran-related business activities are sanctionable under the U.S. Iranian sanction laws and regulations.

We acquired a controlling interest in Sungjin Geotec Co., Ltd. ("Sungjin Geotec"), a manufacturer of specialized equipment used in the power and energy industries in May 2010, and we currently hold a 33.0% interest in the company. In recent years, Sungjin Geotec entered into contracts with various suppliers to supply equipment for the development of natural gas fields in Iran, including natural gas fields located in South Pars that is led by Pars Oil and Gas Company, a subsidiary of National Iranian Oil Company. Sungjin Geotec recognized revenues of approximately Won 27 billion in 2010, Won 240 billion in 2011 and Won 134 billion in 2012, and net profits of approximately Won 1 billion in 2010, Won 15 billion in 2011 and Won 25 billion in 2012 related to such activities. Sungjin Geotec has completed or terminated all of its remaining outstanding supply contracts to sell equipment for the development of natural gas fields in Iran, and it does not plan to engage in any sale of equipment in Iran related to the country's development of petroleum resources in the future.

In July 2010, the United States adopted legislation that expands U.S. economic sanctions against foreign companies doing business with Iran in certain sectors. The Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (the "CISADA") expands the scope of sanctionable activities by, among other things, broadening the definition of "investment" under the Iran Sanctions Act (the "ISA") arguably to include the supply of goods for use in petroleum and gas production. The CISADA also expands the severity of potential sanctions available under the ISA and imposes mandatory investigation and reporting requirements designed to increase the likelihood of enforcement. The CISADA requires the imposition of sanctions against parties found by the U.S. administration, following an investigation, to have engaged in conduct sanctionable under the ISA, subject to certain waiver provisions and exceptions.

Under the ISA, as amended, sanctions can also be imposed against a company that has actual knowledge of, or should have known of, sanctionable conduct engaged in by another company that it owns or controls. A range of sanctions may be imposed on companies that engage in sanctionable activities, including among other things the blocking of any property subject to U.S. jurisdiction in which the sanctioned company has an interest, which could include a prohibition on transactions or dealings involving securities of the sanctioned company. By its terms, the CISADA is applicable to certain investments in Iran that commenced on or after July 1, 2010.

There can be no assurance that Sungjin Geotec's Iran-related business activities do not constitute sanctionable activities or that we will not be subjected to sanctions under the ISA as amended by the CISADA. Our business and reputation could be adversely affected if the U.S. government were to determine that Sungjin Geotec's Iran-related business activities constitute sanctionable activity attributable to us. Investors in our securities may also be adversely affected if we are sanctioned under the CISADA or if their investment in the securities is restricted under any sanctions regimes with which the investors are required to comply. As noted above, sanctions under the ISA could include the blocking of any property in which we have an interest, which would effectively prohibit all U.S. persons from receiving any payments from us, or otherwise acquiring, holding, withholding, using, transferring, withdrawing, transporting, importing, or exporting any property in which we have any interest.

We expect to continue operations and investments relating to countries targeted by United States and European Union economic sanctions.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control, or "OFAC," enforces certain laws and regulations ("OFAC Sanctions") that impose restrictions upon U.S. persons and, in some instances, foreign entities owned or controlled by U.S. persons, with respect to activities or transactions with certain countries, governments, entities and individuals that are the subject of OFAC

Table of Contents

Sanctions ("U.S. Sanctions Targets"). U.S. persons are also generally strictly prohibited from facilitating such activities or transactions. Similarly, the European Union enforces certain laws and regulations ("E.U. Sanctions") that impose restrictions upon nationals of E.U. member states, persons located within E.U. member states, entities incorporated or constituted under the law of an E.U. member state, or business conducted in whole or in part in E.U. member states with respect to activities or transactions with certain countries, governments, entities and individuals that are the subject of E.U. Sanctions ("E.U. Sanctions Targets" and together with U.S. Sanctions Targets, "Sanctions Targets"). E.U. persons are also generally prohibited from activities that promote such activities or transactions.

We engage in limited business activities in countries that are deemed Sanctions Targets, including Iran, Syria and Sudan. We produce and export, typically through our sales subsidiaries, steel products to such countries, including automotive steel sheets and other steel materials to Iranian entities. Our subsidiaries also engage in limited business activities in countries that are deemed Sanctions Targets. In particular, Daewoo International, a global trading company in which we hold a 60.3% interest, engages in the trading of steel, raw materials and other items with entities in countries that are deemed Sanctions Targets, including Iran and Sudan. Our activities and investments do not involve any U.S. goods or services, and we do not export or re-export U.S. goods or services directly or indirectly to any Sanctions Target. Our activities and investments in Iran, Syria and Sudan accounted for approximately 1.7% of our consolidated revenues in 2010, 3.4% in 2011 and 1.4% in 2012.

We expect to continue to engage in business activities and make investments in countries that are deemed Sanctions Targets over the foreseeable future. Although we believe that OFAC Sanctions under their current terms are not applicable to our current activities, our reputation may be adversely affected, some of our U.S. investors may be required to divest their investments in us under the laws of certain U.S. states or under internal investment policies or may decide for reputational reasons to divest such investments. We are aware of initiatives by U.S. governmental entities and U.S. institutional investors, such as pension funds, to adopt or consider adopting laws, regulations, or policies prohibiting transactions with or investment in, or requiring divestment from, entities doing business with countries identified as state sponsors of terrorism. We cannot assure you that the foregoing will not occur or that such occurrence will not have a material adverse effect on the value of our securities.

This annual report contains "forward-looking statements" that are subject to various risks and uncertainties.

This annual report contains "forward-looking statements" that are based on our current expectations, assumptions, estimates and projections about our company and our industry. The forward-looking statements are subject to various risks and uncertainties. Generally, these forward-looking statements can be identified by the use of forward-looking terminology such as "anticipate," "believe," "estimate," "expect," "intend," "project," "should," and similar expressions. Those statements include, among other things, the discussions of our business strategy and expectations concerning our market position, future operations, margins, profitability, liquidity and capital resources. We caution you that reliance on any forward-looking statement involves risks and uncertainties, and that although we believe that the assumptions on which our forward-looking statements are based are reasonable, any of those assumptions could prove to be inaccurate, and, as a result, the forward-looking statements based on those assumptions could be incorrect. The uncertainties in this regard include, but are not limited to, those identified in the risk factors discussed above. In light of these and other uncertainties, you should not conclude that we will necessarily achieve any plans and objectives or projected financial results referred to in any of the forward-looking statements. We do not undertake to release the results of any revisions of these forward-looking statements to reflect future events or circumstances.