

*Direct investments in Argentina of non-Argentine residents*

Non-Argentine residents are compelled to comply with the reporting regime if the value of their investments in Argentina reaches or surpasses the equivalent of US\$ 500,000 – measured in terms of the net worth of the company in which they participate or fiscal value of the real estate owned. If the investments do not reach such amount, the compliance with such regime is optional.

According to Communication “A” 4237, companies in which non-Argentine residents participate in and administrators of real estate pertaining to non-Argentine residents are those obliged to comply with the reporting regime.

*Direct investments made abroad by Argentine residents*

Argentine investors are compelled to comply with the reporting regime if the value of their investments abroad reaches or surpasses the equivalent of US\$ 1,000,000 – measured in terms of net worth of the company in which they participate or the fiscal value of the real estate they own.

If the value of those investments abroad does not exceed the equivalent of US\$ 5,000,000, the declaration could be carried out annually instead of semiannually. If the investments do not reach the equivalent of US\$ 1,000,000, the compliance with such regime is optional.

The first declarations will correspond to the semester ended on December 31, 2004, and will have to be filed within 90 calendar days as of such date.

*Conclusions:*

While the foreign exchange market system in Argentina has become increasingly flexible under recent regulations, Decree No. 616/05 severely deters short term inflows of foreign currency which are presumed to be of a speculative nature. Such determination on the part of the government is associated also to another short term economic policy goal and combined measures aimed at pegging or reasonably adjusting the United States Dollar value around Ps. 3.10 per U.S. Dollar. We cannot assess whether these policies will be maintained in the longer run and how changes made therein may affect the economy and our business perspectives. Furthermore, we cannot predict how changes in the evolution of the world economy and commodity prices which constitutes an important part of Argentina’s exports may influence exchange rates and control policies. Moreover, failure of the government to comply with financial commitments with the IMF or failure to reach an agreement with said institution may have an impact on the foreign exchange system. No assurance can be made as to the extent to which all such factors may lead to future restrictions that might further tighten foreign exchange controls or otherwise change the current foreign exchange system.

**E. TAXATION**

**United States Taxation**

The following summary describes the material United States federal income tax consequences of the ownership of shares and ADSs as of the date hereof. The discussion set forth below is applicable to U.S. Holders (as defined below). Except where noted, this discussion deals only with

U.S. Holders that hold the shares or ADSs as capital assets. This summary does not represent a detailed description of the United States federal income tax consequences applicable to you if you are subject to special treatment under the United States federal income tax laws, including if you are:

- a bank;
- a dealer in securities or currencies;
- a financial institution;
- a regulated investment company;
- a real estate investment trust;
- an insurance company;
- a tax exempt organization;
- a person holding the shares or ADSs as part of a hedging, integrated or conversion transaction, constructive sale or straddle;
- a trader in securities that has elected the mark-to-market method of accounting for your securities;
- a person liable for alternative minimum tax;
- a person who owns 10% or more of the voting stock of our company;
- a partnership or other pass-through entity for United States federal income tax purposes; or
- a person whose “functional currency” is not the U.S. Dollar.

Furthermore, the discussion below is based upon the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the “Code”), and regulations, rulings and judicial decisions thereunder as of the date hereof, and such authorities may be replaced, revoked or modified so as to result in federal income tax consequences different from those discussed below. In addition, this summary is based, in part, upon representations made by the depositary (the “Depositary”) to us and assumes that the deposit agreement governing the ADSs, and all other related agreements, will be performed in accordance with their terms.

**IF YOU ARE CONSIDERING THE PURCHASE, OWNERSHIP OR DISPOSITION OF SHARES OR ADSS YOU SHOULD CONSULT YOUR OWN TAX ADVISOR CONCERNING THE UNITED STATES FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES TO YOU AS WELL AS ANY CONSEQUENCES ARISING UNDER THE LAWS OF ANY OTHER TAXING JURISDICTION.**

“U.S. Holder” means a beneficial owner of a share, or ADS that is for United States federal income tax purposes:

- an individual citizen or resident of the United States;

- a corporation created or organized in or under the laws of the United States or any political subdivision of the United States;
- an estate the income of which is subject to United States federal income taxation regardless of its source; or
- a trust if it (1) is subject to the primary supervision of a court within the United States and one or more United States persons has authority to control all substantial decisions of the trust or (2) has a valid election in effect under applicable United States Treasury regulations to be treated as a United States person.

If a partnership holds shares or ADSs, the tax treatment of a partner will generally depend on the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. If you are a partner of a partnership holding shares or ADSs, you should consult your tax advisors.

#### **ADSs**

In general, for United States federal income tax purposes, U.S. Holders of ADSs will be treated as the owners of the underlying shares that are represented by the ADSs. However, the United States Treasury has expressed concerns that intermediaries in the chain of ownership between the holder of an ADS and the issuer of the security underlying the ADS may be taking actions that are inconsistent with the claiming of foreign tax credits by the holders of 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 Argentine taxes and the availability of the reduced tax rate for dividends received by certain non-corporate U.S. Holders, each discussed below, could be affected by actions taken by intermediaries in the chain of ownership between the holder of an ADS and our company. Deposits or withdrawals of shares by U.S. Holders for ADSs will not be subject to United States federal income tax.

#### **Distributions on Shares or ADSs**

Subject to the discussion under “Passive Foreign Investment Company Rules” below, the gross amount of distributions on the shares or ADSs, (including amounts withheld to reflect Argentine withholding taxes, if any) will be taxable as dividends to the extent paid out of our current and accumulated earnings and profits (as determined under United States federal income tax principles). Such income (including withheld taxes) will be includable in your gross income as ordinary income on the day actually or constructively received by you, in the case of shares, or by the Depositary, in the case of ADSs. Such dividends will not be eligible for the dividends-received deduction allowed to corporations under the Code.

With respect to non-corporate United States investors, certain dividends received before January 1, 2011 from a qualified foreign corporation may be subject to reduced rates of taxation. A foreign corporation is treated as a qualified foreign corporation with respect to dividends received from that corporation on shares (or ADSs backed by such shares) that are readily tradable on an established securities market in the United States. United States Treasury Department guidance indicates that our ADSs (which are listed on the NASDAQ National Market), but not our shares, are readily tradable on an established securities market in the United States. Thus, we do not believe

that dividends that we pay on our shares that are not backed by ADSs currently meet the conditions required for these reduced tax rates. There can be no assurance that our ADSs will be considered readily tradable on an established securities market in later years. Non-corporate holders that do not meet a minimum holding period requirement during which they are not protected from the risk of loss or that elect to treat the dividend income as “investment income” pursuant to Section 163(d)(4) of the Code will not be eligible for the reduced rates of taxation regardless of our status as a qualified foreign corporation. In addition, the rate reduction will not apply to dividends if the recipient of a dividend is obligated to make related payments with respect to positions in substantially similar or related property. This disallowance applies even if the minimum holding period has been met.

The amount of any dividend paid in Pesos will equal the U.S. Dollar value of the Pesos received calculated by reference to the exchange rate in effect on the date the dividend is actually or constructively received by you in the case of shares, or by the Depositary, in the case of ADSs, regardless of whether the Pesos are converted into U.S. Dollars. If the Pesos received are not converted into U.S. Dollars on the day of receipt, you will have a basis in the Pesos equal to their U.S. Dollar value on the date of receipt. Any gain or loss you realize on a subsequent conversion or other disposition of the Pesos will be treated as United States source ordinary income or loss.

Subject to certain significant conditions and limitations, Argentine tax withheld from dividends, if any, may be treated as foreign income tax eligible for credit or deduction against your United States federal income tax liability. For purposes of the foreign tax credit, dividends paid on the shares or ADSs will be treated as income from sources outside the United States and will generally constitute passive income. Further, in certain circumstances, if you:

- have held ADSs or shares for less than a specified minimum period during which you are not protected from risk of loss, or
- are obligated to make payments related to the dividends,

you will not be allowed a foreign tax credit for foreign taxes imposed on dividends paid on ADSs or shares. The rules governing the foreign tax credit are complex. Investors are urged to consult their tax advisors regarding the availability of the foreign tax credit under their particular circumstances.

To the extent that the amount of any distribution exceeds our current and accumulated earnings and profits for a taxable year, as determined under United States federal income tax principles, the distribution will first be treated as a tax-free return of capital, causing a reduction in the adjusted basis of the ADSs or shares (thereby increasing the amount of gain, or decreasing the amount of loss, to be recognized by you on a subsequent disposition of the ADSs or shares), and the balance in excess of adjusted basis will be taxed as capital gain recognized on a sale or exchange. Consequently, such distributions in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits would generally not give rise to foreign source income and you would generally not be able to use the foreign tax credit arising from any Argentine withholding tax imposed on such distributions unless such credit can be applied (subject to applicable limitations) against United States federal income tax due on other foreign source income in the appropriate category for foreign tax credit purposes. However, we do not expect to keep earnings and profits in accordance with United States federal income tax principles. Therefore, you should expect that a distribution will generally be treated as a dividend (as discussed above).

### ***Taxation of Capital Gains***

Subject to the discussion under “Passive Foreign Investment Company Rules” below, upon the sale, exchange or other disposition of shares or ADSs, you generally will recognize capital gain or loss equal to the difference between the U.S. Dollar value of the amount realized upon the sale, exchange or other disposition and the adjusted tax basis of the shares or ADSs, determined in U.S. Dollars. The capital gain or loss will be long-term capital gain or loss if at the time of sale, exchange or other disposition you have held the shares or ADSs for more than one year. Capital gains of individuals derived with respect to capital assets held for more than one year are eligible for reduced rates of taxation. The deductibility of capital losses is subject to limitations. Any gain or loss you recognize will generally be treated as United States source gain or loss. Consequently, you may not be able to use the foreign tax credit arising from any Argentine tax imposed on the disposition of an ADS or share unless such credit can be applied (subject to applicable limitations) against tax due on other income treated as derived from foreign sources.

### ***Passive Foreign Investment Company Rules***

Although it is an inherently uncertain factual issue, we may be a PFIC for the current or future taxable years.

In general, we will be a PFIC for any taxable year in which, either (i) at least 75% of the gross income of our company for the taxable year is passive income or (ii) at least 50% of the value (determined on the basis of a quarterly average) of our assets is attributable to assets that produce or are held for the production of passive income. For this purpose, passive income generally includes dividends, interest, royalties, rents (other than rents and royalties derived in the active conduct of a trade or business and not derived from a related person), annuities and gains from assets that produce passive income. If we own at least 25% by value of the stock of another corporation, we will be treated for purposes of the PFIC tests as owning a proportionate share of the assets of the other corporation, and as receiving directly a proportionate share of the other corporation’s income.

The determination of whether we are a PFIC is made annually. If we are a PFIC for any taxable year during which you hold shares or ADSs in our company, unless you make the mark-to-market election discussed below, you will be subject to special tax rules discussed below.

If we are a PFIC for any taxable year during which you hold our shares or ADSs, you will be subject to special tax rules with respect to any “excess distribution” received and any gain realized from a sale or other disposition, including a pledge, of such shares or ADSs. Distributions received in a taxable year that are greater than 125% of the average annual distributions received during the shorter of the three preceding taxable years or your holding period for the equity interests will be treated as excess distributions. Under these special tax rules (i) the excess distribution or gain will be allocated ratably over your holding period for the equity interests, (ii) the amount allocated to the current taxable year, and any taxable year prior to the first taxable year in which we were a PFIC, will be treated as ordinary income, and (iii) the amount allocated to each other year will be subject to tax at the highest tax rate in effect for that year and the interest charge generally applicable to underpayments of tax will be imposed on the resulting tax attributable to each such year.

In certain circumstances, in lieu of being subject to the excess distribution rules discussed above, you may make an election to include gain on the stock of a PFIC as ordinary income under a mark-to-market method provided that such stock is regularly traded on a qualified exchange. Under current law, the mark-to-market election is only available for stock traded on certain designated United States exchanges and foreign exchanges which meet certain trading, listing, financial

disclosure and other requirements to be treated as a qualified exchange under applicable United States Treasury regulations. Consequently, the mark-to-market election may be available to you with respect to the ADSs because the ADSs will be listed on the Nasdaq, which constitutes a qualified exchange under the regulations, although there can be no assurance that the ADSs will be regularly traded. You should note that only the ADSs and not the shares are listed on the Nasdaq. The shares are listed on the *Bolsa de Comercio de Buenos Aires*. Consequently, the *Bolsa de Comercio de Buenos Aires* would need to meet the trading, listing, financial disclosure and other requirements of the United States Treasury regulations. The ADSs or shares would need to be regularly traded on such exchanges in order for the ADSs or shares to be potentially eligible for the mark-to-market election.

If we are a PFIC in any taxable year in which you hold our shares or ADSs, but you do not make a mark-to-market election until a subsequent taxable year, you will be subject to special rules in the taxable year of the election. You should consult your own tax advisors regarding the application of the mark-to-market election in your particular situation.

If you make an effective mark-to-market election, you will include in income each year as ordinary income, rather than capital gain, the excess, if any, of the fair market value of your PFIC shares or ADSs at the end of the taxable year over your adjusted tax basis in the shares or ADSs and will be permitted an ordinary loss in respect of the excess, if any, of the adjusted basis of such shares or ADSs over their fair market value at the end of the taxable year, but only to the extent of the net amount previously included in income as a result of the mark-to-market election. Your basis in the shares or ADSs will be adjusted to reflect any such income or loss amounts. Any gain or loss on the sale of the shares or ADSs will be ordinary income or loss, except that such loss will be ordinary loss only to the extent of the previously included net mark-to-market gain.

If you make a mark-to-market election it will be effective for the taxable year for which the election is made and all subsequent taxable years unless the shares or ADSs are no longer regularly traded on a qualified securities exchange or the IRS consents to the revocation of the election. Under proposed Treasury regulations, mark-to-market inclusions and deductions will be suspended during taxable years in which are not a PFIC, but would resume if they subsequently become a PFIC. You are urged to consult your own tax advisor about the availability of making such a mark-to-market election.

Alternatively, a United States Holder of shares or ADSs in a PFIC can sometimes avoid the rules described above by electing to treat the company as a “qualified electing fund” under section 1295 of the Code. This option is not available to you because we do not intend to comply with the requirements necessary to permit you to make this election.

A United States Holder who owns shares or ADSs during any year that we are a PFIC must file IRS Form 8621.

You should consult your own tax advisors concerning the United States federal income tax consequences of holding the shares or ADSs if we are considered a PFIC in any taxable year.

#### **Argentine Personal Assets Taxes**

Amounts paid on account of the Argentine Personal Assets Taxes, if any, will not be eligible as a credit against your United States federal income tax liability, but may be deductible subject to applicable limitations in the Code.

***Information Reporting and Backup Withholding***

In general, information reporting requirements will apply to distributions on shares or ADSs and to the proceeds of sale of a share or ADS paid to you within the United States (and in certain cases, outside the United States), unless you are an exempt recipient (such as a corporation). Backup withholding may apply to such payments if you fail to provide a correct taxpayer identification number or certification of foreign or other exempt status or fail to report in full dividend and interest income.

Any amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules will be allowed as a refund or a credit against your United States federal income tax liability provided you furnish the required information to the IRS.

***Argentine Taxation***

The following discussion is a summary of certain Argentine tax considerations associated with an investment in, ownership or disposition of, the shares or the ADSs by (i) an individual holder that is resident in Argentina, (ii) an individual holder that is neither domiciled nor resident in Argentina, (iii) a legal entity organized under the laws of Argentina and (iv) a legal entity that is not organized under the laws of Argentina, that does not have a permanent establishment in Argentina and is not otherwise doing business in Argentina on a regular basis. The discussion is for general information only and is based on current Argentine tax laws. Moreover, while this summary is considered to be a correct interpretation of existing laws in force as of the date of this 20-F Form, no assurance can be given that the courts or administrative authorities responsible for the administration of such laws will agree with this interpretation or that changes in such laws or interpretations will not occur. **PROSPECTIVE INVESTORS ARE URGED TO CONSULT THEIR OWN TAX ADVISOR REGARDING THE PARTICULAR TAX CONSEQUENCES ARISING UNDER ANY TAXING JURISDICTION.**

***Taxation of Dividends***

Dividends, either in cash, shares or kind approved by our shareholders are currently exempt from Argentine withholding or other taxes.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, according to Argentine law, income tax will be applied to the amount of dividends distributed in excess of a company's net taxable income determined in accordance with general income tax regulations for the fiscal years preceding the date of the distribution of such dividends. The legislation requires that companies withhold 35% of the amount of distributed dividends in excess of the net taxable income of such distribution, as determined in accordance with the income tax law. The withholding would not be applied to the payment of future dividends derived out of retained earnings obtained in the fiscal years ended prior to December 30, 1998. Dividends distributed by an Argentine company are not subject to this tax to the extent that those dividends arise from dividend income or other distributions received by such company from other Argentine companies.

***Taxation of Capital Gains***

Due to certain amendments made to the Argentine Income Tax Law, it is not entirely clear whether certain amendments concerning payment of income tax on capital gains arising from the sale, exchange or other disposition of shares are in effect or not. Although Opinion No. 351 of the National Treasury General Attorney Office clarified the legal status of certain matters affecting the tax treatment of capital gains certain issues still remain unclear.

*Resident individuals*

Under what we believe to be a reasonable interpretation of existing applicable tax laws and regulations: (i) income derived from the sale, exchange or other disposition of shares or ADSs by resident individuals who do not sell or dispose of Argentine shares on a regular basis would not be subject to Argentine income tax, and (ii) although there still exists uncertainty regarding this issue, income derived from the sale, exchange or other disposition of shares or ADSs by resident individuals who sell or disposes of Argentine shares on a regular basis should be exempt from Argentine income tax.

*Foreign beneficiaries*

Capital gains obtained by non residents or foreign entities from the sale, exchange or other disposition of shares or ADSs are exempt from income tax. Pursuant to a reasonable interpretation of existing applicable laws and regulations, and although the matter is not completely free from doubt, such treatment should also apply to those foreign beneficiaries that qualify as “offshore entities” for Argentine tax law purposes, when the shares are not listed in Argentina or in other jurisdictions. For this purpose, an offshore entity is any foreign legal entity which pursuant to its by-laws or to the applicable regulatory framework: (i) its principal activity is to invest outside the jurisdiction of its incorporation and/or (ii) cannot perform in such jurisdiction certain transactions.

*Local entities*

Capital gains obtained by Argentine entities (generally entities organized or incorporated under Argentine law, certain traders and intermediaries, local branches of non Argentine entities, sole proprietorships and individuals carrying on certain commercial activities in Argentina) derived from the sale, exchange or other disposition of shares or ADSs are subject to income tax at the rate of 35%.

Losses arising from the sale, exchange or other disposition of shares and ADSs can be applied only to offset such capital gains arising from the sale, exchange or other disposition of these securities.

**WE RECOMMEND PROSPECTIVE INVESTORS TO CONSULT THEIR OWN TAX ADVISOR REGARDING THE PARTICULAR TAX CONSEQUENCES CONCERNING THE SALE OR OTHER DISPOSITIONS OF SHARES AND ADSs.**

*Value Added Tax*

The sale, exchange, disposition, or transfer of shares or ADSs is not subject to Value Added Tax.

*Personal Assets Tax*

Law No. 25,585 issued on April 24, 2002 and published in the Official Gazette on May 15, 2002 (and applicable to personal assets held as of December 31, 2002) introduces amendments to Law No. 23,966 and imposes the personal assets tax on shares and ADSs held by individuals and undivided estates domiciled or located in Argentina or abroad and legal entities not domiciled in Argentina, separately from other assets.



This amendment imposes the obligation to pay the personal assets tax on the Argentine private issuer of the shares and ADSs, and authorizes it to seek recovery of the amount so paid, without limitation, by way of withholding or by foreclosing on the assets that gave rise to such payment. The tax is levied on the proportional equity value of the shares as reflected in the most recent balance sheet closed as of December 31 of the taxable year, at the rate of 0.5% without any non-taxable minimum being applicable.

The shareholders approved the absorption of personal asset tax by the Company for the years 2002 to 2006. There can be no assurance that in the future this tax will be absorbed by the Company.

*Tax on Minimum Notional Income (Impuesto a la Ganancia Mínima Presunta, IGMP)*

Companies domiciled in Argentina, partnerships, foundations, sole proprietorships, trusts, certain mutual funds organized in Argentina, and permanent business establishments owned by foreign persons, among other taxpayers, shall apply a 1% rate to the total value of assets held by such persons, above an aggregate nominal amount of Ps. 200,000. Nevertheless, shares and ADSs issued by entities subject to such tax are exempt from paying the IGMP.

*Gross Income Tax*

The gross income tax is a local tax; therefore, the rules of the relevant provincial jurisdiction should be considered, which may levy this tax on the customary purchase and sale, exchange or other disposition of shares and ADSs, and/or the collection of dividends at an average rate of 3%, unless an exemption is applicable. In the particular case of the City of Buenos Aires, any transaction involving shares and/or the collection of dividends and revaluations is exempt from this tax.

There is no gross income tax withholding system applicable to the payments made to foreign beneficiaries.

*Stamp Tax*

The stamp tax is a local tax that is generally levied on the instrumentation of onerous acts executed within a certain territorial jurisdiction or outside a certain territorial jurisdiction but with effects in such jurisdiction.

In the City of Buenos Aires, the stamp tax has been repealed for all those acts that do not imply an onerous conveyance of real property or the lease of real property. However, most provincial tax authorities maintain this tax in effect for all acts in general; therefore, the instruments which implement onerous transactions (including issuance, subscription, placement and transfer) involving the shares or ADSs, executed in other jurisdictions, or with effects in those jurisdictions, could be deemed to be subject to this tax.

*Tax on Credits and Debits in Bank Accounts*

This tax is levied upon debits and credits in bank accounts and upon other transactions which, due to their special nature and characteristics, are similar or could be used in substitution for a checking account, such as payments on behalf of or in the name of third parties, procedures for the collection of securities or documents, drafts and transfers of funds made by any means, when these transactions are performed by local banks.

---

[Table of Contents](#)

The tax law and its regulations provide several exemptions to this tax. For example, it does not apply to entities recognized as exempt from income tax, to debits and credits relating to salaries, to retirement and pension emoluments credited directly by banking means and withdrawals made in connection with such credits, to credits in checking accounts originating from bank loans, and to transfers of cheques by endorsement.

The general rate of the tax is 0.6%. An increased rate of 1.2% applies in cases in which there has been a substitution for the use of a checking account.

Pursuant to Argentine Regulatory Decree 380/2001, as amended, 34% of the tax paid on credits levied at the 0.6% rate and 17% of the tax paid on transactions levied at the 12% tax rate can be used, to its exhaustion, as a credit against income tax, tax on minimum notional income and/or the special contribution on cooperatives capital.

*Court and Other Taxes*

In the event that it becomes necessary to institute legal actions in relation to the shares or ADS's in Argentina, a court tax (currently at a rate of 3.0%) will be imposed on the amount of any claim brought before the Argentine courts sitting in the City of Buenos Aires.

The City of Buenos Aires imposes a special contribution to the Lawyers' Social Security System ("CASSABA Contribution"), in addition to the court tax of 3.0%. The CASSABA Contribution will be equal to 3.0% of the amount of the court tax imposed as a result of the claim.

Argentina imposes neither an estate nor gift tax on a decedent, donor, legatee or donee. No Argentine tax is imposed on the deposit or withdrawal of shares in exchange for ADSs. Other than the taxes discussed above, no other Argentine taxes are applicable to an investment in shares or ADSs. At present, there is no national tax specifically applicable to the transfer of securities.

*Tax Treaties*

Argentina has entered into tax treaties with several countries. There is currently no tax treaty or convention in effect between Argentina and the United States.

**F. DIVIDENDS AND PAYING AGENTS**

This section is not applicable

**G. STATEMENT BY EXPERTS**

This section is not applicable.

**H. DOCUMENTS ON DISPLAY**

We file annual, quarterly and other information with the SEC. You may read and copy any document that we file at the public reference rooms of the SEC at 450 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20549 and 500 West Madison Street, Suite 1400, Chicago, Illinois 60661. You may obtain information on the operation of the public reference rooms by calling the SEC at 1-800-