

C. Material Contracts

In connection with our offer for Aventis, we entered into a credit facility agreement dated April 24, 2004, permitting borrowing in the amount of up to €16,000 million, which was used mainly to finance the cash consideration to be paid to holders of Aventis securities pursuant to the offer and may also be used to refinance certain debt of Aventis and its subsidiaries. This facility was, subject to certain conditions, entirely underwritten by BNP Paribas and an affiliate of Merrill Lynch & Co.

The credit facility agreement provides that the credit facility is to be divided into a €5,000 million term loan facility ("Tranche A") with a final maturity date of January 24, 2005 (which was able to be extended in two six-month increments), a €5,500 million term loan facility ("Tranche B") with a final maturity date of January 25, 2007, and a €5,500 million revolving loan facility ("Tranche C") with a final maturity date of January 25, 2009. Except as noted above, each tranche is required to be repaid in its entirety on its final maturity date. In 2005, Tranche A and Tranche B were repaid in full and €4,500 million of the credit available under Tranche C has been cancelled and replaced with other credit lines. For a description of amounts outstanding under this facility at year-end 2004, see "Item 5. Operating and Financial Review and Prospects – Liquidity and Capital Resources – Financing of the Aventis Acquisition" and Note D.14 to the consolidated financial statements, included herein at Item 18. The credit facility agreement has been included as Exhibit 2.5 of this annual report.

D. Exchange Controls

French exchange control regulations currently do not limit the amount of payments that we may remit to non-residents of France. Laws and regulations concerning foreign exchange controls do require, however, that all payments or transfers of funds made by a French resident to a non-resident be handled by an accredited intermediary. In France, all registered banks and most credit establishments are accredited intermediaries.

E. Taxation

General

General Informations

The following generally summarizes the material French, U.S. federal income and, in the case of Preference Shares only, Cayman Islands tax consequences to U.S. holders (as defined below) of owning and disposing of our ADSs, ordinary shares, PSSA-ADSs, PSSAs and Preference Shares (collectively the "Securities"). This discussion is intended only as a descriptive summary and does not purport to be a complete analysis or listing of all potential tax effects of the purchase, ownership or disposition of our ordinary shares or ADSs, PSSAs, PSSA-ADSs, and Preference Shares.

This summary does not constitute legal or tax advice. Holders should consult their own tax advisers regarding the tax consequences of the purchase, ownership and disposition of Securities in light of their particular circumstances, including the effect of any state, local or other national laws.

The statements of French, U.S. federal income and Cayman Islands tax laws set forth below are based on the laws (including, for U.S. federal income tax purposes, the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code"), final, temporary and proposed U.S. Treasury Regulations promulgated thereunder and administrative and judicial interpretations thereof) in force as of the date of this Annual Report and are subject to any changes in applicable French, U.S. or Cayman Islands tax laws or in the double taxation conventions or treaties between France and the United States, occurring after that date. In this regard, we refer to the Convention Between the United States of America and the French Republic for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital of August 31, 1994, (the "Treaty") entered into force on December 30, 1995, and the tax regulations issued by the French tax authorities (the "Regulations").

For the purposes of this discussion, a U.S. holder is a beneficial owner of Securities (a) who owns (directly, indirectly or by attribution) less than 5% of the voting stock or 10% of the outstanding share capital of sanofi-aventis, (b) who is (i) an individual who is a U.S. citizen or resident for U.S. federal income tax purposes, (ii) a U.S. domestic corporation or certain other entities created or organized in or under the laws of the United States or any state thereof, or (iii) otherwise subject to U.S. federal income taxation on a net income basis in respect of

the Securities, (c) who holds the Securities as capital assets, (d) whose functional currency is the U.S. dollar, (e) whose ownership of the Securities is not effectively connected to a permanent establishment or a fixed base in France, and (f) who is entitled to the benefit of the Treaty under the “Limitation on Benefits” provision contained in the Treaty.

If a partnership holds Securities, the tax treatment of a partner generally will depend upon the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. If a U.S. holder is a partner in a partnership that holds Securities, the holder is urged to consult its own tax advisor regarding the specific tax consequences of owning and disposing of its Securities.

This discussion is intended only as a general summary and does not purport to be a complete analysis or listing of all potential tax effects of the ownership or disposition of the Securities to any particular investor, and does not discuss tax considerations that arise from rules of general application or that are generally assumed to be known by investors. Certain holders (including, but not limited to, U.S. expatriates, banks, insurance companies, regulated investment companies, tax-exempt organizations, financial institutions, persons subject to the alternative minimum tax, persons who acquired the Securities pursuant to the exercise of employee stock options or otherwise as compensation, dealers in securities or currencies, persons that elect mark-to-market treatment and persons holding Securities as a position in a synthetic security, straddle or conversion transaction) may be subject to special rules not discussed below. Holders of Securities are advised to consult their own tax advisors with regard to the application of French tax law and U.S. federal income tax law to their particular situations as well as any tax consequences arising under the laws of any state, local or other foreign jurisdiction.

French Taxes

New tax distribution regime

Holders of Securities should be aware that the French Budget Law for 2004 (No. 2003-1311 dated December 30, 2003) provides for the suppression of the *avoir fiscal* and the *précompte* with respect to dividends paid on or after January 1, 2005. However, non-individual shareholders will no longer be entitled to use the *avoir fiscal* as of on January 1, 2005. In addition, the French Budget Law for 2004 provides for the implementation of a temporary equalization tax that will be levied at the rate of 25% assessed on the net dividends before withholding tax paid in 2005 out of profits that have not been taxed at the ordinary corporate income tax rate or that have been earned and taxed more than five years before the distribution. This temporary equalization tax will not be refundable to shareholders. Distributions made as from 2006 will not bear any *précompte* or temporary equalization tax.

Estate and Gift Taxes and Transfer Taxes

In general, a transfer of securities by gift or by reason of death of a U.S. holder that would otherwise be subject to French gift or inheritance tax, respectively, will not be subject to such French tax by reason of the Convention between the United States of America and the French Republic for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Estates, Inheritances and Gifts, dated November 24, 1978, unless the donor or the transferor is domiciled in France at the time of making the gift or at the time of his or her death, or the Securities were used in, or held for use in, the conduct of a business through a permanent establishment or a fixed base in France.

Generally, transfers of Securities (other than ordinary shares) are not subject to French registration or stamp duty. Generally, transfers of ordinary shares will not be subject to French registration or stamp duty if such transfers are not evidenced by a written agreement or if such an agreement is executed outside of France.

Wealth Tax

The French wealth tax (*impôt de solidarité sur la fortune*) does not generally apply to the securities if the holder is a U.S. resident, as defined pursuant to the provisions of the Treaty. U.S. Taxes.

US taxes**US status owner**

Deposits and withdrawals by a U.S. holder of ordinary shares in exchange for ADSSs, or of PSSAs in exchange for PSSA-ADSSs (including in connection with the intended termination of the deposit agreement with respect to the PSSA-ADSSs), will not be taxable events for U.S. federal income tax purposes. For U.S. tax purposes, holders of ADSSs will be treated as owners of the ordinary shares represented by such ADSSs, and holders of PSSA-ADSSs will be treated as owners of the PSSAs represented by such PSSA-ADSSs. Accordingly, the discussion that follows regarding the U.S. tax consequences of owning and disposing of ordinary shares and PSSAs is equally applicable to ADSSs and PSSA-ADSSs, respectively.

Information Reporting and Backup Withholding

Dividend payments made to holders and proceeds paid from the sale, exchange, redemption or disposal of Securities may be subject to information reporting to the Internal Revenue Service. Such payments may be subject to backup withholding taxes unless the holder (i) is a corporation or other exempt recipient or (ii) provides a taxpayer identification number and certifies that no loss of exemption from backup withholding has occurred. Holders that are not U.S. persons generally are not subject to information reporting or backup withholding. However, such a holder may be required to provide a certification of its non-U.S. status in connection with payments received within the United States or through a U.S.-related financial intermediary. Backup withholding is not an additional tax. Amounts withheld as backup withholding may be credited against a holder's U.S. federal income tax liability. A holder may obtain a refund of any excess amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules by filing the appropriate claim for refund with the Internal Revenue Service and furnishing any required information.

State and Local Taxes

In addition to U.S. federal income tax, U.S. holders of securities may be subject to U.S. state and local taxes with respect to such securities.

ADSSs-Ordinary Shares**French Taxes****Taxation of Dividends**

As a result of the reform implemented by the French Budget Law for 2004, from 2005 onwards, French resident individuals will only be taxed on half of dividends received and, in addition to the annual allowance of €2,440 for couples subject to joint taxation and €1,220 for single persons, widowers or divorcees which is already applicable, will be entitled to a tax credit equal to 50% of the dividend (the "Tax Credit"). The Tax Credit will have a cap of €230 for married couples and members of a union agreement subject to joint taxation and €115 for single persons, widows or widowers, divorcees or married persons subject to separate taxation.

Qualifying non-residents who were previously entitled to a refund of the *avoir fiscal* may benefit, under the same conditions as for the *avoir fiscal*, from a refund of the Tax Credit (net of applicable withholding tax).

However, the French tax authorities have not yet issued any guidance with regard to the refund of the Tax Credit to non-residents.

Under French law, dividends paid by a French corporation, such as sanofi-aventis, to non-residents of France are generally subject to French withholding tax at a rate of 25%. Under the Treaty, the rate of French withholding tax on dividends paid to a U.S. holder whose ownership of the Ordinary Shares or ADSSs is not effectively connected with a permanent establishment or fixed base that such U.S. holder has in France is reduced to 15% and a U.S. holder may claim a refund from the French tax authorities of the amount withheld in excess of the Treaty rate of 15%, if any. In general, an eligible U.S. holder is a U.S. holder whose ownership of the ordinary shares or ADSSs is not effectively connected with a permanent establishment or fixed base in France, and who is (i) an individual or other non-corporate person who is a U.S. resident, as defined pursuant to the provisions of the Treaty, (ii) a U.S. domestic corporation (other than a "regulated investment company"), (iii) a

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U.S. domestic corporation which is a “regulated investment company,” but only if less than 20% of its shares are beneficially owned by persons who are neither citizens nor residents of the United States, (iv) certain U.S. Pension Funds and Other Tax Exempt Entities (as defined below), or (v) a partnership or trust that is treated as a U.S. resident for purposes of the Treaty, but only to the extent that its partners, beneficiaries or grantors would qualify under clause (i) or (ii) above.

Dividends paid to tax-exempt “U.S. Pension Funds” as discussed below, and certain other tax-exempt entities (including certain State-owned institutions, not-for-profit organizations and individuals with respect to dividends beneficially-owned by such individuals and derived from an investment in a tax-favored retirement account (“Other Tax-Exempt Entities”)) are nonetheless eligible for the reduced withholding tax rate of 15% provided for by the Treaty, subject to the filing formalities specified in the regulations (discussed below), provided that these entities own, directly and indirectly, less than 10% of the capital of sanofi-aventis. A “U.S. Pension Fund” includes exempt pension funds subject to the provisions of Section 401(a) (qualified retirement plans), Section 403(b) (tax deferred annuity contract) or Section 457 (deferred compensation plans) of the Code and which are established and managed in order to pay retirement benefits.

Dividends paid to an eligible U.S. holder are immediately subject to the reduced rate of 15%, provided that such holder establishes before the date of payment that is a U.S. resident under the Treaty by completing and providing the depositary with a simplified certificate (the “Certificate”) in accordance with the French tax guidelines (4J-1-05 released on February 25, 2005) with the “Certificate”. Dividends paid to a U.S. holder that has not filed the Certificate before the dividend payment date will be subject to French withholding tax at the rate of 25% and then reduced at a later date to 15%, provided that such holder duly completes and provides the French tax authorities with the relevant Form described in the tax guidelines described above (the “Form”) before December 31 of the second calendar year following the year during which the dividend is paid. U.S. Pension Funds and Other Tax-Exempt Entities are subject to the same general filing requirements as the U.S. holders except that they may have to supply additional documentation evidencing their entitlement to these benefits.

The Certificate and the Form, together with instructions, will be provided by the depositary to all U.S. holders registered with the depositary and is also available from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. The depositary will arrange for the filing with the French Tax authorities of all certificates properly completed and executed by U.S. holders of Share-ADSS and returned to the depositary in sufficient time that they may be filed with the French tax authorities before the distribution so as to obtain an immediate reduced withholding tax rate.

The withholding tax refund, if any, ordinarily are paid within 12 months of filing the applicable French Treasury form, but not before January 15 of the year following the calendar year in which the related dividend is paid.

Tax on Sale or Other Disposition

In general, under the Treaty, a U.S. holder who is a U.S. resident for purposes of the Treaty will not be subject to French tax on any capital gain from the redemption or sale or exchange of ordinary shares or ADSS unless the ordinary shares or the ADSS form part of the business property of a permanent establishment or fixed base that the U.S. holder has in France. Special rules apply to individuals who are residents of more than one country.

U.S. Taxes

Taxation of Dividends

For U.S. federal income tax purposes, the gross amount of any distribution and Tax Credit paid to U.S. holders (that is, the net distribution received plus any tax withheld therefrom), will be treated as ordinary dividend income to the extent paid or deemed paid out of the current or accumulated earnings and profits of sanofi-aventis (as determined under U.S. federal income tax principles).

Subject to certain exceptions for short-term and hedged positions, the U.S. dollar amount of dividends received by a U.S. holder that is an individual prior to January 1, 2009 with respect to the ADSS or our ordinary

shares will be subject to taxation at a maximum rate of 15% if the dividends are “qualified dividends.” Dividends paid on the ordinary shares or ADSs will be treated as qualified dividends if (i) the issuer is eligible for the benefits of a comprehensive income tax treaty with the United States that the IRS has approved for the purposes of the qualified dividend rules and (ii) the issuer was not, in the year prior to the year in which the dividend was paid, and is not, in the year in which the dividend is paid, (a) a passive foreign investment company (“PFIC”) or (b) for dividends paid prior to the 2005 tax year, a foreign personal holding company (“FPHC”) or foreign investment company (“FIC”). The Treaty has been approved for the purposes of the qualified dividend rules. Based on our audited financial statements and relevant market and shareholder data, we believe sanofi-aventis was not a PFIC, FPHC or FIC for U.S. federal income tax purposes with respect to its 2003 or 2004 taxable year. In addition, based on our audited financial statements and current expectations regarding the value and nature of its assets, the sources and nature of its income, and relevant market and shareholder data, we do not anticipate that sanofi-aventis will become a PFIC for its 2005 taxable year.

The U.S. Treasury has announced its intention to promulgate rules pursuant to which holders of ADSs or ordinary shares and intermediaries through whom such securities are held will be permitted to rely on certifications from issuers to establish that dividends are treated as qualified dividends. Because such procedures have not yet been issued, it is not clear whether we will be able to comply with them. *Holders of ordinary shares and ADSs should consult their own tax advisers regarding the availability of the reduced dividend tax rate in the light of their own particular circumstances.*

Distributions out of earnings and profits with respect to the ADSs or ordinary shares generally will be treated as dividend income from sources outside of the United States and generally will be treated separately along with other items of “passive” (or, in the case of certain U.S. holders, “financial services”) income for purposes of determining the credit for foreign income taxes allowed under the Code. Subject to certain limitations, French income tax withheld in connection with any distribution with respect to the ADSs or ordinary shares may be claimed as a credit against the U.S. federal income tax liability of a U.S. holder if such U.S. holder elects for that year to credit all foreign income taxes. Alternatively such French withholding tax may be taken as a deduction against taxable income. Foreign tax credits will not be allowed for withholding taxes imposed in respect of certain short-term or hedged positions in securities and may not be allowed in respect of certain arrangements in which a U.S. holder’s expected economic profit is insubstantial. U.S. holders should consult their own tax advisors concerning the implications of these rules in light of their particular circumstances.

To the extent that an amount received by a U.S. holder exceeds the allocable share of current and accumulated earnings and profits of sanofi-aventis, such excess will be applied first, to reduce such U.S. holder’s tax basis in its ordinary shares or ADSs and then, to the extent it exceeds the U.S. holder’s tax basis, it will constitute capital gain from a deemed sale or exchange of such ordinary shares or ADSs. No dividends received deduction will be allowed with respect to dividends paid by sanofi-aventis. If the U.S. holder is an individual, any capital gain generally will be subject to U.S. federal income tax at preferential rates (currently a maximum of 15%) if specified minimum holding periods are met.

The amount of any distribution or Tax Credit paid in euros will be equal to the U.S. dollar value of the euro amount distributed calculated by reference to the exchange rate in effect on the date the dividend is received by a U.S. holder of ordinary shares regardless of whether the payment is in fact converted into U.S. dollars or, on the date of receipt by the depository, in the case of ADSs. U.S. holders should consult their own tax advisors regarding the treatment of foreign currency gain or loss, if any, on any euros received by a U.S. holder or depository that are converted into U.S. dollars on a date subsequent to receipt.

Tax on Sale or Other Disposition

In general, for U.S. federal income tax purposes, a U.S. holder will recognize capital gain or loss if the holder sells, exchanges or otherwise disposes of its ordinary shares or ADSs in an amount equal to the U.S. dollar value of the difference between the amount realized for the ordinary shares or ADSs and the holder’s adjusted tax basis (determined in U.S. dollars) in the ordinary shares or ADSs. Such gain or loss generally will be U.S. source gain or loss, and will be treated as long-term capital gain or loss if the U.S. holder’s holding period in the ordinary shares or ADSs exceeds one year at the time of disposition. If the U.S. holder is an individual, any

capital gain generally will be subject to U.S. federal income tax at preferential rates (currently a maximum of 15%) if specified minimum holding periods are met. The deductibility of capital losses is subject to significant limitations.

PSSAs and PSSA-ADSS

French Taxes

Taxation of Annual Payments and any Reorganization Payment

Under French law, no French withholding tax is imposed on Annual Payments or any Reorganization Payment on the PSSAs. Pursuant to Article 131 quarter of the French General Tax Code, the withholding tax exemption on Annual Payments is not subject to any filing requirement because the PSSAs have been exclusively offered outside France. In the event that French law should change and a French withholding tax becomes applicable to the Annual Payments, (i) sanofi-aventis or an affiliate shall be obligated, to the extent it may lawfully do so, to gross up such payments (with certain exceptions relating to the holder's connection with France, failure to claim an exemption or failure to timely present such shares for payment) so that, after the payment of such withholding tax, the holder will receive an amount equal to the amount which the holder would have received had there been no withholding or (ii) sanofi-aventis may redeem the PSSAs.

Taxation of Redemption

In general, under the Treaty, a U.S. holder who is a U.S. resident for purposes of the Treaty will not be subject to French tax on any capital gain from the redemption or sale or exchange of PSSAs or PSSA-ADSS. Special rules apply to individuals who are residents of more than one country.

U.S. Taxes

Taxation of Annual Payments and any Reorganization Payment

For U.S. federal income tax purposes, the gross amount of the annual payments and any Reorganization Payments paid to U.S. holders entitled thereto, will be treated as ordinary dividend income (in an amount equal to the cash or fair market value of the property received) to the extent paid out of the current or accumulated earnings and profits of sanofi-aventis (as determined under U.S. federal income tax principles). Such dividends principally will be foreign source income, and generally will be treated separately, together with other items of "passive" or "financial services" income, as the case may be, for foreign tax credit purposes. No dividends received deduction will be allowed with respect to dividends paid by sanofi-aventis.

Subject to certain exceptions for short-term and hedged positions, the U.S. dollar amount of dividends received by a U.S. holder that is an individual prior to January 1, 2009 with respect to the PSSAs or PSSA-ADSS will be subject to taxation at a maximum rate of 15% if the dividends are "qualified dividends." Dividends paid on the PSSAs or PSSA-ADSS will be treated as qualified dividends if (i) the issuer is eligible for the benefits of a comprehensive income tax treaty with the United States that the IRS has approved for the purposes of the qualified dividend rules and (ii) the issuer was not, in the year prior to the year in which the dividend was paid, and is not, in the year in which the dividend is paid, (a) a passive foreign investment company ("PFIC") or (b) for dividends paid prior to the 2005 tax year, a foreign personal holding company ("FPHC") or foreign investment company ("FIC"). The Treaty has been approved for the purposes of the qualified dividend rules. Based on our audited financial statements and relevant market and shareholder data, we believe sanofi-aventis was not a PFIC, FPHC or FIC for U.S. federal income tax purposes with respect to its 2003 or 2004 taxable year. In addition, based on our audited financial statements and current expectations regarding the value and nature of its assets, the sources and nature of its income, and relevant market and shareholder data, we do not anticipate that sanofi-aventis will become a PFIC for its 2005 taxable year. The U.S. Treasury has announced its intention to promulgate rules pursuant to which holders of PSSAs or PSSA-ADSS and intermediaries through whom such securities are held will be permitted to rely on certifications from issuers to establish that dividends are treated as qualified dividends. Because such procedures have not yet been issued, it is not clear whether we will be able to comply with them. *Holders of PSSAs and PSSA-ADSS should consult their own tax advisers regarding the availability of the reduced dividend tax rate in the light of their own particular circumstances.*

To the extent that an amount received by a U.S. holder exceeds the allocable share of the current and accumulated earnings and profits of sanofi-aventis, such excess will be applied first to reduce such U.S. holder's tax basis in its PSSAs or PSSA-ADSSs and then, to the extent it exceeds the U.S. holder's tax basis, it will constitute gain from a deemed sale or exchange of such PSSAs or PSSA-ADSSs. The amount of any distribution paid in euros will be equal to the U.S. dollar value of the distributed euro calculated by reference to the exchange rate in effect on the date the dividend is received by a U.S. holder of PSSAs regardless of whether the payment is in fact converted into U.S. dollars or, on the date of receipt by the depository, in the case of PSSA-ADSSs. U.S. holders should consult their own tax advisors regarding the treatment of foreign currency gain or loss, if any, on any euros received by a U.S. holder or depository that are converted into U.S. dollars on a date subsequent to receipt.

Tax on Sale or Other Disposition (including Redemption).

In general, for U.S. federal income tax purposes, a U.S. holder will recognize capital gain or loss if the holder sells, exchanges or otherwise disposes of PSSAs or PSSA-ADSSs in an amount equal to the U.S. dollar value of the difference between the amount realized for the PSSAs or PSSA-ADSSs and the holder's adjusted tax basis (determined in U.S. dollars) in the PSSAs or PSSA-ADSSs. Such gain or loss generally will be U.S. source gain or loss, and will be treated as long-term capital gain or loss if the U.S. holder's holding period in the PSSAs or PSSA-ADSSs exceeds one year at the time of disposition. If the U.S. holder is an individual, any capital gain generally will be subject to U.S. federal income tax at preferential rates (currently a maximum of 15%) if specified minimum holding periods are met. The deductibility of capital losses is subject to significant limitations.

If, however, a U.S. holder's PSSAs or PSSA-ADSSs are redeemed and it has a direct or indirect stock interest in sanofi-aventis after such redemption, then amounts received in a redemption could, under applicable U.S. tax rules, be treated as a distribution taxable as a dividend that is measured by the full amount of cash received by such U.S. holder (to the extent of the current and accumulated earnings and profits of sanofi-aventis, as described above in "Taxation of Annual Payments and any Reorganization Payment."). U.S. holders should consult their own tax advisors as to the application of these rules to any such redemption.

Preference Shares

U.S. Taxes

Taxation of Dividends

For U.S. federal income tax purposes, the gross amount of any distribution paid to U.S. holders on the Preference Shares (including any additional amounts paid with respect thereto) will be treated as ordinary dividend income to the extent paid out of current or accumulated earnings and profits of Rhône-Poulenc Overseas Limited. Such dividends will be foreign source income, but will generally be treated separately, together with other items of "passive" or "financial services" income, as the case may be, for foreign tax credit purposes and will not qualify for the dividends received deduction generally allowed to U.S. corporations. Dividends received in 2004 by U.S. holders of Preference Shares should not constitute "qualified dividends" and therefore should not be eligible for the reduced rate of taxation on qualified dividend income (as described above under "ADSSs-Ordinary Shares-U.S. Taxes-Taxation of Dividends").

To the extent that an amount received by a U.S. holder exceeds the allocable share of the current and accumulated earnings and profits of Rhône-Poulenc Overseas Limited, such excess will be applied first to reduce such U.S. holder's tax basis in the Preference Shares and then, to the extent in excess of such U.S. holder's tax basis, will constitute gain from a deemed sale or exchange of such Preference Shares. No dividends received deduction will be allowed with respect to the dividends.

Tax on Sale or Other Disposition

Special U.S. tax rules apply to companies that are considered to be passive foreign investment companies ("PFICs"). We believe that Rhône-Poulenc Overseas Limited will likely qualify as PFIC for the year ended December 31, 2004. Accordingly, a U.S. holder will be subject to a special tax at ordinary income tax rates on

the gain that it recognizes on the sale of its Preference Shares. The amount of income tax will be increased by an interest charge to compensate for tax deferral, calculated as if such gain was earned ratably over the period the U.S. holder holds its Preference Shares.

Classification as a PFIC may also have other adverse tax consequences, including, in the case of individuals, the denial of a step-up in the basis of its Preference Shares at death.

U.S. holders are urged to consult their own tax advisors regarding the application of the PFIC rules to their particular circumstances and the necessity of filing IRS Form 8621, as well as the availability of any ameliorative elections or other actions.

Taxation of Redemption

Rhône-Poulenc Overseas Limited possesses an option to redeem the Preference Shares beginning in 2003. Rhône-Poulenc Overseas Limited exercised its option to redeem all of the Preference Shares as of November 2004, for further details, please see "Item 9. The Offer and Listing – C. Markets – 8 1/4% Cumulative Preference Shares, Series A. "

Cayman Islands Taxes

Under Cayman Islands law, no Cayman Islands withholding tax is imposed on dividend, redemption or liquidation payments made by Rhône-Poulenc Overseas Limited or sanofi-aventis to any holder of Preference Shares.