

B. Capitalization and Indebtedness

Not applicable.

C. Reasons for the Offer and Use of Proceeds

Not applicable.

D. Risk Factors

Investing in our series B shares and the ADSs involves a high degree of risk. You should consider carefully the following risks, as well as all the other information presented in this annual report, before making an investment decision. Any of the following risks, if they were to occur, could materially and adversely affect our business, results of operations, prospects and financial condition. Additional risks and uncertainties not currently known to us or that we currently deem immaterial may also materially and adversely affect our business, results of operations, prospects and financial condition. In either event, the market price of our series B shares and ADSs could decline significantly, and you could lose all or substantially all of your investment.

Risks Related to Our Business

Our results of operations are significantly influenced by the cyclical nature of the steel industry.

The steel industry is highly cyclical and sensitive to regional and global macroeconomic conditions. Global demand for steel as well as global production capacity levels significantly influence prices for our products, and changes in global demand or supply for steel in the future will likely impact our results of operations. The steel industry has suffered in the past, especially during downturn cycles, from substantial over-capacity. Currently, as a result of the increase in steel production capacity in recent years, there are signs of excess capacity in steel markets, which is impacting the profitability of the steel industry. Global steel prices decreased in 2013, 2014 and 2015, and in 2016, 2017 and 2018 global steel prices began to recover. We cannot give you any assurance as to prices of steel in the future.

We may not be able to pass along price increases for raw materials to our customers to compensate for fluctuations in price and supply.

Prices for raw materials necessary for production of our steel products have fluctuated significantly in the past and may do so in the future. Significant increases in raw material prices could adversely affect our gross profit. During periods when prices for scrap metal, iron ore, ferroalloys, coaking coal and other raw materials have increased, our industry has historically sought to maintain profit margins by passing along increased raw material costs to customers by means of price increases. For example, prices of scrap metal in 2014 increased approximately 7%, in 2015 decreased approximately 16%, in 2016 increased approximately 2%, in 2017 increased approximately 31% and in 2018 increased approximately 19%; prices of ferroalloys in 2014 increased approximately 16%, in 2015 decreased approximately 9%, in 2016 decreased approximately 13%, in 2017 increased approximately 22% and in 2018 increased approximately 10%. We may not be able to pass along these and other cost increases in the future and, therefore, our profitability may be materially and adversely affected. Even when we can successfully increase our prices, interim reductions in profit margins frequently occur due to a time lag between the increase in raw material prices and the market acceptance of higher selling prices for finished steel products. We cannot assure you that our customers will agree to pay increased prices for our steel products that compensate us for increases in our raw material costs.

We purchase our raw materials either in the open market or from certain key suppliers. Both scrap metal and ferroalloy prices are negotiated on a monthly basis with our suppliers and are subject to market conditions. We cannot assure you that we will be able to continue to find suppliers of these raw materials in the open market, that the prices of these materials will not increase or that the quality will remain the same. In addition, if any of our key suppliers fails to deliver or we fail to renew our supply contracts, we could face limited access to some raw materials, or higher costs and delays resulting from the need to obtain our raw materials requirements from other suppliers.

The inability to use our existing inventory in the future or impairments in the valuation of our inventory could adversely affect our business.

As of December 31, 2018, we had 136,541 metric tons of coaking coal inventory, which is one of the principal raw materials used in blast furnaces. We have not used this raw material in recent years because our Lorain, Ohio blast furnace facility has been idle since 2008. We intend to start using coaking coal as a substitute for coal in our productive process in our other plants in Mexico and the United States. However we cannot assure you that we will be able to effectively utilize such inventory.

We have assigned a fair market value of Ps. 953 million (U.S.\$48.5 million) to our coaking coal inventory. However, prices for coaking coal have fluctuated significantly in the past and could continue to do so in the future and significant fluctuations in coaking coal prices could adversely affect the value of our existing inventory.

The energy costs involved in our production processes are subject to fluctuations that are beyond our control and could significantly increase our costs of production.

Our production processes are dependent on adequate supplies of electricity and natural gas. A substantial increase in the cost of electricity or natural gas could have a material adverse effect on our gross profit. In addition, a disruption or curtailment in supply could have a material adverse effect on our production and sales. Prices for electricity increased approximately 7% in 2014, decreased approximately 12% in 2015, in 2016 increased approximately 1.5%, in 2017 increased approximately 22% and in 2018 increased approximately 14%, and prices for natural gas increased approximately 25% in 2014, decreased approximately 23% in 2015, increased approximately 8% in 2016, increased approximately 22% in 2017 and increased approximately 28% in 2018. Moreover, energy costs constitute a significant and increasing component of our costs of operations. Our energy cost was 12.4% of our manufacturing conversion cost for 2018 compared to 13.1% for 2017, 13.5% for 2016, 13% for 2015 and 14% for 2014.

We pay special rates to the Mexican federal electricity commission (*Comisión Federal de Electricidad* or “CFE”) for electricity. We also pay special rates to Pemex, Gas y Petroquímica Básica, (“PEMEX”), the national oil company of Mexico, for natural gas used at our facilities in Mexico. We cannot assure you that these special rates will continue to be available to us or that these rates may not increase significantly in the future, particularly in light of recent energy reforms in Mexico. In the United States, we have contracts in place with special rates from the electric utilities. We cannot assure you that these special rates will continue to be available to us or that these rates may not increase significantly in the future. In certain deregulated electric markets in the United States, we have third party electric generation contracts under a fixed price arrangement. These contracts mitigate our price risk for electric generation from the volatility in the electric markets. In addition, we purchase natural gas from various suppliers in the United States. These purchase prices are generally established as a function of monthly New York Mercantile Exchange settlement prices. We also contract with different natural gas transportation and storage companies to deliver the natural gas to our facilities. In addition, we enter into futures contracts to fix and reduce volatility of natural gas prices both in Mexico and the United States, as appropriate. As of December 31, 2018, we have not entered into derivative financial instruments in Mexico, the United States or Brazil. We have not always been able to pass the effect of increases in our energy costs on to our customers and we cannot assure you that we will be able to pass the effect of these increases on to our customers in the future. We also cannot assure you that we will be able to maintain futures contracts to reduce volatility in natural gas prices. Changes in the price or supply of electricity or natural gas would materially and adversely affect our business and results of operations.

We face significant competition from other steel producers, which may adversely affect our profitability and market share.

Competition in the steel industry is intense, which exerts a downward pressure on prices, and, due to high start-up costs, the economics of operating a steel mill on a continuous basis may encourage mill operators to establish and maintain high levels of output even in times of low demand, which further decreases prices and profit margins. The recent trend of consolidation in the global steel industry may further increase competitive pressures on independent producers of our size, particularly if large steel producers formed through consolidations, which have access to greater resources than us, adopt predatory pricing strategies that decrease prices and profit margins. If we are unable to remain competitive with these producers, our profitability and market share would likely be materially and adversely affected.

A number of our competitors in Mexico and the United States have undertaken modernization and expansion plans, including the installation of production facilities and manufacturing capacity for certain products that compete with our products. As these producers become more efficient, we will face increased competition from them and may experience a loss of market share. In each of Mexico and the United States we also face competition from international steel producers. Increased international competition, especially when combined with excess production capacity, would likely force us to lower our prices or to offer increased services at a higher cost to us, which could materially reduce our profit margins.

Competition from other materials could significantly reduce demand and market prices for steel products.

In many applications, steel competes with other materials that may be used as steel substitutes, such as aluminum (particularly in the automobile industry), cement, composites, glass, plastic and wood. Additional substitutes for steel products could significantly reduce demand and market prices for steel products and thereby affect our results of operations.

A sudden slowdown in consumption in or increase in exports from China could have a significant impact on international steel prices, therefore affecting our profitability.

As demand for steel has surged in China, steel production capacity in that market has also increased, and China is now the largest worldwide steel producing country, accounting for approximately half of the worldwide steel production. Due to the size of the Chinese steel market, a slowdown in steel consumption in that market could cause a sizable increase in the volume of steel offered in the international steel markets, exerting a downward pressure on sales and margins of steel companies operating in other markets and regions, including us.

Implementing our growth strategy, which may include additional acquisitions, may adversely affect our operations.

As part of our growth strategy, we may seek to expand our existing facilities, build additional plants, acquire additional steel production assets, enter into joint ventures or form strategic alliances that we expect will expand or complement our existing business. If we undertake any of these transactions, they will likely involve some or all of the following risks:

- disruption of our ongoing business;
- diversion of our resources and of management's time;
- decreased ability to maintain uniform standards, controls, procedures and policies;
- difficulty managing the operations of a larger company;
- increased likelihood of involvement in labor, commercial or regulatory disputes or litigation related to the new enterprise;
- potential liability to joint venture participants or to third parties;
- difficulty competing for acquisitions and other growth opportunities with companies having greater financial resources; and
- difficulty integrating the acquired operations and personnel into our existing business.

We will require significant capital for acquisitions and other strategic plans, as well as for the maintenance of our facilities and compliance with environmental regulations. We may not be able to fund our capital requirements from operating cash flow and we may be required to issue additional equity or debt securities or obtain additional credit facilities, which could result in additional dilution to our shareholders. We cannot assure you that adequate equity or debt financing would be available to us on favorable terms or at all. If we are unable to fund our capital requirements, we may not be able to implement our growth strategy.

We intend to continue to pursue a growth strategy, the success of which will depend in part on our ability to acquire and integrate additional facilities. Some of these acquisitions may be outside of Mexico and the United States. Acquisitions involve a number of special risks, in addition to those described above, that could adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations, including the assumption of legacy liabilities and the potential loss of key employees. We cannot assure you that any acquisition we make will not materially and adversely affect us or that any such acquisition will enhance our business. We are unable to predict the likelihood of any additional acquisitions being proposed or completed in the near future or the terms of any such acquisitions.

We and our auditors have identified material weaknesses in our internal controls over financial reporting, for each of the last eight years, and if we fail to remediate these material weaknesses and achieve an effective system of internal controls, we may not be able to report our financial results accurately, and current and potential shareholders could lose confidence in our reporting, which would harm our business and the trading price of our Series B shares or the ADSs.

In connection with the preparation of our financial statements as of and for each of the years ended December 31, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018, we and our auditors identified material weaknesses (as defined under standards established by the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, (United States of America)) in our internal controls over financial reporting (our management did not assess the effectiveness of our internal controls over financial reporting as of December 31, 2016). A material weakness is a deficiency, or combination of deficiencies, in internal control over financial reporting such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of our annual or interim financial statements will not be prevented or detected on a timely basis.

Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2011. On January 12, 2012, our audit and corporate practices committee ("Audit Committee") received a formal complaint from the General Accounting and Treasury Services Manager of Republic Engineered Products, Inc. ("Republic"), stating that he had identified, during his review of the financial statements of SimRep and its subsidiaries for the year ended December 31, 2011, what he considered to be material accounting errors, and potential "management override of

internal controls” at SimRep. In response, our Audit Committee instructed our internal audit department to perform a review, and subsequently engaged outside counsel to conduct an internal investigation concerning the accounting matters and potential management overrides of internal controls at SimRep. As a result of our investigation, we identified material weakness at SimRep, finding that, with respect to SimRep and its subsidiaries, management did not design and maintain effective controls relating to the year-end closing and financial reporting process, resulting in accounting errors with respect to the reconciliation of certain balance sheet accounts, and a failure to timely review and control the preparation and closing of SimRep’s consolidated financial statements. In addition, SimRep also had insufficient personnel resources and technical accounting and reporting expertise to appropriately address certain accounting and financial reporting matters in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

In addition, our external auditors notified our management that, during their audit of our consolidated financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2011, it identified what it considered to be, under standards established by the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, material weaknesses in internal controls over financial reporting:

- Significant deficiencies were detected regarding entity-level controls and control environment which, in the aggregate, constitute a material weakness, and which include (i) ineffective controls in the patents registry; (ii) inadequate resources and inadequate distribution of duties among personnel, resulting in too many functions centralized among too few personnel; (iii) out-of-date accounting and human resources policies and information technology procedures, and a lack of proper monitoring of the foregoing; (iv) a lack of adequate implementation of our ethical code; (v) failure to integrate all control processes into an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system; (vi) a lack of an accounting manual (including instructions on accounting recordkeeping) for the entire company; (vii) failure to create and implement a training plan for management personnel preparing financial records; and (viii) failure of audit personnel to report periodically to the Audit Committee in order to monitor the remediation procedures previously adopted with respect to previous accounting periods;
- A lack of appropriate accounting resources, which led to inadequate supervision and controls within the accounting department and therefore prejudiced the financial statement closing process, the deferred income tax process and the conversion of foreign subsidiaries process, resulting in material accounting errors;
- A lack of an appropriate consolidation system to allow management to supervise properly the preparation of consolidated financial information. Financial information of subsidiaries was presented at a level of detail that was insufficient to allow for a clear and precise understanding of operations; and
- A lack of appropriate accounting resources at SimRep, which led to material weaknesses with respect to SimRep’s internal controls over financial reporting, which resulted in material corrections to its consolidated financial statements. Such material weaknesses included: (i) a lack of proper controls to reconcile certain balance sheet accounts at a detailed level, including certain accounts payable debit balances that could not be substantiated, resulting in audit adjustments; (ii) financial close control failure due to lack of timely review of monthly financial statements; (iii) a necessity to perform several reclassifications to basic financial statements and adjustments to the footnotes after the auditors’ review of such financial statements; and (iv) a lack of appropriate expertise at SimRep to address technical accounting and financial reporting matters.
- Significant deficiencies were detected also at our subsidiary Corporación Aceros DM, S.A. de C.V. which, in the aggregate, constitute a material weakness. These significant deficiencies include (i) lack of physical inventory of fixed assets; (ii) lack of proper segregation of duties analysis and authorization of personnel access to main information systems (iii) lack of evidence of reconciliation of physical and accounting information of raw material inventory; (iv) lack of evidence of review of interim financial statements; and (v) failure to document and communicate adequately responsibilities and authority of key financial roles.

Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2012. In our assessment of our internal controls over financial reporting for the year ended December 31, 2012, we and our external auditors identified the following material weaknesses:

- Significant deficiencies were detected regarding entity-level controls and control environment which, in the aggregate, constitute a material weakness, and which include: (i) failure to keep all our policies and procedures, including IFRS accounting policies, updated; (ii) limited IFRS understanding within our Internal Audit department; (iii) inadequate controls in the review and approval process of the disclosures of our financial statements; (iv) poor maintenance of our whistleblower line for the Mexican subsidiaries; (v) ineffective controls in our patents registry; (vi) inadequate distribution and segregation of duties within our accounting department; (vii) deficient distribution

to employees and officers of our code of ethics; (viii) failure to integrate all control processes into an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system; (ix) lack of an accounting manual with accounting instructions for our most important transactions; (x) failure to create and implement a training plan for our management personnel preparing financial records; and (xi) incomplete monitoring of certain control deficiencies identified on previous years;

- Inadequate supervision and controls within our accounting department which prejudiced the financial statement closing process, conversion of foreign subsidiaries, presentation of financial statements and assets valuation, resulting in material accounting errors;
- A lack of an appropriate consolidation system to allow our management to supervise properly the preparation of consolidated financial information with the required detail;
- Deficient and not standardized controls in SimRep related to the physical inventory counts and a very vulnerable procedure to determine costs due to manual calculations, and;
- Significant deficiencies were also detected at our subsidiary Corporación Aceros DM S.A. de C.V. which in the aggregate, constitute a material weakness. These significant deficiencies include: (i) failure to timely approve our policies and procedures to prepare financial statements in accordance with IFRS and limited knowledge of those standards, (ii) undocumented process and deficient controls in the control access to information systems, (iii) deficient controls to review and approve cost calculation of finished goods, (iv) lack of physical inventory of fixed assets; and (v) failure to document and communicate adequately responsibilities and authority of key financial roles.

Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2013. In our assessment of our internal controls over financial reporting for the year ended December 31, 2013, we and our external auditors identified the following material weaknesses:

- Significant deficiencies were detected regarding entity-level controls and control environment which, in the aggregate, constitute a material weakness, and which include: (i) inadequate controls in the review and approval process of the disclosure in the financial statements and our annual report on form 20-F, (ii) out of date whistleblower line for the Mexican subsidiaries, (iii) ineffective controls in our patents registry, (iv) inadequate distribution and segregation of duties within the accounting department in the Mexican subsidiaries, (v) deficient distribution to employees and officers of our code of ethics and poor promotion of strong control environment and internal controls, (vi) failure to integrate all control processes into an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, (vii) lack of an accounting manual with accounting instructions for our most important transactions, (viii) lack of specific procedures to authorize and register intercompany transactions, (ix) failure to create and implement a complete training plan for our management personnel preparing financial records, (x) limited IFRS and consolidation process understanding and reduced personnel within our Internal Audit department which limited the scope of the management assessment, also the internal audit plan was not carried out in full and did not include test about risk assessment, environmental, fraud and compliance with law, and only included a limited review of the consolidated financial statements, (xi) lack of committees to review and approve all our contracts and to make risk assessments, these activities are currently executed by selected persons only, (xii) lack of a transition plan for the establishment of the new COSO 2013; and (xiii) insufficient resources to implement and follow up on the remedial measures identified in previous years for the Mexican subsidiaries due to the prevalence of such deficiencies, and informal communication of deficiencies and remediation plans;
- Inadequate supervision and controls within our accounting department which prejudiced the financial statement closing process, conversion of foreign subsidiaries, presentation of financial statements, assets valuation and deferred taxes, resulting in material accounting errors;
- A lack of an appropriate consolidation system to allow our management to supervise properly the preparation of consolidated financial information with the required detail;
- Deficient and not standardized controls in SimRep related to authorization, control and accounting of capitalized expenditures and related fixed assets, and;
- Significant deficiencies were also detected at our subsidiary Corporación Aceros DM, S.A. de C.V. which in the aggregate, constitute a material weakness. These significant deficiencies include (i) incomplete procedures for the review process over financial closings; (ii) incomplete documental support for authorization and extension of customer credit lines, (iii) deficient controls in the control access to the information systems, (iv) deficient controls to review and approve inventory valuation, cost of production calculation and cost of sales computation, (v) lack of physical inventory of fixed assets; and (vi) failure to document and communicate adequately responsibilities and

authority of key financial roles.

Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2014. In our assessment of our internal controls over financial reporting for the year ended December 31, 2014, we and our external auditors identified the following material weaknesses:

- Insufficient resources applied to the remediation and appropriate monitoring of internal control weaknesses, most of which were identified in previous years and continue to be unresolved.
- Inadequate distribution and segregation of duties within the accounting department in the Mexican Subsidiaries due to insufficient resources. Additionally, the internal audit staff was reduced and considered insufficient to fulfill their role.
- Significant deficiencies were detected regarding entity-level controls and control environment which, in the aggregate, constitute a material weakness, and which include: (i) inadequate controls for the definition, review and approval process of the disclosure in the financial statements and our annual report on form 20-F, (ii) non-operating and outdated whistleblower line for the Mexican subsidiaries, (iii) ineffective controls in our patents registry, (iv) deficient distribution of our code of ethics to employees and officers and poor promotion of strong control environment and internal controls in accordance with the COSO model, (v) failure to integrate all control processes into one Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, (vi) lack of an accounting manual with accounting instructions on most of accounting records, (vii) lack of specific procedures for the approval of transactions with related parties, (viii) failure to create and implement a complete training plan for management personnel preparing financial records, (ix) limited IFRS and consolidation process understanding and reduced personnel within our Internal Audit department which limited the scope of the management assessment; the internal audit plan was not carried out in full and did not include tests about risk assessment, including environmental, fraud, compliance with laws and review of the consolidated financial statements; (x) lack of committees to review, approve and make risk assessments of all our contracts, and (xii) informal communications of deficiencies and remediation plan to the areas and managers involved.
- Inadequate supervision and controls within the accounting department which impacted the financial statement closing process, conversion of foreign subsidiaries and intercompany reconciliations, resulting in material accounting errors.
- A lack of an appropriate consolidation system to allow management to properly supervise the preparation of consolidated financial information with the detail required.
- SimRep did not maintain effective controls relating to accounting of certain capital expenditures and related fixed assets were found. Lastly, the evaluation for impairments is not reasonable given actual results of such Subsidiary.
- Significant deficiencies were also detected at our subsidiary Corporación Aceros DM, S.A. de C.V. which in the aggregate, constitute a material weakness. These significant deficiencies include (i) ineffective controls and insufficient supporting documentation for closings of periods end and financial statements review and authorization; the related procedures were incomplete and do not include specific procedures to enter transactions into the general ledger, to select and apply accounting policies and have not been updated in the last 3 years, which such controls are necessary to give reasonable assurance of compliance with IFRS, (ii) no evidence of review of some account balances, such as fixed assets, sales and tax calculations by the responsible individuals; there is also no evidence of review of the financial statements by the General Manager of Corporación Aceros DM, S.A de C.V., (iii) undocumented processes and deficient controls in the access to the information systems, (iv) deficient controls to review and approve cost calculations of finish goods, period end costs and inventories and cost of sales report, (v) lack of physical inventory of fixed assets in several years; and (vi) failure to document and communicate adequately responsibilities and authority of key financial roles.

Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2015. In our assessment of our internal controls over financial reporting for the year ended December 31, 2015, we and our external auditors identified the following material weaknesses:

- The internal audit department did not develop its functions to comply with the analysis of the controls during 2015. Consequently, this limited the functions of the Audit Committee.
- Insufficient resources applied to the remediation and appropriate monitoring of internal control weaknesses, most of which were identified in previous years and continue to be unresolved.

- Inadequate distribution and segregation of duties within the accounting department in our Subsidiaries due to insufficient resources. Additionally, the internal audit staff was considered insufficient to fulfill their role.
- Significant deficiencies were detected regarding entity-level controls and control environment which, in the aggregate, constitute a material weakness and create a reasonable likelihood that a material misstatement of our annual and interim financial statements will not be prevented or detected on a timely basis. Such deficiencies include: (i) inadequate controls for the definition, review and approval process of the disclosure in the financial statements and our annual report on form 20-F, (ii) whistleblower line for our Mexican subsidiaries was not fully operational, our website information is outdated and does not include information about our Brazilian operations, (iii) ineffective controls in our patents registry, (iv) deficient distribution of our code of ethics to employees and officers and poor promotion of strong control environment and internal controls in accordance with the COSO model, (v) failure to integrate all control processes into one Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, (vi) lack of an accounting manual with accounting instructions on most of accounting records, (vii) lack of specific procedures for the approval of transactions with related parties, (viii) failure to create and implement a complete training plan for management personnel preparing financial records under IFRS, (ix) limited IFRS and consolidation process understanding and reduced personnel within our Internal Audit department which limited the scope; also the internal audit plan was not carried out, and therefore the audit department did not perform risk assessment an environmental, fraud, compliance with laws, review of the consolidated financial statements and review of our annual report on form 20-F; (x) lack of committees to review, approve and make risk assessments of all our contracts; and (xi) informal communications of deficiencies and remediation plan to the areas and managers involved.
- Inadequate supervision and controls within the accounting department which impacted the financial statement closing process, conversion of foreign subsidiaries, intercompany reconciliations and a lack of controls for the issuance and authorizations of journal entries, resulting in material accounting errors.
- A lack of an appropriate consolidation system to allow management to properly supervise the preparation of consolidated financial information with the detail required.
- SimRep did not maintain personnel with the appropriate level of knowledge and experience of accounting and training required to comply with financial reporting requirements. This material weakness led to the certain control deficiencies, each of which are considered to be a material weakness.
- Failure to provide our external auditors with evidence of the evaluation of the effectiveness of internal controls in our Brazilian subsidiary, in addition of not hiring an external auditor for this evaluation.
- Significant deficiencies were also detected at our subsidiary Corporación Aceros DM, S.A. de C.V. which in the aggregate, constitute a material weakness.

Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2016. Our external auditors incorporated into their "Attestation Report of the Independent Registered Public Accounting Firms" for the year ended December 31, 2016, the following assessment of our internal controls, which included the following material weaknesses:

- Regarding the control environment and entity level controls, the following material weaknesses were identified: (i) lack of a whistleblower tool that covers the entirety of the company; (ii) regarding the distribution of the code of ethics, certain sectors of the employees did not recognize the code of ethics; (iii) ineffective control of the patent registration process, which lacks a policy and a procedure; (iv) lack of a policy and procedure for the valuation of assets and the company's physical inventories; (v) lack of a policy and procedure governing the extensions of credit to the clients; (vi) lack of a policy and procedure for the registration of related parties and the approval of transactions with related parties.
- Lack of an appropriate consolidation system to allow management to properly supervise the preparation of consolidated financial information with the detail required.
- In connection with certain financial reporting processes, lack of a robust role-segregation model for the creation, editing, deletion, display only, and modification of such processes.
- Lack of communication between the internal audit team, which impacted time of test execution, leaving out of scope cycles such as income, human resources, general controls of information technology and costs and inventories.

- Lack of documentation setting out the procedure in the event of a disaster (Disaster Recovery Plan) and documentation setting out the procedure in order to continue the operations of the business (Business Continuity Plan).

Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2017. In our assessment of our internal controls over financial reporting for the year ended December 31, 2017, we and our external auditors identified the following material weaknesses:

- Insufficient training on, and knowledge of, COSO and the related operation of the control environment for mid-level personnel of the Company.
- A lack of a formalized policy related to the delegation of authority clearly defining the roles and responsibilities for employees.
- The Company lacks a system of assessing and monitoring employee performance to increase their skills to be prepared for the complexity of the Company's operation.
- The Company does not maintain a detailed accounting manual and closing checklists. The lack of such procedures reduces the likelihood of detecting errors on a timely basis during the financial close. Similarly, there is a lack of documents supporting the existence of supervisory review over accounting entries recorded by the Company.
- The Company does not maintain appropriate evidence over records supporting certain matters in regards to fixed assets:
- There is insufficient data to support certain adjustments to fixed assets recorded on the books of the Company.
- The Company does not have an appropriate system to properly store records in regards to significant acquisitions of fixed assets.
- The Company failed to reconcile their recorded fixed assets to the underlying support.
- The Company did not document appropriate authorizations in regards to capital investments or to increases in the planned size of an ongoing investment project.
- The Company has neither a system of tagging and tracking fixed assets nor a process for taking periodic inventories to determine the continued existence of recorded fixed assets.
- The Company lacks sufficient documentation and internal controls related to the process of obtaining credit. The Company also lacks sufficient training for personnel responsible for monitoring such credit facilities in regards to fraud detection and ongoing compliance matters.
- The Company lacks a program to ascertain that the administrative staff with access to accounting records are sufficiently trained and monitored.
- The Company lacks an appropriate environment to ensure that the financial records are closed in accordance with

International Financial Reporting Standards properly and in a timely manner. Items identified included:

- o A lack of appropriate accounting resources at the corporate level which adversely impacted the operation of key supervision controls over the accounting department, the financial statement closing process, and the process of computing and authorizing journal entries.
- o A lack of appropriate procedures to analyze the results of the business units prior to consolidation.
- o A lack of a unified computerized general ledger or enterprise resource planning system among the business units. There is also a lack of a common chart of accounts which would simplify the consolidation process.
- o A lack of an appropriate consolidation system allowing management to properly supervise the preparation of consolidated financial information. The system is highly manual, increasing the risk of human error and lacking sufficient oversight as the process is largely performed by a single member of the accounting staff.
- An audit performed on the information technology systems of the Company determined that approximately 25% of controls over the information technology infrastructure were either deficient in design or missing. Additional findings include:
 - o A lack of an internal reference framework methodology to ascertain and assess information technology risks.
 - o The lack of a methodology to evaluate the design and operational effectiveness of key controls over critical business processes.
 - o No system of verification of the access profiles of personnel or a process to verify that accounts of former employees are properly closed.
- In the case of GV do Brasil Indústria e Comércio de Aço Ltda in Brasil we observed an inadequate segregation of duties, in respect to system access and activities related to:
 - o The person with final responsibility for the preparation of the financial reports is also responsible for the corporate tax area, financial management (approval of payments and receipts, analysis of client credit risks including credit limits still not established, and negotiations with clients), monthly calculation of the costs of the products sold (and, consequently, of the value of the inventories of finished products), and assessment of the amount of physical impurities contained in scrap inventories, which also determines the valuation.
 - o The person responsible for supervising the physical movements of raw materials and finished products also has the following duties: authorization to issue sales invoices, the authority to adjustment quantities of inventory items, and also responsibility for planning and authorizing the movements of the physical inventory of between inventory locations.
- In the case of SimRep Corporation and Subsidiaries in the United States we identified that as a component of the financial control process, certain accounts are not being reconciled quarterly to the underlying details and

the components of certain other accounts are not being reviewed by management.

- In the case of SimRep Corporation and Subsidiaries in the United States we identified that a control requiring the signatures of the vice-president of Finance, head of information technology and the General Manager to authorize all expenditures over \$25,000 was not operating effectively. A number of the purchases lacked the required supporting signatures.
- In the case of SimRep Corporation and Subsidiaries in the United States we identified that the controller at one of the production plants failed to properly perform all required tests to review the inventories to be sure they are properly recorded at the lower of cost or market, and also failed to obtain approval for a journal entry which should be generated from the analysis.

Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2018. In our assessment of our internal controls over financial reporting for the year ended December 31, 2018, the following material weaknesses were identified:

- Transactions with related parties:
 - o Lack of evidence of how transactions with third parties are documented and authorized.
 - o Lack of policy regulating the way in which transactions with third parties should be documented and authorized.
- Information Technology Systems:
 - o Lack of backup-generation controls for computer equipment that contains key company information.
 - o Insufficient Information Technology infrastructure to support the Company's growth when required.

By letter dated February 13, 2017, the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") notified us that the SEC was conducting an informal, and non-public, inquiry into the Company in connection with our internal controls. After cooperating with the SEC, we settled internal controls charges with the SEC on January 29, 2019. We agreed to retain an independent consultant and to pay a civil monetary penalty in the amount of US\$200,000.

Any failure to implement and maintain the needed improvements in the controls over our financial reporting, or difficulties encountered in the implementation of these improvements in our controls, could result in a material misstatement in our annual or interim financial statements that would not be prevented or detected, or cause us to fail to meet our reporting obligations under applicable securities laws. Any failure to improve our internal controls to address the identified weaknesses could result in our incurring substantial liability for not having met our legal obligation and could also cause investors to lose confidence in our reported financial information, which could have a material adverse impact on the trading price of our Series B shares or the ADSs.

For further details, see Items 15.B "Controls and Procedures—Management's Annual Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting – Material Weaknesses," 15.C "Attestation Report of the Independent Registered Public Accounting Firms" and 15.D "Changes in Internal Control over Financial Reporting."

Tariffs, anti-dumping and countervailing duty claims imposed in the future could harm our ability to export our products outside of Mexico, and changes in Mexican tariffs on steel imports could adversely affect the profitability and market share of our Mexican steel business.

On October 14, 2014, the United States International Trade Commission (USITC) determined that the U.S. steel industry is materially injured by reason of imports of steel concrete reinforcing bars from Mexico, that are sold in the United States at less than fair value, and from Turkey, that are subsidized by the government of Turkey. As a result of the USITC's affirmative determinations, the U.S. Department of Commerce issued an antidumping duty order on imports of this product from Mexico and a countervailing duty order on imports of this product from Turkey. The U.S. government imposed tariffs of 66.7% against imports for rebar from Deacero, S.A.P.I de C.V. and us and tariffs of 20.58% for rebar imports from all other producers in Mexico. On June 8, 2017, the US Department of Commerce issued a final resolution in which it determined that the tariff would be 0%.

Recent events, including the results of the 2016 U.S. presidential election and the lack of progress in Brexit negotiations in the U.K., have resulted in substantial regulatory uncertainty regarding international trade and trade policy. On March 1, 2018, U.S. President Trump announced a 25% tariff on all steel products and a 10% tariff on all aluminum products imported into the United States for an indefinite amount of time under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act. On May 1, 2018, the Trump administration issued two proclamations authorizing modifications of the Section 232 tariffs on steel and aluminum. In its May 1, 2018 proclamations, the Trump administration also extended negotiations with Canada, Mexico, and the EU for a final 30 days and, effective June 1, 2018, the Trump administration implemented 25% tariffs on imports from the EU, Canada and Mexico. It is unclear what impact these protectionist measures will have in 2019, whether they will be effective in increasing or maintaining steel prices in the adopting country or countries and whether they will have an overall negative impact on global macroeconomic conditions.

In addition, the Trump administration and the U.S. Congress may make substantial changes in legislation, regulation and government policy directly affecting our business or indirectly affecting the Company because of impacts on its customers and suppliers. In particular, the Company's exports from Mexico into the United States may be negatively affected by the implementation of the Trump administration's replacement of the NAFTA trade agreement with Canada and Mexico. More generally, actions further to President Trump's suggestions that he may seek to renegotiate other free trade agreements or withdraw the United States from the

World Trade Organization could have an adverse effect on the Company's operations. All of the above, including escalating tariffs on steel imports or a more general trade war, pose a degree of uncertainty which could have a significant adverse effect on steel demand, our results of operations and global macroeconomic conditions generally.

Many of our products are subject to existing duties, tariffs, anti-dumping duties and quotas that may limit the quantity of some types of goods that we import into the United States. Furthermore, certain of our competitors may be better positioned than us to withstand or react to border taxes, tariffs or other restrictions on global trade and as a result we may lose market share to such competitors. Due to broad uncertainty regarding the timing, content and extent of any regulatory changes in the U.S. or elsewhere, we cannot predict the impact, if any, that these changes could have to our business, financial condition and results of operations. See “—Risks Related to Mexico—Developments in other countries could adversely affect the Mexican economy, our financial performance and the price of our shares.”

The operation of our facilities depends on good labor relations with our employees.

As of December 31, 2018, approximately 87% of our non-Mexican and 44% of our Mexican employees were members of unions. The compensation terms of our labor contracts are adjusted on an annual basis, and all other terms of the labor contracts are renegotiated every two years. In addition, collective bargaining agreements are typically negotiated on a facility-by-facility basis for our Mexican facilities. Any failure to reach an agreement on new labor contracts or to negotiate these labor contracts could result in strikes, boycotts or other labor disruptions. These potential labor disruptions could have a material and adverse effect on our business. Labor disruptions or significant negotiated wage increases could reduce our sales or increase our costs, which could in turn have a material adverse effect on our results of operations.

Operations at our Lackawanna, New York, facility depend on our continuing right to use certain property and assets of an adjoining facility and the termination of any such rights would interrupt our operations and have a material adverse effect on our results of operations and financial condition.

The operations of our Lackawanna facility depend upon certain arrangements and understandings relating to, among other things, our use of industrial water, compressed air, sanitary sewer and electrical power. These service and utility arrangements, initially entered into with the Mittal Steel Company N.V. and its affiliates (“Mittal Steel”), were effective through April 30, 2009, at which time Mittal Steel transferred its Lackawanna plant to Tecumseh Redevelopment, Inc. (“Tecumseh”). In December 2010, Tecumseh transferred a portion of the former Mittal Steel facility to Great Lakes Industrial Development, LLC (“GLID”). Upon the transfer to GLID, we entered into a written agreement with GLID regarding the provision of compressed air to our facility. This lease assures that compressed air will be provided to our facility during the lease term (initially two years with automatic one year renewals until terminated by either party) and grants us an option to purchase the equipment at various times and at stated prices, thereby providing us some flexibility while we consider the installation of our own compressed air system at our facility. The water pump that services our plant is located on property still owned by Mittal Steel and is maintained by Mittal Steel, which also continues to furnish industrial water to us on a month-to-month basis. The electric system which services the compressed air equipment, as well as the electric system which services the GLID property, has been re-routed through our electric meter located at a substation on the adjacent GLID property. We continue to pursue a written agreement with GLID covering our use of the electric substation and related equipment on the GLID property, as well as the sanitary sewer lift station on the GLID property that serves our facility, and a truck entrance and security monitoring equipment located on the GLID property. All of these rights are essential to the use and operation of our Lackawanna facility. It is our understanding that GLID has sold or is in the process of selling a portion of its property to an unrelated third party. In the event of a termination of any of our rights, either due to a failure to negotiate a satisfactory outcome with Mittal Steel, GLID or any third party to which it sells all or part of its facility, or for any other reason, we could be required to cease all or substantially all of our operations at the Lackawanna facility. Because we produce certain types of products in our Lackawanna facility that we do not produce in our other facilities, an interruption of production at our Lackawanna facility would result in a substantial loss of revenue and could damage our relationships with customers.

Our sales in the United States are concentrated and could be significantly reduced if one of our major customers reduced its purchases of our products or was unable to fulfill its financial obligations to us.

Our sales in the United States are concentrated among a relatively small number of customers. Any of our major customers can stop purchasing our products or significantly reduce their purchases at any time. During 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015 and 2014, sales to our ten largest customers in the United States accounted for approximately 68.4%, 68.7%, 62.1%, 56.8% and 51.4% of our consolidated revenues in the United States, respectively, and approximately 17.7%, 20%, 18.1%, 21.5% and 23.6% of our total consolidated revenues, respectively. A disruption in sales to one or more of our largest customers would adversely affect our cash flow and results of operations.

We cannot assure you that we will be able to maintain our current level of sales to our largest customers or that we will be able to sell our products to other customers on terms that are favorable to us or at all. The loss of, or substantial decrease in the amount

of purchases by, or a write-off of any significant receivables from, any of our major customers would materially and adversely affect our business, results of operations, liquidity and financial condition.

Unanticipated problems with our manufacturing equipment and facilities could have an adverse impact on our business.

Our capacity to manufacture steel products depends on the suitable operation of our manufacturing equipment, including blast furnaces, electric arc furnaces, continuous casters, reheating furnaces and rolling mills. Breakdowns requiring significant time and/or resources to repair, as well as the occurrence of unexpected adverse events, such as fires, explosions or adverse meteorological conditions, could cause production interruptions that could adversely affect our results of operations.

We have not obtained insurance against all risks, and do not maintain insurance covering losses resulting from catastrophes or business interruptions. In the event we are not able to quickly and cost-effectively remedy problems creating any significant interruption of our manufacturing capabilities, our operations could be adversely affected. In addition, in the event any of our plants were destroyed or significantly damaged or its production capabilities otherwise significantly decreased, we would likely suffer significant losses, and capital investments necessary to repair any destroyed or damaged facilities or machinery would adversely affect our profitability, liquidity and financial condition.

If we are unable to obtain or maintain quality and environmental management certifications for our facilities, we may lose existing customers and fail to attract new customers.

Most of our automotive parts customers in Mexico and the United States require that we have ISO 9001, TS 16949 and ISO 14001 certifications. All of the Mexican and U.S. facilities that sell to automotive parts customers are currently certified, as required. If the foregoing certifications are canceled, approvals are withdrawn or necessary additional standards are not obtained in a timely fashion, our ability to continue to serve our targeted market, retain our customers or attract new customers may be impaired. For example, our failure to maintain these certifications could cause customers to refuse shipments, which could materially and adversely affect our revenues and results of operations. We cannot assure you that we will be able to maintain these required certifications.

In the SBQ market, all participants must satisfy quality audits and obtain certifications in order to obtain the status of "approved supplier." The automotive industry has put these stringent conditions in place for the production of auto parts to assure vehicle quality and safety. We currently are an approved supplier for our automotive parts customers. Maintaining these certifications is key to preserving our market share, because they can be a barrier to entry in the SBQ market, and we cannot assure you that we will be able to do so.

Failure to comply with environmental laws and regulations may result in fines, penalties or other significant liabilities or prevent us from operating our facilities.

Our operations are subject to a broad range of environmental laws and regulations governing our impact on air, water, soil and groundwater and exposure to hazardous substances. The costs of complying with and the imposition of liabilities pursuant to, environmental laws and regulation can be significant. Despite our efforts to comply with environmental laws and regulations, environmental incidents or events that negatively affect the operations of our facilities may occur. In addition, we cannot assure you that we will at all times operate in compliance with environmental laws and regulations. If we fail to comply with these laws and regulations, we may be assessed fines or penalties, be required to make large expenditures to comply with such laws and regulations, or be forced to shut down non-compliant operations and face lawsuits by third parties. In addition, environmental laws and regulations are becoming increasingly stringent and it is possible that future laws and regulations may require us to undertake material environmental compliance expenditures and require modifications in our operations. Furthermore, we need to maintain existing and obtain future environmental permits in order to operate our facilities. The failure to obtain necessary permits or consents or the loss of any permits could result in significant fines or penalties or prevent us from operating our facilities. We may also be subject, from time to time, to legal proceedings brought by private parties or governmental agencies with respect to environmental matters, including matters involving alleged property damage or personal injury that could result in significant liability. Certain of our facilities in the United States have been the subject of administrative action by federal, state and local environmental authorities. See Item 8. "Financial Information—Legal Proceedings."

Greenhouse gas policies and regulations, particularly any binding restriction on emissions of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, could negatively impact our steelmaking operations.

Our steel making operations in the United States and in Mexico use electric arc furnaces where carbon dioxide generation is primarily linked to energy use. In the United States, the Environmental Protection Agency has issued rules imposing inventory and reporting obligations to which some of our facilities are subject, and has also issued rules that will affect preconstruction permits for our facilities where increases in greenhouse gas pollutants are contemplated. The U.S. Congress has debated various measures for

regulating greenhouse gas emission (such as carbon dioxide) and may enact them in the future. Such laws and regulations may also result in higher costs for coking coal, natural gas and electricity generated by carbon-based systems (such as coal-fired electric generating facilities). Such future laws and regulations, whether in the form of a cap-and-trade emissions permit system, a carbon tax or other regulatory regime may have a negative effect on our operations. Climate change policy is evolving at regional, national and international levels, and political and economic events may significantly affect the scope and timing of climate change measures that are ultimately put in place. As signatories to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (the "UNFCCC"), Mexico and the U.S. became subject to the Paris Agreement to fight climate change, which was approved at the 21st session of the UNFCCC conference in 2015. However, in June 2017, U.S. President Trump stated that the United States would withdraw from the Paris Agreement, but may enter into a future international agreement related to greenhouse gas emissions. In August 2017, the U.S. State Department officially informed the United Nations of the intent of the United States to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. The United States' adherence to the four-year exit process is uncertain and/or the terms on which the United States may reenter the Paris Agreement or a separately negotiated agreement are unclear at this time. As a result, some of our facilities may ultimately be subject to future regional, provincial and/or federal climate change regulations to manage greenhouse emissions. More stringent greenhouse gas policies and regulations could adversely affect our business and results of operations.

If we are required to remediate contamination at our facilities we may incur significant liabilities.

Certain of our U.S. facilities are currently engaged in the investigation and/or remediation of environmental contamination. Most of these investigations relate to legacy activities by prior owners. We may in the future be subject to similar investigations or required to undertake similar remediation measures at other facilities. We recognize a liability for environmental remediation when it becomes probable that such remediation will be required and the amount can be reasonably estimated. As estimated costs to remediate change, or when new liabilities become probable, we adjust the record liabilities accordingly. However, due to the numerous variables associated with the judgments and assumptions that are part of these estimates and changes in governmental regulations and environmental technologies over time, we cannot assure you that our environmental reserves will be adequate to cover such liabilities or that our environmental expenditures will not differ significantly from our estimates or materially increase in the future. Failure to comply with any legal obligations requiring remediation of contamination could result in liabilities, imposition of cleanup liens and fines, and we could incur large expenditures to bring our facilities into compliance. See Item 8. "Financial Information—Legal Proceedings."

We could incur losses due to product liability claims and may be unable to maintain product liability insurance on acceptable terms, if at all.

We could experience losses from defects or alleged defects in our steel products that subject us to claims for monetary damages. For example, many of our products are used in automobiles and light trucks and it is possible that a defect in one of these vehicles would result in product liability claims against us. In accordance with normal commercial sales, some of our products include implied warranties that they are free from defects, are suitable for their intended purposes and meet certain agreed upon manufacturing specifications. We cannot assure you that future product liability claims will not be brought against us, that we will not incur liability in excess of our insurance coverage, or that we will be able to maintain product liability insurance with adequate coverage levels and on acceptable terms, if at all.

Our controlling shareholder, Industrias CH, S.A.B. DE C.V., (Industrias CH) is able to exert significant influence on our business and policies and its interests may differ from those of other shareholders.

As of April 29, 2019, Industrias CH, which the chairman of our board of directors, Rufino Vigil González, controls, owned approximately 84% of our shares. Industrias CH nominated and elected all of the current members of our board of directors, and Industrias CH is in a position to exercise substantial influence and control over our business and policies, including the timing and payment of dividends. The interests of Industrias CH may differ significantly from those of other shareholders. Furthermore, as a result of the significant equity position of Industrias CH, there is currently limited liquidity in our series B shares and the ADSs.

Mr. Sergio Vigil González is the chief executive officer of Industrias CH and he also functions in a senior management role for the Company, although he holds no formal title at the Company. In this function, Mr. Vigil directs business strategies for the Company, negotiates potential acquisitions and directs intercompany loans, among other things. Our board of directors is aware of Mr. Vigil's role at the Company and he has been formally authorized by our board of directors as a signatory of the Company. Mr. Vigil is the brother of our controlling shareholder and chairman of the board of directors, Rufino Vigil González.

We have had a number of related party transactions with our affiliates.

Historically, we have engaged in a number and variety of transactions with our affiliates, including entities that Industrias CH owns or controls. While we believe that these transactions were made on terms that were not less favorable to us than those obtainable on an arm's length basis, there was no independent determination of that fact. We expect that in the future we will continue to enter into transactions with our affiliates, and some of these transactions may be significant. See Item 7.B "Related Party Transactions."

We depend on our senior management and their unique knowledge of our business and of the SBQ industry, and we may not be able to replace key executives if they leave.

We depend on the performance of our executive officers and key employees. Our senior management has significant experience in the steel industry, and the loss of any member of senior management or our inability to attract and retain additional senior management could materially and adversely affect our business, results of operations, prospects and financial condition. We believe that the SBQ steel market is a niche market where specific industry experience is key to success. We depend on the knowledge of our business and the SBQ industry of our senior management team, including Luis Garcia Limon, our chief executive officer. In addition, we attribute much of the success of our growth strategy to our ability to retain most of the key senior management personnel of the companies and businesses that we have acquired. Competition for qualified personnel is significant, and we may not be able to find replacements with sufficient knowledge of, and experience in, the SBQ industry for our existing senior management or any of these individuals if their services are no longer available. Our business could be adversely affected if we cannot attract or retain senior management or other necessary personnel.

Our tax liability may increase if the tax laws and regulations in countries in which we operate change or become subject to adverse interpretations.

Taxes payable by companies in the countries in which we operate are substantial and include income tax, value-added tax, excise duties, profit taxes, payroll related taxes, property taxes and other taxes. Tax laws and regulations in some of these countries may be subject to change, varying interpretation and inconsistent enforcement. Ineffective tax collection systems and continuing budget requirements may increase the likelihood of the imposition of onerous taxes and penalties which could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations. In addition to the usual tax burden imposed on taxpayers, these conditions create uncertainty as to the tax implications of various business decisions. This uncertainty could expose us to significant fines and penalties and to enforcement measures despite our best efforts at compliance, and could result in a greater than expected tax burden. In addition, many of the jurisdictions in which we operate, including Mexico, have adopted transfer pricing legislation. If tax authorities impose significant additional tax liabilities as a result of transfer pricing adjustments, it could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations. It is possible that tax authorities in the countries in which we operate will introduce additional tax raising measures. The introduction of any such provisions may affect our overall tax efficiency and may result in significant additional taxes becoming payable. Any such additional tax exposure could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations.

If we are unable to protect our information systems against data corruption, cyber-based attacks or network security breaches, our operations could be disrupted.

We are increasingly dependent on information technology networks and systems, including over the Internet, to process, transmit and store electronic information. In particular, we depend on our information technology infrastructure for digital marketing activities and electronic communications among us and our clients, suppliers and also among our subsidiaries and facilities. Security breaches or infrastructure flaws can create system disruptions, shutdowns or unauthorized disclosure of confidential information. If we are unable to prevent such breaches or flaws, our operations could be disrupted, or we may suffer financial damage or loss because of lost or misappropriated information.

Cyber threats are rapidly evolving and those threats and the means for obtaining access to information in digital and other storage media are becoming increasingly sophisticated. Cyber threats and cyber-attackers can be sponsored by countries or sophisticated criminal organizations or be the work of single "hackers" or small groups of "hackers."

Insider or employee cyber and security threats are increasingly a concern for all companies, including ours. Nevertheless, as cyber threats evolve, change and become more difficult to detect and successfully defend against, one or more cyber-attacks might defeat our or a third-party service provider's security measures in the future and obtain the personal information of customers or employees. Employee error or other irregularities may also result in a defeat of security measures and a breach of information systems. Moreover, hardware, software or applications we use may have inherent defects of design, manufacture or operations or could be inadvertently or intentionally implemented or used in a manner that could compromise information security. A security breach and loss of information may not be discovered for a significant period of time after it occurs. While we have no knowledge of a material security breach to date, any compromise of data security could result in a violation of applicable privacy and other laws or standards, the loss of valuable business data, or a disruption of our business. A security breach involving the misappropriation, loss or other unauthorized disclosure of sensitive or confidential information could give rise to unwanted media attention, materially damage to our customer relationships and reputation, and result in fines, fees, or liabilities, which may not be covered by our insurance policies.

Risks Related to Global Economic Conditions

Global economic conditions, such as the latest financial crisis and economic recession that occurred during 2008 and 2009, may significantly impact our business.

The financial crisis that began in the United States in 2008 led to a global recession in which overall economic activity decreased across the world generally and in North America in particular. The corresponding reduction in demand across the economy in general and in the automotive, construction and manufacturing sectors in particular has reduced demand for steel products in North America and globally. These economic conditions significantly impacted our business and results of operations. Although demand, production levels and prices in certain segments and markets have recovered and stabilized to a certain degree, the extent, timing and duration of the recovery and potential return to pre-crisis levels remains uncertain. If global macroeconomic conditions deteriorate, however, the outlook for steel producers would be adversely affected. It is difficult to predict the duration or severity of a new global economic downturn, or to what extent it will affect us. An unsustainable recovery and persistently weak economic conditions in our key markets could depress demand for our products and adversely affect our business and results of operations. We sell our products to the automotive and construction-related industries, both of which reported substantially lower customer demand during and after the latest global recession. As a result, our operating levels declined compared to pre-recession levels. While some of our end-product markets, such as the automotive industry, experienced recoveries during 2013, 2014 and 2015, in 2016 we experienced a reduction in our sales, and in 2017 there was a slight increase in sales to the automotive industry compared to 2016, in 2018 we experienced a slight decrease in our sales to the automotive industry compared to 2017. In addition to slackening demand by end consumers, we believe that some of our customers continue to experience and may experience in the future difficulty in obtaining credit or maintaining their ability to qualify for trade credit insurance, resulting in a further reduction in purchases and an increase in our credit risk exposure. Moreover, if a new global economic downturn occurs, we may face increased risk of insolvency and other credit related issues of our customers and suppliers, as we faced with our customers and suppliers particularly in industries that were hard hit by the latest recession, such as automotive, construction and appliance. Also, there is the possibility that our suppliers may face similar risks. A decrease in available credit may increase the risk of our customers defaulting on their payment obligations to us and may cause some of our suppliers to be delayed in filling or to be unable to fill our needs. The impact of global economic conditions on these industries may have a significant effect on our results of operations.

Additionally, if global economic conditions deteriorate, we may be required to undertake asset impairments, as we have been required to undertake in the past.

Because a significant portion of our sales are to the automotive industry, a decrease in automotive manufacturing could reduce our cash flows and adversely affect our results of operations.

Direct sales of our products to automotive assemblers and manufacturers accounted for approximately 65% of our net sales of SBQ in 2018. Demand for our products is affected by, among other things, the relative strength or weakness of the North American automotive industry. A reduction in vehicles manufactured in North America, the principal market for Republic's SBQ steel products, would have an adverse effect on our results of operations. We also sell to independent forgers, components suppliers and steel service centers, all of which sell to the automotive market as well as other markets. Developments affecting the North American automotive industry may adversely affect us.

Our customers in the automotive industry continually seek to obtain price reductions from us, which may adversely affect our results of operations.

A challenge that we and other suppliers of intermediary products used in the manufacture of automobiles face is continued price reduction pressure from our customers in the automobile manufacturing business. Downward pricing pressure has been a characteristic of the automotive industry in recent years and it is migrating to all our vehicular markets. Virtually all automobile manufacturers have aggressive price reduction initiatives that they impose upon their suppliers, and such actions are expected to continue in the future. In the face of lower prices to customers, we must continue to reduce our operating costs in order to maintain profitability. We have taken and continue to take steps to reduce our operating costs to offset customer price reductions; however, price reductions are adversely affecting our profit margins and are expected to do so in the future. If we are unable to offset customer price reductions through improved operating efficiencies, new manufacturing processes, sourcing alternatives, technology enhancements and other cost reduction initiatives, or if we are unable to avoid price reductions from our customers, our results of operations could be adversely affected.

Sales may fall as a result of fluctuations in industry inventory levels.

Inventory levels of steel products held by companies that purchase our products can vary significantly from period to period. These fluctuations can temporarily affect the demand for our products, as customers draw from existing inventory during periods of low investment in construction and the other industry sectors that purchase our products and accumulate inventory during periods of high investment and, as a result, these companies may not purchase additional steel products or maintain their current purchasing volume. Accordingly, we may not be able to increase or maintain our current levels of sales volumes or prices.

Risks Related to Mexico

Adverse economic conditions in Mexico may adversely affect our financial performance.

A substantial portion of our operations are conducted in Mexico and our business is affected by the performance of the Mexican economy. The latest global credit crisis and the economic recession has had significant adverse consequences on the Mexican economy, which in 2009 contracted by 6.5%, in 2010 grew by 5.5%, in 2011 and 2012 grew by 3.9%, in 2013 grew by 1.1%, in 2014 grew by 2.3%, in 2015 grew 2.5%, in 2016 grew by 2.9% in 2017 grew by 2% and in 2018 grew by 2% (according to preliminary figures of the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía* (INEGI)), in terms of gross domestic production. Moreover, in the past, Mexico has experienced prolonged periods of economic crises, caused by internal and external factors over which we have no control. Those periods have been characterized by exchange rate instability, high inflation, high domestic interest rates, changes in oil prices, economic contraction, a reduction of international capital flows, balance of payment deficits, a reduction of liquidity in the banking sector and high unemployment rates. Decreases in the growth rate of the Mexican economy, or periods of negative growth, or increases in inflation may result in lower demand for our products. The Mexican government recently cut spending in response to a downward trend in international crude oil prices, and it may further cut spending in the future. These cuts could adversely affect the Mexican economy and, consequently, our business, financial condition, operating results and prospects. We cannot assure you that economic conditions in Mexico will not worsen, or that those conditions will not have an adverse effect on our financial performance.

Political, social and other developments in Mexico could adversely affect our business.

Political, social and other developments in Mexico may adversely affect our business. Social unrest, such as strikes, suspension of labor, demonstrations, acts of violence and terrorism in the Mexican states in which we operate could disrupt our financial performance. Additionally, the Mexican government has exercised, and continues to exercise, significant influence over the economy. Accordingly, Mexican federal governmental actions and policies concerning the economy, the regulatory framework, the social or political context, and state-owned and state controlled entities or industries could have a significant impact on private sector companies and on market conditions, prices and returns of Mexican securities. In the past, governmental actions have involved, among other measures, increases in interest rates, changes in tax policies, price controls, currency devaluations, capital controls and limits on imports.

Presidential and federal congressional elections in Mexico were held on July 1, 2018. Mr. Andrés Manuel López Obrador, a member of the *Movimiento Regeneración Nacional* (National Regeneration Movement, or Morena), was elected President of Mexico and took office on December 1, 2018, replacing Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto, a member of the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI). The new President's term will expire on September 30, 2024. The newly-elected members of the Mexican Congress took office on September 1, 2018. The uncertainty regarding the direction of policymaking with the new government could significantly change Mexico's political and economic situation, which consequently could affect our operations. As of the date of this annual report, the National Regeneration Movement holds an absolute majority in the Chamber of Deputies and controls 19 of 32 Mexican state congresses. This should facilitate the passing of legislation, including potential changes to the Mexican Constitution, which may increase political uncertainty. We cannot provide any assurances that political developments in Mexico, over which we have no control, will not have an adverse effect on our business, financial condition or results from operations. We cannot assure you that the current political situation or future developments in Mexico, over which we have no control, will not have an adverse effect on our business, financial condition or results of operations. Further, we cannot assure you that any new government policies will not adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations.

The Mexican government has exercised, and continues to exercise, significant influence over the Mexican economy.

The Mexican federal government has exercised, and continues to exercise, significant influence over the Mexican economy. Accordingly, Mexican federal governmental actions and policies concerning the economy, state-owned enterprises and state controlled, funded or influenced financial institutions could have a significant impact on private sector entities in general and on us in particular, and on market conditions, prices and returns on securities of Mexican companies. The Mexican federal government occasionally makes significant changes in policies and regulations, and may do so again in the future. Actions to control inflation and other regulations and policies have involved, among other measures, increases in interest rates, changes in tax policies, price controls, currency devaluations, capital controls and limits on imports. Tax legislation in Mexico is subject to continuous change and we cannot assure you whether the Mexican government may maintain existing political, social, economic or other policies, or whether changes may have a material adverse effect on our financial performance.

Violence in Mexico may adversely impact the Mexican economy and have a negative effect on our financial performance.

Mexican drug related violence and other organized crime have escalated significantly since 2006, when the Mexican federal government began increasing the use of the army and police to fight drug trafficking. Drug cartels have carried out attacks largely directed at competing drug cartels and law enforcement agents, however they also target companies and their employees, including companies' industrial properties, including through extortion, theft from trucks or industrial sites, kidnapping and other forms of crime and violence. This increase in violence and criminal activity has led to increased costs for companies in the form of stolen products

and added security and insurance. Corruption and links between criminal organizations and authorities also create conditions that affect our business operations, as well as extortion and other acts of intimidation, which may have the effect of limiting the level of action taken by federal and local governments in response to such criminal activity. We cannot assure you that the levels of violent crime in Mexico, over which we have no control, will not have an adverse effect on the country's economy and, as a result, on our financial performance.

Depreciation of the Mexican peso relative to the U.S. dollar could adversely affect our financial performance.

The peso historically has been subject to significant depreciation against the U.S. dollar. Depreciation of the Mexican peso relative to the U.S. dollar decreases a portion of our revenues in U.S. dollar terms, as well as increases the cost of a portion of the raw materials we require for production and any debt obligations denominated in U.S. dollars, and thereby may negatively affect our results of operations. The Mexican Central Bank may from time to time participate in the foreign exchange market to minimize volatility and support an orderly market. The Mexican Central Bank and the Mexican government have also promoted market-based mechanisms for stabilizing foreign exchange rates and providing liquidity to the exchange market, such as using over-the-counter derivatives contracts and publicly-traded futures contracts on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. However, the Peso is currently subject to significant fluctuations against the U.S. dollar and may be subject to such fluctuations in the future. Since the second half of 2008, the value of the Mexican peso relative to the U.S. dollar has fluctuated significantly. According to the U.S. Federal Reserve Board, during this period the exchange rate registered a low of Ps. 9.91 to U.S.\$1.00 on August 5, 2008, and a high of Ps. 21.89 to U.S.\$1.00 on January 19, 2017. In 2018 the exchange rate registered a low of Ps. 17.97 to U.S.\$1.00 and a high of Ps. 20.67 to U.S.\$1.00.

A severe depreciation of the Mexican peso may also result in disruption of the international foreign exchange markets and may limit our ability to transfer and to convert Mexican pesos into U.S. dollars and other currencies. While the Mexican government does not currently restrict, and since 1982 has not restricted the right or ability of Mexican or foreign persons or entities to convert Mexican pesos into U.S. dollars or to transfer other currencies out of Mexico, the Mexican government could impose restrictive exchange rate policies in the future.

Currency fluctuations or restrictions on transfer of funds outside Mexico may have an adverse effect on our financial performance, and could adversely affect the U.S. dollar value of the price of our Series B shares and the ADSs.

On December 17, 2015, a day after the U.S. Federal Reserve increased the target range for the federal funds rate in the United States by 25 basis points, the Mexican Central Bank increased the reference rate from 3.00% to 3.25% in an effort to counteract a sharp depreciation of the Mexican peso that could affect Mexico's expected rate of inflation. On February 17, 2016, the Mexican Central Bank further increased the reference rate from 3.25% to 3.75%, and has been increasing the reference rate regularly since then, to 8.25% as of March 26, 2019. We cannot assure you that, as a result of future increases by U.S. Federal Reserve of the target range for the federal funds rate in the United States, the Mexican economy or the value of securities issued by Mexican companies will not be affected, including as a result of any precipitous unwinding of investments in emerging markets, depreciations and increased volatility in the value of their currency and higher interest rates.

High inflation rates in Mexico may affect demand for our products and result in cost increases.

Mexico has historically experienced high annual rates of inflation. The annual rate of inflation, as measured by changes in the Mexican national consumer price index (*Índice Nacional de Precios al Consumidor*) published by the INEGI was 4.1% for 2014, 2.1% for 2015, 3.4% for 2016, 6.8% for 2017 and 4.8% for 2018. High inflation rates could adversely affect our business and results of operations by reducing consumer purchasing power, thereby adversely affecting demand for our products, increasing certain costs beyond levels that we could pass on to consumers, and by decreasing the benefit to us of revenues earned if the inflation rate exceeds the growth in our pricing levels.

Developments in other countries could adversely affect the Mexican economy, our financial performance and the price of our shares.

The Mexican economy and the market value of Mexican companies may be, to varying degrees, affected by economic and market conditions globally, in other emerging market countries and major trading partners, in particular the United States. Although economic conditions in other countries may differ significantly from economic conditions in Mexico, investors' reactions to adverse developments in other countries may have an adverse effect on the market value of securities of Mexican issuers or of Mexican assets. In recent years, for example, prices of both Mexican debt securities and equity securities decreased substantially as a result of developments in Russia, Asia, Europe and Brazil. Also, credit issues in the United States have in the past resulted in significant fluctuations in global financial markets, including Mexico.

In addition, in recent years economic conditions in Mexico have become increasingly correlated with economic conditions in the United States as a result of the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA, increased economic activity between the two countries, and the remittance of funds from Mexican immigrants working in the United States to Mexican residents. However, Donald Trump's victory in the U.S. presidential election in November 2016 has created uncertainty regarding the future of NAFTA and trade between the U.S. and Mexico. On January 20, 2017, Donald Trump became president of the U.S. President Trump and the Trump administration have made comments suggesting that he intends to re-negotiate the free trade agreements that the U.S. is party to, including NAFTA, and to implement high import taxes. On March 1, 2018, President Trump announced a 25% tariff on all steel products and a 10% tariff on all aluminum products imported into the United States for an indefinite amount of time under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act. In addition, leaders from the United States, Canada and Mexico also commenced discussions regarding NAFTA on January 23, 2018 in Montreal, Canada. In November 2018, the United States, Mexico and Canada signed the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, or USMCA, which is designed to replace NAFTA. The USMCA remains subject to approval and ratification by the legislatures in each of the three countries. If the United States fails to ratify the USMCA and withdraws from NAFTA, or if the United States withdraws from or makes material changes to other international trade agreements to which it is a party, trade barriers and other costs associated with trade between the United States and Mexico may increase, which could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

Moreover, the debt crisis in the European Union, changes in Chinese exchange rate policy, continuing concerns regarding the slowdown of the Chinese economy, recent terrorist attacks and recent sharp declines in the price of crude oil, may also affect the global and Mexican economies. We cannot assure you that events in other emerging market countries, in the United States or elsewhere will not adversely affect our financial performance.

We could be adversely affected by violations of the Mexican Federal Anticorruption Law in Public Contracting, the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and similar worldwide anti-bribery laws.

The Mexican Federal Anticorruption Law (*Ley Federal de Anticorrupción en Contrataciones Públicas*), the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and similar worldwide anti-bribery laws generally prohibit companies and their intermediaries from making improper payments to government officials and other persons for the purpose of obtaining or retaining business. There can be no assurance that our internal control policies and procedures will protect us from reckless or criminal acts committed by our employees or agents. Violations of these laws, or allegations of such violations, could disrupt our business and could have an adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

Our financial statements are prepared in accordance with IFRS and therefore are not directly comparable to financial statements of other companies prepared under U.S. GAAP or other accounting principles.

All Mexican companies listed on the Mexican Stock Exchange must prepare their financial statements in accordance with IFRS which differs in certain significant respects from U.S. GAAP. Items on the financial statements of a company prepared in accordance with IFRS may not reflect its financial position or results of operations in the way they would be reflected had such financial statements been prepared in accordance with U.S. GAAP. Accordingly, Mexican financial statements and reported earnings are likely to differ from those of companies in other countries in this and other respects.

Mexico has different corporate disclosure and accounting standards than those in the United States and other countries.

A principal objective of the securities laws of the United States, Mexico and other countries is to promote full and fair disclosure of all material corporate information, including accounting information. However, there may be different or less publicly available information about issuers of securities in Mexico than is regularly made available by public companies in countries with more highly developed capital markets, including the United States. The disclosure standards imposed by the Mexican Stock Exchange may be different than those imposed by securities exchanges in other countries or regions such as the United States. As a foreign private issuer, we are not subject to U.S. proxy rules and are exempt from certain reports under the U.S. Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as we are not required to file annual, quarterly and current reports and financial statements with the SEC as frequently or as promptly as U.S. domestic reporting companies whose securities are registered under the Exchange Act. These exemptions and leniencies will reduce the frequency and scope of information and protections available to you in comparison to those applicable to a U.S. domestic reporting company.

Risks Related to Brazil

Brazilian political and economic conditions, and the Brazilian government's economic and other policies, may negatively affect demand for our products.

The Brazilian economy has been characterized by frequent and occasionally extensive intervention by the Brazilian government and unstable economic cycles. The Brazilian government has often changed monetary, taxation, credit, tariff and other policies to influence the course of Brazil's economy. The Brazilian government's actions to control inflation and implement other policies have at times involved wage and price controls, blocking access to bank accounts, imposing capital controls and limiting imports into Brazil.

Our results of operations and financial condition may be adversely affected by factors such as:

- fluctuations in exchange rates;
- exchange control policies;
- interest rates;
- inflation;
- tax policies;
- expansion or contraction of the Brazilian economy, as measured by rates of growth in GDP;
- liquidity of domestic capital and lending markets; and
- other political, diplomatic, social and economic developments in or affecting Brazil.

Brazilian markets have been experiencing heightened volatility due to the uncertainties derived from the ongoing *Lava Jato* investigation, which is being conducted by the Office of the Brazilian Federal Prosecutor, and its impact on the Brazilian economy and political environment. Members of the Brazilian federal government and of the legislative branch, as well as senior officers of the state-owned oil company *Petróleo Brasileiro S.A. – Petrobras*, have faced allegations of political corruption. These government officials and senior officers allegedly accepted bribes by means of kickbacks on contracts granted by *Petrobras* to several infrastructure, oil and gas and construction companies. As a result of the *Lava Jato* investigation, a number of senior politicians, including congressman and officers of the major state-owned companies in Brazil resigned or have been arrested.

The potential outcome of these investigations and proceedings is uncertain, but they have adversely affected and we expect that they will continue to adversely affect the Brazilian markets. We cannot predict whether the allegations or proceedings will lead to further political and economic instability or whether new allegations against government officials or other companies in Brazil will arise in the future. In addition, we can neither predict the outcome of any such allegations and proceedings nor their effect on the Brazilian economy.

Amidst this background of political uncertainty, in August 2016, the Brazilian Senate approved the removal from office of Brazil's then-President, Dilma Rousseff, following a legal and administrative impeachment process for infringement of budgetary laws. Michel Temer, the former Vice-President, who assumed the presidency of Brazil following Rousseff's ouster, is also under investigation on corruption allegations. In addition, the former President, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, began serving a 12-year prison sentence on corruption and money laundering charges in April 2018 yet had led for a while the polls as a top contender to win the 2018 presidential election. On October 28, 2018, Jair Bolsonaro, a former member of the military and three-decade congressman, was elected the president of Brazil and took office on January 1, 2019. During his presidential campaign, Bolsonaro was reported to favor the privatization of state-owned companies, economic liberalization, and social security and tax reforms. However, there is no guarantee that Bolsonaro will be successful in executing his campaign promises or passing certain favored reforms fully or at all, particularly when confronting a fractured congress. In February 2019, the Brazilian federal government presented to the Congress a bill proposing a large and comprehensive change of Brazil's public social security system. If some or all of these public expenses are maintained and the required reforms are not passed, Brazil will continue to run a budget deficit for 2019 and the years going forward. We cannot predict the effects of this budget deficit on the Brazilian economy. We cannot predict which policies the Brazilian federal government may adopt or change or the effect that any such policies might have on our business and on the Brazilian economy. Any such new policies or changes to current policies may have a material adverse impact on our business, results of operations, financial condition and prospects. In addition, his current minister of the economy, Paulo Guedes, proposed during the presidential campaign the revocation of income tax exemption over payment of dividends, which, if enacted, would increase the tax expenses associated with any dividend or distribution by Brazilian companies, which could impact our capacity to receive, from our subsidiaries, future cash dividends or distributions net of taxes. Moreover, Bolsonaro was generally a polarizing figure during his campaign for presidency, particularly in relation to certain of his behavioral views, and we cannot predict the ways in which a divided electorate may continue to impact his presidency and ability to implement policies and reforms, all of which could have a negative impact on our business.

In addition, the Brazilian steel sector is facing a severe crisis. According to the Brazilian Steel Institute, steel consumption fell by 14% in the first nine months of 2015. We believe this crisis is largely due to a sharp decrease in durable goods manufacturing, particularly motor vehicle production, which is depressing steel consumption and offsetting the positive impact of construction activity associated with the summer 2016 Olympic Games held in Rio de Janeiro. The crisis in the Brazilian steel sector could have a material and adverse effect on our Brazilian business segment.