AGREEMENT ON PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF INVESTMENTS

BETWEEN

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN

AND

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS

The Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain

and

the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands,

hereinafter referred to as the Contracting Parties,

Desiring to strengthen their traditional ties of friendship and to extend and intensify the economic relations between them, particularly with respect to investments by the nationals of one Contracting Party in the territory of the other Contracting Party,

Recognising that agreement upon the treatment to be accorded to such investments will stimulate the flow of capital and technology and the economic development of the Contracting Parties and that fair and equitable treatment of investments is desirable,

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1

For the purposes of this Agreement:

a. the term "investments" means every kind of asset and more particularly, though not exclusively:
   i movable and immovable property and any other property rights such as mortgages, liens and pledges, as well as any other similar rights in respect of every kind of asset;
   ii. rights derived from shares, bonds and other kinds of interests in companies and joint ventures;
   iii. claims to money, to other assets or to any performance having an economic value;
   iv. rights in the field of intellectual property, technical processes, goodwill and know-how;
   v. rights granted under public law or under contract, including rights to prospect, explore, extract and win natural resources.

b. the term "nationals" shall comprise with regard to either Contracting Party:
   i. natural persons having the nationality of that Contracting Party;
   ii. legal persons constituted under the law of that Contracting Party;
   iii. legal persons not constituted under the law of that Contracting Party but controlled, directly or indirectly, by natural persons as defined in (i) or by legal persons as defined in (ii).

c. the term "territory" means:
   in respect of each Contracting Party, the territory under the sovereignty of that Contracting Party including the territorial sea, the continental shelf and any exclusive economic zone over which a Contracting Party exercises sovereign rights or jurisdiction in accordance with international law.

d. for the purpose of this Agreement a change in the form in which assets are utilised as investments does not affect their character as investments.

Article 2

Either Contracting Party shall, within the framework of its laws and regulations, promote economic cooperation through the protection in its territory of investments of nationals of the other Contracting Party. Subject to its right to exercise powers conferred by its laws or regulations, each Contracting Party shall admit such investments.

Article 3

1. Each Contracting Party shall ensure fair and equitable treatment of the investments of nationals of the other Contracting Party and shall not impair, by unreasonable or discriminatory measures, the operation, management, maintenance, use, enjoyment or disposal thereof by those nationals. Each Contracting Party shall accord to such investments full security and protection.

2. More particularly, each Contracting Party shall accord to such investments treatment which in any case shall not be less favourable than that accorded either to investments of its own nationals or to investments of nationals of any third State, whichever is more favourable to the national concerned.

3. If a Contracting Party has accorded special advantages to nationals of any third State by virtue of agreements establishing customs unions, economic unions, monetary unions or similar institutions, or on the basis of interim agreements leading to such unions or institutions, that Contracting Party shall not be obliged to accord such advantages to nationals of the other Contracting Party.

4. Each Contracting Party shall observe any obligation it may have entered into with regard to investments of nationals of the other Contracting Party.

5. If the provisions of law of either Contracting Party or obligations under international law existing at present or established hereafter between the Contracting Parties in addition to the present Agreement contain a regulation, whether general or specific, entitling investments by nationals of the other Contracting Party to a treatment more favourable than is provided for by the present Agreement, such regulation shall, to the extent that it is more favourable, prevail over the present Agreement.

Article 4

With respect to taxes, fees, charges and to fiscal deductions and exemptions, each Contracting Party shall accord to nationals of the other Contracting Party who are engaged in any economic activity in its territory, treatment not less favourable than that accorded to its own nationals or to those of any third State who are in the same circumstances, whichever is more favourable to the nationals concerned. For this purpose, however, there shall not be taken into account any special fiscal advantages accorded by that Party:

a. under an agreement for the avoidance of double taxation; or
b. by virtue of its participation in a customs union, economic union or similar institution; or
c. on the basis of reciprocity with a third State.

Article 5

The Contracting Parties shall guarantee that payments relating to an investment may be transferred. The transfers shall be made in a freely convertible currency, without restriction or delay. Such transfers include in particular though not exclusively:

a. profits, interests, dividends and other current income;
b. funds necessary
    i. for the acquisition of raw or auxiliary materials, semi-fabricated or finished products,

    or

    ii. to replace capital assets in order to safeguard the continuity of an investment;
c. additional funds necessary for the development of an investment;
d. funds in repayment of loans;
e. royalties or fees;
f. earnings of natural persons;
g. the proceeds of sale or liquidation of the investment;
h. payments arising under Article 7.

Article 6

Neither Contracting Party shall take any measures depriving, directly or indirectly, nationals of the other Contracting Party of their investments unless the following conditions are complied with:

a. the measures are taken in the public interest and under due process of law;
b. the measures are not discriminatory or contrary to any undertaking which the Contracting Party which takes such measures may have given;

c. the measures are taken against just compensation. Such compensation shall represent the genuine value of the investments affected, shall include interest at a normal commercial rate until the date of payment and shall, in order to be effective for the claimants, be paid and made freely transferable, without delay, to the country designated by the claimants concerned and in the currency of the country of which the claimants are nationals or in any freely convertible currency accepted by the claimants.

Article 7

Nationals of the one Contracting Party who suffer losses in respect of their investments in the territory of the other Contracting Party owing to war or other armed conflict, revolution, a state of national emergency, revolt, insurrection or riot shall be accorded by the latter Contracting Party treatment, as regards restitution, indemnification, compensation or other settlement, no less favourable than that which that Contracting Party accords to its own nationals or to nationals of any third State, whichever is more favourable to the nationals concerned.

Article 8

If the investments of a national of the one Contracting Party are insured against non-commercial risks or otherwise give rise to payment of indemnification in respect of such investments under a system established by law, regulation or government contract, any subrogation of the insurer or re-insurer or Agency designated by the one Contracting Party to the rights of the said national pursuant to the terms of such insurance or under any other indemnity given shall be recognised by the other Contracting Party.

Article 9

1. Disputes which might arise between one of the Contracting Parties and a national of the other Contracting Party concerning an investment of that national in the territory of the former Contracting Party shall, whenever possible, be settled amicably between the parties concerned.

2. If the dispute has not been settled within a period of three months from the date either party to the dispute requested amicable settlement, that Contracting Party irrevocably consents that the dispute may be submitted at the request of the national concerned to:

a. the competent court of the Contracting Party in whose territory the investment has been made;

b. the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), for settlement by arbitration or conciliation under the Convention on the Settlement of Investment Disputes between States and Nationals of other States, opened for signature at Washington on 18 March 1965;

c. an international arbitral tribunal under the Arbitration Rules of the United Nations Commission on International Trade law (UNCITRAL).

3. A legal person which is a national of one Contracting Party and which before such a dispute arises is controlled by nationals of the other Contracting Party shall in accordance with Article 25 (2) (b) of the Convention on the Settlement of Investment Disputes between States and Nationals of other States for the purpose of the Convention be treated as a national of the other Contracting Party.

4. The arbitral awards of the international dispute settlement fora referred to under paragraphs 2 b and c above shall be final and binding on the parties to the dispute and will be executed under the laws of the Contracting Party in whose territory the investment was made.

5. Each Contracting Party hereby consents to submit investment disputes for resolution at the choice of the national to the alternative dispute settlement fora mentioned in the preceding paragraphs.

Article 10

The provisions of this Agreement shall, from the date of entry into force thereof, also apply to investments, which have been made before that date. However, they will not apply to investment disputes that have arisen prior to that date.

Article 11

Either Contracting Party may propose to the other Party that consultations be held on any matter concerning the interpretation or application of the Agreement. The other Party shall accord sympathetic consideration to the proposal and shall afford adequate opportunity for such consultations.

Article 12

1. Any dispute between the Contracting Parties concerning the interpretation or application of the present Agreement, which cannot be settled within a reasonable lapse of time by means of diplomatic negotiations shall, unless the Parties have otherwise agreed, be submitted, at the request of either Party, to an arbitral tribunal, composed of three members. Each Party shall appoint one arbitrator and the two arbitrators thus appointed shall together appoint a third arbitrator as their chairman who is not a national of either Party.

2. If one of the Parties fails to appoint its arbitrator and has not proceeded to do so within two months after an invitation from the other Party to make such appointment, the latter Party may invite the President of the International Court of Justice to make the necessary appointment.

3. If the two arbitrators are unable to reach agreement, in the two months following their appointment, on the choice of the third arbitrator, either Party may invite the President of the International Court of Justice to make the necessary appointment.

4. If, in the cases provided for in the paragraphs 2 and 3 of this Article, the President of the International Court of Justice is prevented from discharging the said function or is a national of either Contracting Party, the Vice-President shall be invited to make the necessary appointments. If the Vice-President is prevented from discharging the said function or is a national of either Party the most senior member of the Court available who is not a national of either Party shall be invited to make the necessary appointments.

5. The tribunal shall decide on the basis of respect for the law. Before the tribunal decides, it may at any stage of the proceedings propose to the Parties that the dispute be settled amicably.

6. Unless the Parties decide otherwise, the tribunal shall determine its own procedure.

7. The tribunal shall reach its decision by a majority of votes. Such decision shall be final and binding on the Parties.

Article 13

As regards the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the present Agreement shall apply to the part of the Kingdom in Europe, to the Netherlands Antilles and to Aruba, unless the notification provided for in Article 14, paragraph 1, provides otherwise.

Article 14

1. The present Agreement shall enter into force on the first day of the second month following the date on which the Contracting Parties have notified each other in writing that their constitutionally required procedures have been complied with, and shall remain in force for a period of fifteen years.

2. Unless notice of termination has been given by either Contracting Party at least six months before the date of the expiry of its validity, the present Agreement shall be extended tacitly for periods of ten years, whereby each Contracting Party reserves the right to terminate the Agreement upon notice of at least six months before the date of expiry of the current period of validity.

3. In respect of investments made before the date of the termination of the present Agreement, the foregoing Articles shall continue to be effective for a further period of fifteen years from that date.

4. Subject to the period mentioned in paragraph 2 of this Article, the Kingdom of the Netherlands shall be entitled to terminate the application of the present Agreement separately in respect of any of the parts of the Kingdom.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned representatives, duly authorised thereto, have signed the present Agreement.

DONE in two originals at Manama, on the 5th day of February 2007, in the Arabic, Dutch and English languages, the three texts being equally authentic. In case of difference of interpretation the English text will prevail.

For the Government of
the Kingdom of Bahrain

For the Government of
the Kingdom of the Netherlands