

AGREEMENT BETWEEN
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS
AND THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN FOR
THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF
THE PREVENTION OF FISCAL EVASION AND
THE ALLOCATION OF RIGHTS OF TAXATION WITH
RESPECT TO INCOME OF INDIVIDUALS

The Government of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas and
the Government of Japan,

Desiring to conclude an Agreement for the exchange of
information for the purpose of the prevention of fiscal
evasion and the allocation of rights of taxation with
respect to income of individuals,

Have agreed as follows:

Chapter 1
GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1
GENERAL DEFINITIONS

1. For the purposes of this Agreement, unless the
context otherwise requires:
 - (a) the term "Japan", when used in a geographical
sense, means all the territory of Japan,
including its territorial sea, in which the laws
relating to Japanese tax are in force, and all
the area beyond its territorial sea, including
the seabed and subsoil thereof, over which Japan
has sovereign rights in accordance with
international law and in which the laws relating
to Japanese tax are in force;
 - (b) the term "The Bahamas" means the Commonwealth of
The Bahamas, and when used in a geographical
sense, means all the territory of the
Commonwealth of The Bahamas, which encompasses
its land and territorial waters subject to the
laws of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, and any
area outside its territorial waters inclusive of
the exclusive economic zone and the seabed and
subsoil thereof, over which the Commonwealth of
The Bahamas exercises sovereign rights for the
purpose of exploration, exploitation and
conservation of natural resources in accordance
with international law;

- (c) the term "Contracting Party" means The Bahamas or Japan as the context requires;
- (d) the term "competent authority" means:
 - (i) in the case of Japan, the Minister of Finance or an authorised representative of the Minister; and
 - (ii) in the case of The Bahamas, the Minister of Finance or an authorised representative of the Minister;
- (e) the term "person" includes an individual, a company and any other body of persons;
- (f) the term "company" means any body corporate or any entity that is treated as a body corporate for tax purposes;
- (g) the term "national" means:
 - (i) in the case of Japan, any individual possessing the nationality of Japan, any juridical person created or organised under the laws of Japan and any organisation without juridical personality treated for the purposes of Japanese tax as a juridical person created or organised under the laws of Japan; and
 - (ii) in the case of The Bahamas, any individual possessing the nationality or citizenship of The Bahamas, or any legal person, partnership, association or other entity deriving its status as such from the laws in force in The Bahamas;
- (h) the term "publicly traded company" means any company whose principal class of shares is listed on a recognised stock exchange provided its listed shares can be readily purchased or sold by the public. Shares can be readily purchased or sold "by the public" if the purchase or sale of shares is not implicitly or explicitly restricted to a limited group of investors;
- (i) the term "principal class of shares" means the class or classes of shares representing a majority of the voting power and value of a company;

- (j) the term "recognised stock exchange" means:
 - (i) any stock exchange established by a Financial Instruments Exchange or an approved-type financial instruments firms association under the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law (Law No. 25 of 1948) of Japan;
 - (ii) the Bahamas International Securities Exchange; and
 - (iii) any other stock exchange agreed upon by the competent authorities of the Contracting Parties;

- (k) the term "collective investment fund or scheme" means any pooled investment vehicle, irrespective of legal form. The term "public collective investment fund or scheme" means any collective investment fund or scheme provided the units, shares or other interests in the fund or scheme can be readily purchased, sold or redeemed by the public. Units, shares or other interests in the fund or scheme can be readily purchased, sold or redeemed "by the public" if the purchase, sale or redemption is not implicitly or explicitly restricted to a limited group of investors;

- (l) the term "Applicant Party" means the Contracting Party requesting information;

- (m) the term "Requested Party" means the Contracting Party requested to provide information;

- (n) the term "information gathering measures" means laws and administrative or judicial procedures that enable a Contracting Party to obtain and provide the information requested; and

- (o) the term "information" means any fact, statement or record in any form whatever.

2. As regards the application of this Agreement at any time by a Contracting Party, any term not defined therein shall, unless the context otherwise requires, have the meaning that it has at that time under the laws of that Contracting Party, any meaning under the applicable tax laws of that Contracting Party prevailing over a meaning given to the term under other laws of that Contracting Party.

Chapter 2
EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

Article 2
OBJECT AND SCOPE

The competent authorities of the Contracting Parties shall provide assistance through exchange of information that is foreseeably relevant for the carrying out of this Agreement or to the administration or enforcement of the laws of the Contracting Parties concerning taxes referred to in Article 4. Such information shall include information that is foreseeably relevant to the determination, assessment and collection of such taxes, the recovery and enforcement of tax claims, or the investigation or prosecution of tax matters. Information shall be exchanged in accordance with the Agreement and shall be treated as confidential in the manner provided in Article 8. When the Requested Party obtains and provides information under the Agreement, the procedural rights and safeguards secured to persons by the laws or administrative practices of the Requested Party remain applicable, to the extent that they do not unduly prevent or delay effective exchange of information.

Article 3
JURISDICTION

The Requested Party is not obligated to provide information which is neither held by its authorities nor in the possession or control of persons who are within its territorial jurisdiction.

Article 4
TAXES COVERED

1. This Chapter shall apply to taxes of every kind and description imposed on behalf of a Contracting Party or of its local authorities.

2. The competent authorities of the Contracting Parties shall notify each other of any significant changes that have been made in their respective tax laws.

Article 5
EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION UPON REQUEST

1. The competent authority of the Requested Party shall provide upon request information for the purposes referred to in Article 2. Such information shall be provided without regard to whether the conduct that is the subject of the request would constitute a crime under the laws of the Requested Party if such conduct occurred in the Requested Party.

2. If the information in the possession of the competent authority of the Requested Party is not sufficient to enable it to comply with the request for information, the Requested Party shall use all relevant information gathering measures to provide the Applicant Party with the information requested, notwithstanding that the Requested Party may not need such information for its own tax purposes.

3. If specifically requested by the competent authority of the Applicant Party, the competent authority of the Requested Party shall provide information under this Article, to the extent allowable under its laws, in the form of authenticated copies of original records.

4. Each Contracting Party shall ensure that its competent authority for the purposes specified in Article 2, has the authority to obtain and provide upon request:

- (a) information held by banks, other financial institutions, and any person acting in an agency or fiduciary capacity including nominees and trustees; and
- (b) information regarding the ownership of companies, partnerships, trusts, foundations and other persons, including, within the constraints of Article 3, ownership information on all such persons in an ownership chain; in the case of trusts, information on settlors, trustees and beneficiaries; and in the case of foundations, information on founders, members of the foundation council and beneficiaries. This Agreement does not create an obligation on the Contracting Parties to obtain or provide ownership information with respect to publicly traded companies or public collective investment funds or schemes unless such information can be obtained without giving rise to disproportionate difficulties.

5. The competent authority of the Applicant Party shall provide the following information in writing to the competent authority of the Requested Party when making a request for information under this Agreement to demonstrate the foreseeable relevance of the information sought to the request:

- (a) the identity of the taxpayer that is the subject of the request;
- (b) the identity of the person in respect of whom information is requested, if that person is not the taxpayer referred to in subparagraph (a);
- (c) a statement of the information requested including its nature and the form in which the Applicant Party wishes to receive the information from the Requested Party;
- (d) the period of time with respect to which the information requested is required for the tax purposes;
- (e) the tax purposes (including the legal grounds) for which the information requested is sought;
- (f) the reason for believing that the information requested is foreseeably relevant for the carrying out of this Agreement or to the administration or enforcement of the laws of the Applicant Party concerning taxes referred to in Article 4;
- (g) grounds for believing that the information requested is held by the Requested Party or is in the possession or control of a person who is within the territorial jurisdiction of the Requested Party;
- (h) to the extent known, the name and address of any person believed to be in possession or control of the information requested;
- (i) a statement that the request is in conformity with the laws and administrative practices of the Applicant Party, that the Applicant Party would be able to obtain the information under the laws or in the normal course of administrative practices of the Applicant Party in similar circumstances and that the request is in conformity with the Agreement; and

- (j) a statement that the Applicant Party has pursued all means available within its territorial jurisdiction to obtain the information requested, except those that would give rise to disproportionate difficulties.

6. The competent authority of the Requested Party shall forward the information requested as promptly as possible to the Applicant Party. To ensure a prompt response, the competent authority of the Requested Party shall:

- (a) confirm receipt of a request in writing to the competent authority of the Applicant Party and shall notify the competent authority of the Applicant Party of deficiencies in the request, if any, within sixty days of the receipt of the request; and
- (b) if the competent authority of the Requested Party has been unable to obtain and provide the information within ninety days of the receipt of the request, including if it encounters obstacles in furnishing the information or it refuses to furnish the information, immediately inform the competent authority of the Applicant Party, explaining the reason for its inability, the nature of the obstacles or the reasons for its refusal.

Article 6 TAX EXAMINATIONS ABROAD

1. At the request of the competent authority of the Applicant Party, the competent authority of the Requested Party may allow, to the extent permitted under the laws of the Requested Party, representatives of the competent authority of the Applicant Party to be present at the appropriate part of a tax examination in the Requested Party.

2. If the request referred to in paragraph 1 is acceded to, the competent authority of the Requested Party conducting the examination shall, as soon as possible, notify the competent authority of the Applicant Party about the time and place of the examination, the authority or official designated to carry out the examination and the procedures and conditions required by the Requested Party for the conduct of the examination. All decisions with respect to the conduct of the examination shall be made by the Requested Party conducting the examination.

Article 7
POSSIBILITY OF DECLINING A REQUEST

1. The Requested Party shall not be required to obtain or provide information that the Applicant Party would not be able to obtain under the laws or in the normal course of administrative practices of the Applicant Party in similar circumstances. The competent authority of the Requested Party may decline to assist where the request of the Applicant Party is not made in conformity with this Agreement.

2. This Agreement shall not impose on a Contracting Party the obligation to supply information which would disclose any trade, business, industrial, commercial or professional secret or trade process. Such information includes information relating to communications received or issued by attorneys, solicitors or other admitted legal representatives in their role as such, to the extent that the communications are protected from disclosure under the laws of each Contracting Party. Notwithstanding the foregoing sentences, information of the type referred to in paragraph 4 of Article 5 shall not be treated as such a secret or trade process merely because it meets the criteria in that paragraph.

3. The Requested Party may decline a request for information if the disclosure of the information requested would be contrary to public policy (ordre public) of the Requested Party.

4. A request for information shall not be refused on the ground that the tax claim giving rise to the request is disputed.

5. The Requested Party may decline a request for information if the information is requested by the Applicant Party to administer or enforce any provision of the tax laws of the Applicant Party, or any requirement connected therewith, which discriminates against a national of the Requested Party as compared with a national of the Applicant Party in the same circumstances.

Article 8
CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information received by a Contracting Party under this Agreement shall be treated as confidential and may be disclosed only to persons or authorities (including courts and administrative bodies) in the Contracting Party concerned with the assessment or collection of, the enforcement or prosecution in respect of, or the determination of appeals in relation to, the taxes referred to in Article 4. Such persons or authorities shall use such information only for such purposes. They may disclose the information in public court proceedings or in judicial decisions. The information may not be disclosed to any other person or authority, including those in non-Contracting Parties, without the express written consent of the Requested Party.

Article 9
COSTS

Incidence of costs incurred in providing assistance shall be agreed by the competent authorities of the Contracting Parties.

Chapter 3
ALLOCATION OF RIGHTS OF TAXATION

Article 10
PERSONS COVERED

This Chapter shall apply to individuals who are residents of one or both of the Contracting Parties.

Article 11
TAXES COVERED

1. This Chapter shall apply to taxes on income of individuals imposed on behalf of a Contracting Party or of its local authorities, irrespective of the manner in which they are levied.
2. In the case of Japan, the existing taxes to which this Chapter shall apply are the income tax and the local inhabitant taxes, and this Chapter shall apply also to any identical or substantially similar taxes that are imposed after the date of signature of this Agreement in addition to, or in place of, such existing taxes.
3. The competent authorities of the Contracting Parties shall notify each other of any significant changes that have been made in their respective tax laws.

Article 12
RESIDENT

1. For the purposes of this Chapter, the term "resident of a Contracting Party" means:

- (a) in the case of Japan, any individual who, under the laws of Japan, is liable to tax therein by reason of his domicile, residence or any other criterion of a similar nature except any individual who is liable to tax in Japan in respect only of income from sources in Japan; and
- (b) in the case of The Bahamas, any individual domiciled in The Bahamas who is a citizen of The Bahamas or has been granted permission to reside or remain in The Bahamas pursuant to Parts Four and Six of the Immigration Act of The Bahamas.

2. Where by reason of paragraph 1 an individual is a resident of both Contracting Parties, then his status shall be determined as follows:

- (a) he shall be deemed to be a resident only of the Contracting Party in which he has a permanent home available to him; if he has a permanent home available to him in both Contracting Parties, he shall be deemed to be a resident only of the Contracting Party with which his personal and economic relations are closer (centre of vital interests);
- (b) if the Contracting Party in which he has his centre of vital interests cannot be determined, or if he has not a permanent home available to him in either Contracting Party, he shall be deemed to be a resident only of the Contracting Party in which he has an habitual abode;
- (c) if he has an habitual abode in both Contracting Parties or in neither of them, he shall be deemed to be a resident only of the Contracting Party of which he is a national;
- (d) if he is a national of both Contracting Parties or of neither of them, the competent authorities of the Contracting Parties shall settle the question by mutual agreement.

Article 13
PENSIONS

Subject to paragraph 2 of Article 14, pensions and other similar remuneration beneficially owned by a resident of a Contracting Party shall be taxable only in that Contracting Party.

Article 14
GOVERNMENT SERVICE

1. (a) Salaries, wages and other similar remuneration paid by a Contracting Party or a local authority thereof to an individual in respect of services rendered to that Contracting Party or local authority, in the discharge of functions of a governmental nature, shall be taxable only in that Contracting Party.
- (b) However, such salaries, wages and other similar remuneration shall be taxable only in the other Contracting Party if the services are rendered in that other Contracting Party and the individual is a resident of that other Contracting Party who:
 - (i) is a national of that other Contracting Party; or
 - (ii) did not become a resident of that other Contracting Party solely for the purpose of rendering the services.
2. (a) Notwithstanding paragraph 1, pensions and other similar remuneration paid by, or out of funds to which contributions are made or created by, a Contracting Party or a local authority thereof to an individual in respect of services rendered to that Contracting Party or local authority shall be taxable only in that Contracting Party.
- (b) However, such pensions and other similar remuneration shall be taxable only in the other Contracting Party if the individual is a resident of, and a national of, that other Contracting Party.
3. Paragraphs 1 and 2 shall not apply to salaries, wages, pensions, and other similar remuneration in respect of services rendered in connection with a business carried on by a Contracting Party or a local authority thereof.

Article 15
STUDENTS

Payments which a student or business apprentice who is or was immediately before visiting a Contracting Party a resident of the other Contracting Party and who is present in the first-mentioned Contracting Party solely for the purpose of his education or training receives for the purpose of his maintenance, education or training shall not be taxed in the first-mentioned Contracting Party, provided that such payments arise from sources outside the first-mentioned Contracting Party. The exemption provided by this Article shall apply to a business apprentice only for a period not exceeding one year from the date on which he first begins his training in the first-mentioned Contracting Party.

Chapter 4
SPECIAL PROVISIONS

Article 16
MUTUAL AGREEMENT PROCEDURES

1. Where a person considers that the actions of one or both of the Contracting Parties result or will result for him in taxation not in accordance with Chapter 3, he may, irrespective of the remedies provided by the laws of those Contracting Parties, present his case to the competent authority of the Contracting Party of which he is a resident. The case must be presented within three years from the first notification of the action resulting in taxation not in accordance with that Chapter.
2. The competent authority of a Contracting Party shall endeavour, if the objection appears to it to be justified and if it is not itself able to arrive at a satisfactory solution, to resolve the case by mutual agreement with the competent authority of the other Contracting Party, with a view to the avoidance of taxation which is not in accordance with Chapter 3. Any agreement reached shall be implemented notwithstanding any time limits in the laws of the Contracting Parties.
3. The competent authorities of the Contracting Parties shall endeavour to resolve by mutual agreement any difficulties or doubts arising as to the interpretation or application of this Agreement.

4. In addition to the agreements referred to in paragraph 3, the competent authorities of the Contracting Parties may mutually agree on the procedures to be used for the purposes of Chapter 2.

5. The competent authorities of the Contracting Parties may communicate with each other directly for the purpose of reaching an agreement in the sense of the preceding paragraphs of this Article.

Chapter 5 FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 17 HEADINGS

The headings of the Chapters and the Articles of this Agreement are inserted for convenience of reference only and shall not affect the interpretation of the Agreement.

Article 18 ENTRY INTO FORCE

1. This Agreement shall be approved in accordance with the legal procedures of each of the Contracting Parties and shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the date of exchange of diplomatic notes indicating such approval.

2. This Agreement shall be applicable:

(a) with respect to taxes levied on the basis of a taxable year, for taxes for any taxable years beginning on or after the date on which the Agreement enters into force; and

(b) with respect to taxes not levied on the basis of a taxable year, for taxes levied on or after the date on which the Agreement enters into force.

3. Notwithstanding paragraph 2, Chapter 3 shall be applicable:

(a) with respect to taxes withheld at source, for amounts taxable on or after 1 January in the calendar year next following that in which this Agreement enters into force; and

(b) with respect to taxes on income which are not withheld at source, for income for any taxable year beginning on or after 1 January in the calendar year next following that in which this Agreement enters into force.

Article 19
TERMINATION

1. This Agreement shall remain in force until terminated by a Contracting Party. Either Contracting Party may terminate the Agreement by giving written notice to the other Contracting Party, through diplomatic channels, at least six months before the end of any calendar year beginning after the expiry of five years from the date of entry into force of the Agreement.

2. Upon receipt of the written notice of termination referred to in paragraph 1, this Agreement shall cease to have effect:

- (a) with respect to taxes withheld at source, for amounts taxable on or after 1 January in the calendar year next following that in which the notice is given;
- (b) with respect to taxes on income which are not withheld at source, as regards income for any taxable year beginning on or after 1 January in the calendar year next following that in which the notice is given; and
- (c) with respect to other taxes, as regards taxes levied on or after 1 January in the calendar year next following that in which the notice is given.

3. Notwithstanding paragraph 1, each Contracting Party shall remain bound by Article 8 with respect to any information received by that Contracting Party under this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, being duly authorised thereto by their respective Governments, have signed this Agreement.

DONE in duplicate at Nassau this twenty-seventh day of January, 2011, in the English and Japanese languages, each text being equally authentic.

For the Government
of the Commonwealth
of The Bahamas:

T. Brent Symonette
Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister of Foreign Affairs

For the Government
of Japan:

Hiroshi Yamaguchi
Ambassador of Japan
to the Commonwealth of
The Bahamas