

## **Tax dispensation for REITs**

As SA Corporate has REIT status, unitholders are advised that distributions declared and paid by SA Corporate meet the requirements of a "qualifying distribution" for the purposes of section 25BB of the Income Tax Act, No. 58 of 1962 ("Income Tax Act"). The distributions on SA Corporate units will be deemed to be dividends, for South African tax purposes, in terms of section 25BB of the Income Tax Act.

The distributions received by or accrued to South African tax residents must be included in the gross income of such unitholders and are not exempt from income tax (in terms of the exclusion to the general dividend exemption, contained in paragraph (aa) of section 10(1)(k)(i) of the Income Tax Act) because they are dividends distributed by a REIT, with the effect that the distribution is taxable in the hands of the unitholder. These distributions are, however, exempt from dividend withholding tax in the hands of South African tax resident unitholders, provided that the South African resident unitholders have provided the following forms to their CSDP or broker, as the case may be, in respect of uncertificated units, or the transfer secretaries, in respect of certificated units:

- a) a declaration that the distribution is exempt from dividends tax; and
- b) a written undertaking to inform the CSDP, broker or the transfer secretaries, as the case may be, should the circumstances affecting the exemption change or the beneficial owner ceases to be the beneficial owner, both in the form prescribed by the Commissioner for the South African Revenue Service.

SA Corporate unitholders are advised to contact the CSDP, broker or transfer secretaries, as the case may be, to arrange for the abovementioned documents to be submitted prior to payment of the distribution, if such documents have not already been submitted.

Distributions received by non-resident unitholders will not be taxable as income and instead will be treated as ordinary dividends which are exempt from income tax in terms of the general dividend exemption in section 10(1)(k)(i) of the Income Tax Act. It should be noted that until 31 December 2013 distributions received by non-residents from a REIT were not subject to dividend withholding tax. From 1 January 2014, any distribution received by a non-resident from a REIT will be subject to dividend withholding tax at 15%, unless the rate is reduced in terms of any applicable agreement for the avoidance of double taxation ("DTA") between South Africa and the country of residence of the unitholder. A reduced dividend withholding rate, in terms of the applicable DTA, may only be relied on if the non-resident unitholder has provided the following forms to the CSDP or broker, as the case may be, in respect of uncertificated units, or the transfer secretaries, in respect of certificated units:

- a) a declaration that the dividend is subject to a reduced rate as a result of the application of a DTA; and
- b) a written undertaking to inform the CSDP, broker or the transfer secretaries, as the case may be, should the circumstances affecting the reduced rate change or the beneficial owner ceases to be the beneficial owner, both in the form prescribed by the Commissioner for the South African Revenue Service. Non-resident unitholders are advised to contact the CSDP, broker or the transfer secretaries, as the case may be, to arrange for the abovementioned documents to be submitted prior to payment of the distribution if such documents have not already been submitted, if applicable.