

5. The competent authorities of the Contracting States may consult together for the elimination of double taxation in cases not provided for in the Convention and may communicate with each other directly for the purpose of applying the Convention.

Article 26

Exchange of Information

1. The competent authorities of the Contracting States shall exchange such information as is necessary for carrying out the provisions of this Convention or of the domestic laws of the Contracting States concerning taxes covered by the Convention insofar as the taxation thereunder is not contrary to the Convention. The exchange of information is not restricted by Article 1. Any information received by a Contracting State shall be treated as secret in the same manner as information obtained under the domestic laws of that State and shall be disclosed only to persons or authorities (including courts and administrative bodies) involved in the assessment or collection of, the enforcement in respect of, or the determination of appeals in relation to, the taxes covered by the Convention. Such persons or authorities shall use the information only for such purposes. They may disclose the information in public court proceedings or in judicial decisions.

2. Nothing in paragraph 1 shall be construed so as to impose on a Contracting State the obligation:

- (a) to carry out administrative measures at variance with the laws or the administrative practice of that or of the other Contracting State;
- (b) to supply information which is not obtainable under the laws or in the normal course of the administration of that or of the other Contracting State;
- (c) to supply information which would disclose any trade, business, industrial, commercial or professional secret or trade process, or information, the disclosure of which would be contrary to public policy (*ordre public*).

3. If information is requested by a Contracting State in accordance with this Article, the other Contracting State shall endeavour to obtain the information to which the request relates in the same way as if its own taxation was involved notwithstanding the fact that the other State does not, at that time, need such information. If specifically requested by the competent authority of a Contracting State, the competent authority of the other