

MOBILE TELESYSTEMS OJSC
Form 20-F
April 24, 2014

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**UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20549

Form 20-F

- o **Registration Statement pursuant to Section 12(b) or (g) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934**

or
- ý **Annual report pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2013**

or
- o **Transition report pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934**

or
- o **Shell company report pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934**
Date of event requiring this shell company report
Commission file number 333-12032

MOBILE TELESYSTEMS OJSC

(Exact name of Registrant as specified in its charter)

Not Applicable

(Translation of Registrant's name into English)

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

(Jurisdiction of incorporation or organization)

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4 Marksistskaya Street, Moscow 109147 Russian Federation
(Address of Principal Executive Offices)

Joshua B. Tulgan
Director, Investor Relations
Mobile TeleSystems OJSC
5 Vorontsovskaya Street, bldg. 2, 109147 Moscow Russian Federation
Phone: +7 495 223 20 25, Fax: +7 495 911 65 67
E-mail: ir@mts.ru

(Name, Telephone, E-mail and/or Facsimile number and Address of Company Contact Person)

Securities registered or to be registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act:

Title of Each Class	Name of Each Exchange on which Registered
AMERICAN DEPOSITARY SHARES, EACH REPRESENTING 2 SHARES OF COMMON STOCK COMMON STOCK, PAR VALUE 0.10 RUSSIAN RUBLES PER SHARE	NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE ⁽¹⁾

Securities registered or to be registered pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act:

NONE
(Title of Class)

Securities for which there is a reporting obligation pursuant to Section 15(d) of the Act:

NONE
(Title of Class)

Indicate the number of outstanding shares of each of the issuer's classes of capital or common stock as of the close of the period covered by the annual report 1,198,831,184 ordinary shares, par value 0.10 Russian rubles each and 388,698,252 American Depositary Shares as of December 31, 2013.

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act. Yes No

If this report is an annual or transition report, indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. Yes No

Note: Checking the box above will not relieve any registrant required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 from their obligations under those Sections.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days. Yes No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has submitted electronically and posted on its corporate Web site, if any, every Interactive Data File required to be submitted and posted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T (§232.405 of this chapter) during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to submit and post such files). Yes: No:

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, or a non-accelerated filer. See definition of "accelerated filer and large accelerated filer" in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act. (Check One):

Large accelerated filer Accelerated Filer Non-accelerated filer

Indicate by check mark which basis of accounting the registrant has used to prepare the financial statements included in this filing:

U.S. GAAP International Financial Reporting Standards as issued by the International Accounting Standards Board Other

If "Other" has been checked in response to the previous question indicate by check mark which financial statement item the registrant has elected to follow. Item 17 Item 18

If this is an annual report, indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act). Yes No

- (1) Listed, not for trading or quotation purposes, but only in connection with the registration of ADSs pursuant to the requirements of the Securities and Exchange Commission.
-

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Unless otherwise indicated or unless the context requires otherwise, references in this document to (i) "MTS," "the Group," "we," "us," or "our" refer to Mobile TeleSystems OJSC and its subsidiaries; (ii) "MTS Ukraine" is to MTS Ukraine Private Joint Stock Company (formerly CJSC Ukrainian Mobile Communications), our Ukrainian subsidiary; (iii) "MTS-Uzbekistan" is to Uzdurobita, our former subsidiary in Uzbekistan, which was deconsolidated in 2013; (iv) "MTS-Turkmenistan" and "BCTI" are to Barash Communication Technologies, Inc., our Turkmenistan subsidiary; (v) "Comstar" or "Comstar-UTS" are to COMSTAR United TeleSystems, our fixed line subsidiary, which was merged into Mobile TeleSystems OJSC in 2011; (vi) "MGTS" is to Moscow City Telephone Network, our Moscow public switched telephone network ("PSTN") fixed line subsidiary; and (vii) "K-Telecom" or "VivaCell-MTS" are to K-Telecom CJSC, our Armenian subsidiary; and (viii) "Sistema" is to Sistema Joint-Stock Financial Corporation, our majority shareholder. We refer to Mobile TeleSystems LLC, our 49% owned equity investee in Belarus, as "MTS Belarus". We refer to MTS-Bank OJSC, our 26.3% owned equity investee as "MTS Bank". As MTS Belarus and MTS Bank are equity investees, our revenues and subscriber data do not include MTS Belarus and MTS Bank.

In 2013, we changed our reporting currency to the Russian Ruble. Previously, we have presented our consolidated financial statements in the U.S. Dollar. The change in the reporting currency is to allow a greater transparency of our financial and operating performance as it more closely reflects the profile of our revenue and operating income, a major portion of which are generated in Russian rubles. In accordance with authoritative guidance, comparative information was restated in Russian rubles.

In this document, references to "U.S. dollars," "dollars," "\$" or "USD" are to the lawful currency of the United States, "Russian rubles," "rubles" or "RUB" are to the lawful currency of the Russian Federation, "hryvnias" are to the lawful currency of Ukraine, "soms" are to the lawful currency of Uzbekistan, "manats" are to the lawful currency of Turkmenistan, "dram" are to the lawful currency of Armenia and "€," "euro" or "EUR" are to the lawful currency of the member states of the European Union that adopted a single currency in accordance with the Treaty of Rome establishing the European Economic Community, as amended by the treaty on the European Union, signed at Maastricht on February 7, 1992. References in this document to "shares" or "ordinary shares" refers to our ordinary shares, "ADSs" refers to our American depositary shares, each of which represents two ordinary shares, and "ADRs" refers to the American depositary receipts that evidence our ADSs. Prior to May 3, 2010, each ADS represented five ordinary shares of our common stock. "CIS" refers to the Commonwealth of Independent States.

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The following tables show, for the periods indicated, certain information regarding the exchange rate between the ruble and the U.S. dollar, based on data published by the Central Bank of Russia ("CBR"). These rates may differ from the actual rates used in preparation of our financial statements and other financial information provided herein.

Years ended December 31,	Rubles per U.S. dollar			Period End
	High	Low	Average ⁽¹⁾	
2009	36.43	28.67	31.72	30.24
2010	31.78	28.93	30.37	30.48
2011	32.68	27.26	29.38	32.20
2012	34.04	28.95	30.97	30.37
2013	33.47	29.93	31.98	32.73

(1) The average of the exchange rates on the last business day of each full month during the relevant period.

	Rubles per U.S. dollar	
	High	Low
July 2013	33.32	32.31
August 2013	33.25	32.86
September 2013	33.47	31.59
October 2013	32.48	31.66
November 2013	33.19	32.08
December 2013	33.26	32.63
January 2014	35.24	32.66
February 2014	36.05	34.60
March 2014	36.65	35.45

Source: CBR.

The exchange rate between the ruble and the U.S. dollar published by the CBR for April 24, 2014 was 35.66 rubles per U.S. dollar.

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CAUTIONARY STATEMENT REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

Matters discussed in this document may constitute forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the U.S. Securities Act of 1933 (the "U.S. Securities Act"), and Section 21E of the U.S. Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the "U.S. Exchange Act"). The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 provides safe harbor protections for forward-looking statements in order to encourage companies to provide prospective information about their businesses. Forward-looking statements include statements concerning plans, objectives, goals, strategies, future events or performance, and underlying assumptions and other statements, which are other than statements of historical facts.

MTS desires to take advantage of the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 and is including this cautionary statement in connection with this safe harbor legislation and other relevant law. This document and any other written or oral statements made by us or on our behalf may include forward-looking statements. We have based these forward-looking statements largely on our current expectations and projections about future events and financial trends that we believe may affect our financial condition, results of operations, business strategy and financial needs. The words "believe," "expect," "anticipate," "intend," "estimate," "forecast," "project," "predict," "plan," "may," "should," "could" and similar expressions identify forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements appear in a number of places including, without limitation, "Item 3. Key Information D. Risk Factors," "Item 4. Information on Our Company B. Business Overview," "Item 5. Operating and Financial Review and Prospects," and "Item 11. Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosures about Market Risk" and include statements regarding:

our strategies, future plans, economic outlook, industry trends and potential for future growth;

our liquidity, capital resources and capital expenditures;

our payment of dividends;

our capital structure, including our indebtedness amounts;

our ability to generate sufficient cash flow to meet our debt service obligations;

our ability to achieve the anticipated levels of profitability;

our ability to timely develop and introduce new products and services;

our ability to obtain and maintain interconnect agreements;

our ability to secure the necessary spectrum and network infrastructure equipment;

our ability to meet license requirements and to obtain and maintain licenses and regulatory approvals;

our ability to maintain adequate customer care and to manage our churn rate; and

our ability to manage our rapid growth and train additional personnel.

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The forward-looking statements in this document are based upon various assumptions, many of which are based, in turn, upon further assumptions, including without limitation, management's examination of historical operating trends, data contained in our records and other data available from third parties. Although we believe that these assumptions were reasonable when made, because these assumptions are inherently subject to significant uncertainties and contingencies which are difficult or impossible to predict and are beyond our control, we cannot assure you that we will achieve or accomplish these expectations, beliefs or projections. In addition to these important factors and matters

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discussed elsewhere herein, important factors that, in our view, could cause actual results to differ materially from those discussed in the forward-looking statements include:

growth in demand for our services;

changes in consumer preferences or demand for our products;

availability of external financing on commercially acceptable terms;

the developments of our markets;

the highly competitive nature of our industry and changes to our business resulting from increased competition;

the impact of regulatory initiatives;

the rapid technological changes in our industry;

cost and synergy of our recent acquisitions;

the acceptance of new products and services by customers;

the condition of the economies of Russia, Ukraine and certain other countries of the CIS;

risks relating to legislation, regulation and taxation in Russia and certain other CIS countries, including laws, regulations, decrees and decisions governing each of the telecommunications industries in the countries where we operate, currency and exchange controls relating to entities in Russia and other countries where we operate and taxation legislation relating to entities in Russia and other countries where we operate, and their official interpretation by governmental and other regulatory bodies and by the courts of Russia and the CIS;

political stability in Russia, Ukraine and certain other CIS countries; and

the impact of general business and global economic conditions and other important factors described herein and from time to time in the reports filed by us with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC").

All future written and verbal forward-looking statements attributable to us or any person acting on our behalf are expressly qualified in their entirety by the cautionary statements contained or referred to in this section. New risks and uncertainties arise from time to time, and it is impossible for us to predict these events or how they may affect us. Readers are cautioned not to place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements. Except to the extent required by law, neither we, nor any of our respective agents, employees or advisors intends or has any duty or obligation to supplement, amend, update or revise any of the forward-looking statements contained or incorporated by reference in this document.

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PART I

Item 1. Identity of Directors, Senior Management and Advisors

Not applicable.

Item 2. Offer Statistics and Expected Timetable

Not applicable.

Item 3. Key Information

A. Selected Financial Data

The selected consolidated financial data for the years ended December 31, 2011, 2012 and 2013, and as of December 31, 2012 and 2013, are derived from the audited consolidated financial statements, prepared in accordance with U.S. GAAP included elsewhere in this document. The numbers presented in the following table for the years ended December 31, 2009 and 2010 and as of December 31, 2009, 2010 and 2011 were derived from our audited consolidated financial statements presented in U.S. dollars and not included in this document and restated in Russian rubles using average monthly exchange rates and period end exchange rates between the U.S. dollars and the Russian rubles based on data published by the CBR, except for data derived from statement of cash flows. Cash flows data for the years ended December 31, 2009 and 2010 were restated in Russian rubles using average annual rates between the U.S. dollar and the Russian ruble based on data published by the CBR. Our results of operations for all periods presented in the following table exclude financial data of Uzdunrobita, our former subsidiary in Uzbekistan. The results of operations of Uzdunrobita are reported as discontinued operations in our audited consolidated financial statements for the years ended December 31, 2011, 2012 and 2013, and as of December 31, 2012 and 2013.

Our results of operations are affected by acquisitions. Results of operations of acquired businesses are included in our audited consolidated financial statements from their respective dates of acquisition, other than with respect to our acquisition of certain subsidiaries of Sistema, as further described below.

In October 2009, we acquired a 50.91% stake in Comstar, a provider of fixed line communication services in Russia, Ukraine and Armenia, from Sistema for RUB 39.15 billion. We subsequently increased our ownership stake in Comstar to 61.97% (or 64.03% excluding treasury shares) in December 2009 and to 70.97% (or 73.33% excluding treasury shares) in September 2010 through a voluntary tender offer. On December 23, 2010, the extraordinary general meetings of shareholders of Comstar and MTS approved a merger of Comstar and us. On March 10, 2011, we completed a share buyback as part of the reorganization of MTS and on April 1, 2011 the merger was completed. A total of 8,000 MTS ordinary shares representing 0.0004% of our issued share capital were repurchased in the buyback for RUB 1.96 million. The buyback price was set at RUB 245.19 per one MTS ordinary share. In addition, a total of 22,483,791 Comstar ordinary shares representing 5.38% of the Comstar issued share capital were repurchased for RUB 4.8 billion. The buyback price was set at RUB 212.85 per one Comstar ordinary share. The remaining 98,853,996 Comstar ordinary shares were converted into MTS ordinary shares at an exchange ratio of 0.825 MTS ordinary shares for each Comstar ordinary share. See "Item 5. Operating and Financial Review and Prospects A. Operating Results Certain Factors Affecting our Financial Position and Results of Operations Acquisitions."

In June 2010, we acquired a 15% ownership interest in TS-Retail OJSC ("TS-Retail") from Sistema for RUB 31 consequently increasing our effective ownership interest in TS-Retail to 49.6%. We subsequently increased our effective ownership interest in TS-Retail to 50.95%, which was achieved through a voluntary tender offer to purchase Comstar's shares in September 2010.

In August 2010, we acquired a 95% ownership interest in Metro-Telecom, a company which owns a fiber optic network located in the Moscow metro, from Invest-Svyaz CJSC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Sistema, for RUB 339.35 million.

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In December 2010, we acquired a 100% ownership stake in Sistema Telecom, a subsidiary of Sistema which owns the egg-shaped logos each of the telecommunications companies operating within the Sistema group uses, including us, and a 45% ownership stake in TS-Retail, from Sistema for RUB 11.59 billion. As a result of this acquisition and the completion of our merger with Comstar on April 1, 2011, we currently own a 100% stake in TS-Retail.

As we, Comstar, TS-Retail, Sistema Telecom and Metro-Telecom were under the common control of Sistema, our acquisition of majority stakes in these companies has been treated as a combination of entities under common control and accounted for in a manner similar to a pooling-of-interests, *i.e.*, the assets and liabilities acquired were recorded at their historical carrying value and the consolidated financial statements were retroactively restated to reflect the Group as if these companies had been owned since the beginning of the earliest period presented. Accordingly, the financial data presented below for the year ended December 31, 2009, the financial year preceding the acquisitions, have been restated to include the financial position and results of operations of the companies acquired from Sistema as if the acquisitions had occurred as of January 1, 2009, and the financial data for the years ended December 31, 2009 and 2010 includes the financial position and results of operations of Comstar, TS-Retail, Sistema Telecom and Metro-Telecom for the full-year.

The selected financial data should be read in conjunction with our audited consolidated financial statements, included elsewhere in this document, "Item 3. Key Information D. Risk Factors" and "Item 5. Operating and Financial Review and Prospects." Certain industry and operating data are also provided below. The numbers presented in the following table for the years ended December 31, 2009 and 2010 and as of December 31, 2009, 2010 and 2011 were derived from our audited consolidated financial statements presented in U.S. dollars and not included in this document and restated into Russian rubles using average monthly exchange rates and period end exchange rates between the U.S. dollar and the Russian ruble based on data published by the CBR, except for data derived from statement of cash flows. Cash flows data for the years ended December 31, 2009 and 2010 were restated in Russian rubles using average annual rates between the U.S. dollar and the Russian ruble based on data published by the CBR:

	2009 (restated, other than industry and operating data)	Years Ended December 31,			
		2010	2011	2012	2013
(Amounts in millions of Russian Rubles, except share and per share amounts, industry and operating data and ratios)					
Consolidated statements of operations data:					
Services revenue and connection fees	287,726	308,007	322,546	349,338	371,950
Sales of handsets and accessories	11,042	21,542	26,025	28,902	26,493
Total net operating revenues	297,768	329,549	348,571	378,240	398,443
Operating expenses:					
Cost of services, excluding depreciation and amortization shown separately below	61,002	66,067	74,753	83,051	83,777
Cost of handsets and accessories	11,466	22,001	26,286	25,042	22,636
Sales and marketing expenses	22,249	25,143	24,800	21,667	22,861
Depreciation and amortization expense	55,532	57,197	63,932	67,910	73,253
Sundry operating expenses ⁽¹⁾	69,392	75,973	78,505	86,776	94,158
Net operating income	79,126	83,169	80,295	93,794	101,758
Currency exchange and transaction loss/(gain)	6,903	(877)	4,403	(3,952)	5,473

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	2009 (restated, other than industry and operating data)	Years Ended December 31,			
		2010	2011	2012	2013
(Amounts in millions of Russian Rubles, except share and per share amounts, industry and operating data and ratios)					
Other (income) expenses:					
Interest income	(3,190)	(2,554)	(1,850)	(2,588)	(2,793)
Interest expense, net of capitalized interest	17,812	23,578	19,333	17,673	15,498
Equity in net income of associates	(1,907)	(2,147)	(1,430)	(869)	(2,472)
Impairment of investments	10,856				
Change in fair value of derivatives	160				
Other expenses, net	942	1,983	180	688	(10,636)
Total other expenses/(income), net	24,672	20,860	16,233	14,904	(403)
Income from continuing operations before provision for income taxes and noncontrolling interests					
	45,003	58,934	59,659	82,842	96,688
Provision for income taxes	15,938	15,660	15,526	19,384	19,633
Net income from continuing operations	29,065	43,243	44,133	63,458	77,055
Net income/(loss) from discontinued operations	3,649	3,580	1,806	(32,846)	3,733
Net (loss)/ income attributable to the noncontrolling interest	(394)	5,080	3,624	970	949
Net income attributable to the Group	33,108	41,773	42,315	29,642	79,839
Dividends declared ⁽²⁾	39,405	30,697	30,046	30,397	40,956
Earnings per share, basic and diluted, RUB	17.56	21.79	21.5	14.9	40.1
Earnings per share from continuing operations, basic and diluted, RUB	15.62	19.92	20.6	31.4	38.3
Earnings/(loss) per share from discontinued operations, basic and diluted, RUB	1.93	1.87	0.9	(16.5)	1.9
Annual Dividends declared per share, rubles	20.15	15.40	14.54	14.71	14.6
Semi annual Dividends declared per share, rubles					5.2
Number of common shares outstanding	1,916,869,262	1,916,869,262	1,988,916,837	1,988,919,177	1,988,831,184
Weighted average number of common shares outstanding basic	1,885,750,147	1,916,869,262	1,970,953,129	1,988,918,528	1,988,849,281
Weighted average number of common shares outstanding diluted	1,885,750,147	1,916,869,262	1,970,953,129	1,988,918,528	1,988,849,281
Consolidated statement of cash flows data:					
Cash provided by operating activities	113,957	109,851	113,562	132,123	159,377
Cash used in investing activities	(72,253)	(66,254)	(77,210)	(93,367)	(96,671)
(of which capital expenditures) ⁽³⁾	(73,861)	(80,391)	(72,802)	(87,783)	(81,575)
Cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	4,154	(92,214)	(5,630)	(75,346)	(55,145)

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	Years Ended December 31,				
	2009 (restated, other than industry and operating data)	2010	2011	2012	2013
	(Amounts in millions of Russian Rubles, except share and per share amounts, industry and operating data and ratios)				
Consolidated statement of financial position (end of period):					
Cash, cash equivalents and short-term investments	82,732	38,440	62,366	26,048	45,245
Property, plant and equipment, net	234,411	242,957	265,376	271,781	270,660
Total assets	476,784	441,246	493,474	454,978	485,524
Total debt (long-term and short-term) ⁽⁴⁾	252,546	218,233	280,596	232,105	219,148
Total shareholders' equity	132,037	126,686	114,960	113,991	156,053
Common stock less treasury stock	(25,884)	(25,884)	(24,255)	(24,255)	(24,275)
Financial ratios (end of period):					
Total debt/total capitalization ⁽⁵⁾	65.7%	63.3%	70.9%	67.1%	58.4%
Mobile industry and operating data:⁽⁶⁾					
Mobile penetration in Russia (end of period)	143%	151%	157%	161%	170%
Mobile penetration in Ukraine (end of period)	121%	118%	118%	126%	133%
Mobile subscribers in Russia (end of period, thousands) ⁽⁷⁾	69,342	71,442	69,954	71,227	75,322
Mobile subscribers in Ukraine (end of period, thousands) ⁽⁷⁾	17,564	18,240	19,223	20,709	22,661
Overall market share in Russia (end of period)	33%	33%	31%	31%	31%
Overall market share in Ukraine (end of period)	32%	34%	36%	36%	37%
Average monthly usage per subscriber in Russia (minutes) ⁽⁸⁾	213	234	269	304	327
Average monthly usage per subscriber in Ukraine (minutes) ⁽⁸⁾	462	535	580	597	574
Average monthly service revenue per subscriber in Russia ⁽⁹⁾ , rubles	248	253	273	297	308
Average monthly service revenue per subscriber in Ukraine ⁽⁹⁾ , rubles	159	146	143	153	150
Subscriber acquisition costs in Ukraine ⁽¹⁰⁾ , rubles	222	244	241	236	218
Churn in Russia ⁽¹¹⁾	38.3%	45.9%	47.6%	42.4%	36.3%
Churn in Ukraine ⁽¹¹⁾	40.0%	31.0%	30.7%	30.5%	26.1%

(1) "Sundry operating expenses" consist of general and administrative expenses, provision for doubtful accounts, impairment of long-lived assets and goodwill and other operating expenses.

(2) Dividends declared in each of the years ended December 31, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 were, in each case, in respect of the prior fiscal year (i.e., in respect of each of the years ended December 31, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012, respectively). In addition, in 2013 the Group declared semi-annual dividends in amount of RUB 10.786 million. Includes dividends on treasury shares of RUB 1.421 million, RUB 1.086 million, RUB 1.127 million, RUB 1.140 million, RUB 1.133 million and RUB 405 million in respect of the years ended December 31, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013, respectively. At a meeting held on April 11, 2014, the Board recommended that an annual general meeting of shareholders approve annual dividends of RUB 18.6 per ordinary MTS share (RUB 37.2 per ADS), or a total of approximately RUB 38 billion, based on the full-year 2013 financial results.

(3) Capital expenditures include purchases of property, plant and equipment and intangible assets.

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- (4) Includes notes payable, bank loans, capital lease obligations and other debt.
- (5) Calculated as book value of total debt divided by the sum of the book values of total shareholders' equity and total debt at the end of the relevant period. See footnote 4 above for the definition of "total debt."
- (6) Source: AC&M-Consulting and our data. Operating data is presented for mobile operations only. None of this data is derived from our audited consolidated financial statements.
- (7) We define a subscriber as an individual or organization whose account shows chargeable activity within 61 days (or 183 days in the case of Prepaid tariffs) or whose account does not have a negative balance for more than this period.
- (8) Average monthly minutes of usage per subscriber is calculated by dividing the total number of minutes of usage during a given period by the average number of our subscribers during the period and dividing by the number of months in that period.
- (9) We calculate average monthly service revenue per subscriber by dividing our service revenues for a given period, including interconnect, guest roaming fees and connection fees, by the average number of our subscribers during that period and dividing by the number of months in that period.
- (10) In Ukraine, subscriber acquisition costs are calculated as total sales and marketing expenses, handset subsidies and cost of sim cards and vouchers for a given period divided by the total number of gross subscribers added during that period. In Russia, it is impracticable to calculate subscriber acquisition costs for the period as we now have the mobile and fixed line parts of the business combined in one reportable segment, "Russia."
- (11) We define our churn as the total number of subscribers who cease to be a subscriber (see footnote 7 above for the definition of a "subscriber") during the period (whether involuntarily due to non-payment or voluntarily, at such subscriber's request), expressed as a percentage of the average number of our subscribers during that period.

B. Capitalization and Indebtedness

Not applicable.

C. Reasons for the Offer and Use of Proceeds

Not applicable.

D. Risk Factors

An investment in our securities involves a certain degree of risk. In our securities involves a certain degree of risk. You should carefully consider the following information about these risks, together with other information contained in this document, before you decide to buy our securities. If any of the following risks actually occur, our business, prospects, financial condition or results of operations could be materially adversely affected. In that case, the value of our securities could also decline and you could lose all or part of your investment. In addition, please read "Cautionary Statement Regarding Forward-Looking Statements" where we describe additional uncertainties associated with our business and the forward-looking statements included in this document.

Risks Relating to Business Operations in Emerging Markets

Emerging markets such as the Russian Federation, Ukraine and other CIS countries are subject to greater risks than more developed markets, including significant legal, economic, tax and political risks.

Investors in emerging markets such as the Russian Federation, Armenia, Ukraine, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and other CIS countries should be aware that these markets are subject to greater risk than more developed markets, including in some cases, significant legal, economic, tax and political risks. Investors should also note that emerging economies such as the economies of the Russian Federation and Ukraine are subject to rapid change and that the information set out herein may become outdated relatively quickly.

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Global financial or economic crises or even financial turmoil in any large emerging market country tend to adversely affect prices in equity markets of most or all emerging market countries as investors move their money to more stable, developed markets. Beginning in the second half of 2008, the Russian equity markets have been highly volatile, principally due to the impact of the global financial and economic crisis on the Russian economy as well as the current crisis in Ukraine. Such volatility has caused market regulators to temporarily suspend trading on the Moscow Interbank Currency Exchange ("MICEX") and the Russian Trading System ("RTS") multiple times. MICEX and RTS stock market indices have experienced significant overall declines since their peaks in May 2008, including an over ten percent fall during the first three months of 2014 in response to the current crisis in Ukraine and deepening concerns over the strength of the Russian economy. As has happened in the past, financial problems or an increase in the perceived risks associated with investing in emerging economies due to, *inter alia*, geopolitical disputes such as the current crisis in Ukraine, could dampen foreign investment in Russia and adversely affect the Russian economy. In addition, during such times, businesses that operate in emerging markets can face severe liquidity constraints as funding sources are withdrawn. Furthermore, in doing business in various countries of the CIS, we face risks similar to (and sometimes greater than) those that we face in Russia and Ukraine. For example, see " Legal Risks and Uncertainties The inability of MTS-Turkmenistan to sustain its operations in Turkmenistan on commercially acceptable terms or at all may adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations," and " The inability of our subsidiaries in the countries in which we are present to maintain control over their operations and assets may adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations." Accordingly, investors should exercise particular care in evaluating the risks involved and must decide for themselves whether, in light of those risks, their investment is appropriate. Generally, investment in emerging markets is suitable for sophisticated investors who fully appreciate the significance of the risks involved and investors are urged to consult with their own legal and financial advisors before making an investment in our securities.

Risks Relating to Our Business

The telecommunications services market is characterized by rapid technological change, which could render our services obsolete or non-competitive and result in the loss of our market share and a decrease in our revenues.

The telecommunications industry is subject to rapid and significant changes in technology and is characterized by the continuous introduction of new products and services. The mobile telecommunications industry in Russia is also experiencing significant technological change, as evidenced by the introduction in recent years of new standards for radio telecommunications, such as Wi-Fi, Worldwide Inter-operability for Microwave Access ("Wi-Max"), Enhanced Data Rates for Global Evolution ("EDGE"), Universal Mobile Telecommunications System ("UMTS"), and Long Term Evolution ("LTE"), as well as ongoing improvements in the capacity and quality of communications, shorter development cycles for new products and enhancements and changes in customer requirements and preferences. Such continuing technological advances make it difficult to predict the extent of the future competition we may face and it is possible that existing, proposed or as yet undeveloped technologies will become dominant in the future and render the technologies we use less profitable or even obsolete. New products and services that are more commercially effective than our products and services may also be developed. Furthermore, we may not be successful in responding in a timely and cost-effective way to keep up with these developments. Changing our products or services in response to market demand may require the adoption of new technologies that could render many of the technologies that we are currently implementing less competitive or obsolete. To respond successfully to technological advances and emerging industry standards, we may require substantial capital expenditures and access to related or enabling technologies in order to integrate the new technology with our existing technology.

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We face increasing competition in the markets where we operate, which may result in reduced operating margins and loss of market share, as well as different pricing, service or marketing policies.

The wireless telecommunications services markets in which we operate are highly competitive, particularly in Russia and Ukraine, where mobile penetration exceeds 100%. We also face increased competition in our cable TV and fixed line business, where the market for alternative fixed line communications services in Russia is rapidly evolving and becoming increasingly competitive. Competition is generally based on price, product functionality, range of service offerings and customer service.

Our principal wireless competitors in Russia are Open Joint Stock Company "Vimpel Communications," or "Vimpelcom", and Open Joint Stock Company MegaFon ("MegaFon"). We also face competition from several regional operators and Tele2 Russia which is undergoing a reorganization (as described further below) that may lead to the creation of the fourth federal operator in the course of 2015.

In addition, on April 1, 2011, the Russian government completed the reorganization of state-controlled telecommunications companies Svyazinvest Telecommunications Investment Joint Stock Company ("Svyazinvest"), and Open Joint Stock Company Long-Distance and International Telecommunications Rostelecom ("Rostelecom"). As a result, Rostelecom is currently the largest fixed-line operator and fourth largest mobile operator in Russia.

In October 2010, Sistema and Svyazinvest entered into an exchange transaction, upon completion of which, Svyazinvest obtained control over 100% of the share capital in Sky Link, Sistema acquired the 23.33% stake in MGTS controlled by Svyazinvest and Comstar transferred 25% plus 1 share in Svyazinvest to Rostelecom for cash consideration of 26 billion rubles. Sky Link is a Moscow-based code division multiple access ("CDMA") operator holding GSM licenses for a majority of Russian regions. In July 2012, Rostelecom acquired 100% of Sky Link which at the time of this acquisition held licenses in 76 Russian regions covering more than 90% of the total Russian population. In addition, Rostelecom won tenders for 39 out of 40 licenses to provide fourth-generation ("4G") wireless services within the 2.3-2.4 GHz frequency band and in November 2011 received permission from the Ministry of Defense to use the allotted frequencies for the creation of a 4G network.

On April 4, 2013, the Federal Antimonopoly Service approved a transaction for Airport Alliance, a member of VTB Group, to acquire 100% of Tele2 Russia, which was later completed. Subsequently, VTB Bank sold 50% of Tele2 Russia to a consortium of private investors, including affiliates of Bank "Rossiya", whose main shareholder is Mr. Yury Kovalchuk, and also entities linked to Mr. Alexey Mordashov. Both of these individuals are reputedly among Russia's most successful and influential businessmen. On December, 30, 2013 shareholders of Rostelecom approved a reorganization plan which led to the spin-out of its mobile business into RT-Mobile Ltd. It is reported that RT-Mobile Ltd's business has been contributed as capital for a new joint venture concluded between Rostelecom and Tele2 Russia, under the name of "T2 Rus Holding". During the first stage of integration, seven subsidiaries of Rostelecom will become part of T2 Rus Holding, while under the second stage Rostelecom will contribute 100% of RT-Mobile into the joint venture's equity capital and consequently will acquire a 45% share in it. The second stage of the transaction is planned to be completed by the end of 2014. In 2014, T2 Rus Holding will be reorganized into T2 RTK Holding and is scheduled to start operations under the Tele2 brand in more than 60 regions of Russia. Therefore T2 RTK Holding may become one of the key players in the mobile telecommunications market in Russia, which may materially adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations.

According to Direct INFO, Rostelecom controls over 75% of all fixed line telecommunications services in Russia. The emergence of Rostelecom as an integrated nationwide provider of fixed line local and long distance communications services as well as its reorganized business holdings in mobile communications services may significantly increase competition in our markets. In particular, a new

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mobile operator involving this state-controlled group may receive favorable pricing terms to interconnect from the regional fixed line operators within its group, putting us at a competitive disadvantage. See also " If we cannot interconnect cost-effectively with other telecommunications operators, we may be unable to provide services at competitive prices and therefore lose market share and revenues."

Of the telecommunication services we provide, broadband Internet access is among the most competitive. While the Moscow and St. Petersburg markets have become mature in recent years (more than 70% of the market is controlled by the five largest companies), regional markets are the fastest growing markets, and it is expected that regional markets will follow the same trend as the Moscow and St. Petersburg markets in the coming years, with competition in such markets becoming extremely intense. If we fail to obtain and maintain a substantial share of the broadband Internet access market, our business, financial condition, results of operations or prospects or the value of the ADSs may be materially adversely affected.

In addition, we believe that Rostelecom, as a state-controlled company, is currently able to influence telecommunications policy and regulation in Russia and may cause substantial increases in interconnect rates for access to fixed line operators' networks by mobile cellular operators. Similarly, Rostelecom may cause substantial decreases in interconnect rates for access to mobile cellular operators' networks by fixed line operators, which could cause our revenues to decrease and may materially adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations.

Competition in the Ukrainian wireless telecommunications market has significantly intensified over the last several years and may further intensify as a result of the current political crisis. See " Political and Social Risks Political instability in Ukraine could have a material adverse effect on our operations in Ukraine and on our business, financial condition and results of operations," and " A deterioration in relations between Russia and other former Soviet republics and/or the United States and the European Union could materially adversely affect our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects and the value of our shares and ADSs."

In October 2010, the Antimonopoly Committee of Ukraine (the "AMC"), approved the merger of Kyivstar, our primary mobile competitor in Ukraine, with URS and Golden Telecom Ukraine, a Ukrainian mobile operator controlled by Vimpelcom, in connection with Vimpelcom's restructuring. On September 4, 2013, Golden Telecom ceased to provide mobile telecommunication services in Ukraine, and its subscribers were invited to re-connect to Kyivstar. It is not clear how the Vimpelcom restructuring in Ukraine will affect our operations. Aggressive pricing by our competitors in Ukraine, driven primarily by Astelit, has driven down the price per minute levels in recent years for mobile communication, which in conjunction with the economic crisis in Ukraine has contributed to the slowdown in the growth rate of the Ukrainian wireless telecommunications market. Presently, the controlled rise of prices, monetization of services, the customer experience of our services and value for money are the most important drivers for the competitive situation in Ukraine. However, we may face additional competition from other European telecommunication companies in the future in the event that Ukraine enters into cooperation agreements with or accedes into the European Union and is required to liberalize access to its telecoms markets for other European operators. These factors may adversely affect our own business, financial condition and results of operations.

The competitive situation for our services in Ukraine may also be influenced by the expected introduction of a mobile number portability ("MNP") service from July 1, 2014 (however due to technical delays by the company responsible for administrating the ported numbers data base, the MNP launch is likely to be postponed until the end of 2014), and also by the sale by the SKM company of Trimob (the only operator in Ukraine with a UMTS license). Similar provisions regarding MNP are already in force in Russia, see also " Legal Risks and Uncertainties Regulatory changes in Russia,

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including the reduction of settlement rate, the mobile number portability principle and others may have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations."

In Belarus, we face increasing competition and aggressive pricing from Best CJSC, a subsidiary of System Capital Management and Turkcell Iletisim Hizmetleri A.S. ("Turkcell") operating in Belarus under the "life:")" brand. Additionally, in 2011, the government of Belarus announced its intention to hold a public tender to privatize a 51% ownership interest in MTS Belarus with an opening price of \$1.0 billion (RUB 29.4 billion). The public tender was scheduled to be held on December 23, 2011, but was cancelled due to a lack of bidders, and is now expected to be held by the State Property Committee of Belarus in 2014 with subsequent reduction in price. The terms of share disposal have not yet been determined, although it may be conducted either through a public tender or by entering into a direct contract with a particular purchaser. If we are unable to acquire this ownership interest at a commercially reasonable price, or if it is acquired by one of our competitors, it may impact our competitive position and results of operations in Belarus.

We also face competition in Armenia. In 2009, France Telecom operating under the Orange brand entered the Armenian telecommunications market and began offering voice and data transmission services, as well as mobile phones at highly competitive prices. By the end of 2013, Orange had a market share of 16.6% and continued to pursue its strategy of providing telecommunication services (voice and internet) at highly competitive prices.

Following the resumption of our operations in Turkmenistan we continue to face price competition from our main competitor Altyn Asyr on international roaming rates and also capacity restrictions that impact on the development of our third-generation "3G" mobile data network in Turkmenistan. MTS-Turkmenistan is required to route both international traffic signals as well as domestic traffic signals entirely through the telecommunications network infrastructure of the state owned telecom operator Turkmentelekom. However, in spite of our further requests for additional network capacity in accordance with our interconnection agreements with Turkmentelekom, there has not been a corresponding increase in capacity made available to us to accommodate the volume of MTS-Turkmenistan's traffic signals. In addition, Turkmentelekom may also refuse to lease communication lines needed for the day-to-day operation of MTS-Turkmenistan's 3G network. As a result, the data service of MTS-Turkmenistan could become less attractive for the subscribers, which could adversely affect the results of our operations in Turkmenistan.

Generally, increased levels of competition, including from the potential entry of new mobile operators, government-backed operators, mobile virtual network operators and alternative fixed line operators in the markets where we operate, as well as the strengthening of existing operators and increased use of Internet protocol telephony, may adversely affect our ability to increase the number of subscribers. This in turn could result in reduced operating margins and a loss of market share, as well as necessitating different pricing, service or marketing policies, which may have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of our operations.

We are subject to anti-corruption laws in the jurisdictions in which we operate, including anti-corruption laws of Russia and the US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (the "FCPA"), and we may be subject to the UK Bribery Act of 2010 (the "UK Bribery Act"). Our failure to comply therewith could result in penalties which could harm our reputation and have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

We are subject to the FCPA, which generally prohibits companies and their intermediaries from making improper payments to foreign officials for the purpose of obtaining or keeping business and/or other benefits, along with various other anti-corruption laws. We may also be subject to the UK Bribery Act. The UK Bribery Act is broader in scope than the FCPA in that it directly addresses commercial

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bribery in addition to bribery of government officials and it does not recognize certain exceptions, notably facilitation payments that are permitted by the FCPA.

Although we regularly review and update our policies and procedures designed to ensure that we, our employees, distributors and other intermediaries comply with the anti-corruption laws to which we are subject, there is no assurance that such policies or procedures will work effectively all of the time or protect us against liability under these or other laws for actions taken by our employees, distributors and other intermediaries with respect to our business or any businesses that we may acquire. We operate primarily in Russia and other countries of the former Soviet Union, many of which pose elevated risks of corruption violations. We and certain of our subsidiaries are in frequent contact with persons who may be considered "foreign officials" under the FCPA and UK Bribery Act, and therefore, are subject to an increased risk of potential FCPA and UK Bribery Act violations. If we are not in compliance with the FCPA, the UK Bribery Act and other laws governing the conduct of business with government entities (including local laws), we may be subject to criminal and civil penalties and other remedial measures, which could have an adverse impact on our business, results of operations, financial condition and liquidity.

As previously disclosed, in March 2014, we received requests for the provision of information from the United States Securities and Exchange Commission and the United States Department of Justice relating to an investigation of the Group's former subsidiary in Uzbekistan. See also Note 4 to our audited consolidated financial statements. As the aforementioned US government investigations are at an early stage, we cannot predict the outcome of the investigations, including any fines or penalties that may be imposed, and such fines or penalties could be significant. Any investigation of any potential violations of the FCPA, the UK Bribery Act or other anti-corruption laws by US, UK or foreign authorities could have an adverse impact on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

Our controlling shareholder has the ability to take actions that may conflict with the interests of other holders of our securities.

We are controlled by Sistema, which owns 51.46% of our total charter capital (53.47% excluding treasury shares). If not otherwise required by Russian law and/or our charter, resolutions at a shareholders' meeting are adopted by a simple majority in a meeting at which shareholders holding more than half of the issued share capital are present or represented. Accordingly, Sistema has the power to control the outcome of most matters to be decided by vote at a shareholders' meeting and, as long as it holds, either directly or indirectly, a majority of our shares, Sistema will control the appointment of a majority of directors and removal of all directors. Sistema is also able to control or significantly influence the outcome of any vote on matters which require three-quarters majority vote of a shareholders' meeting, such as amendments to the charter, proposed reorganizations substantial asset sales, and other major corporate transactions, among other things. Thus, Sistema can take actions that may conflict with the interests of other security holders. In addition, under certain circumstances, a disposition by Sistema of its controlling stake in our company could harm our business. See also "Risks Relating to Our Financial Condition" If a change in control occurs, our noteholders and other debt holders may require us to redeem notes or other debt, which could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations."

Sistema has a significant amount of outstanding debt. As of December 31, 2013, Sistema had consolidated indebtedness of approximately \$41 million (RUB 1,342 million) of short-term debt, \$2.47 billion (RUB 80,841 million) comprising the short-term portion of its long-term debt, and \$10.8 billion (RUB 353 billion) of long-term debt (net of the short-term portion). At the corporate level, Sistema had \$8.99 million (RUB 291 million) of short-term debt, \$574.5 million (RUB 18,803 million) comprising the short-term portion of its long-term debt, and \$991.1 million (RUB 32,438 million) of long-term debt (net of the short-term portion). Therefore, Sistema will require

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significant funds to meet its obligations, which may come in part from dividends paid by its subsidiaries, including us.

Sistema voted in favor of declaring dividends of RUB 39,405 million in 2009 for 2008, RUB 30,697 million in 2010 for 2009, RUB 30,046 million in 2011 for 2010, RUB 30,397 million in 2012 for 2011 and RUB 40,956 million in 2013 for 2012 and half-year 2013. Annual dividends are calculated at the exchange rate on the date when dividends are declared at the Annual General Meeting of Shareholders. The indentures relating to our outstanding notes and other debt do not restrict our ability to pay dividends. As a result of paying dividends, our reliance on external sources of financing may increase, our credit rating may decrease, and our cash flow and ability to repay our debt obligations, or make capital expenditures, investments and acquisitions could be materially adversely affected. Furthermore, our credit ratings can be and have been affected in the past by Sistema's activity and credit ratings.

Failure to effectively implement our geographic expansion strategy as well as difficulties with operational management of the acquired businesses could hamper our continued growth and profitability.

Our continued growth depends, in part, on our ability to identify attractive opportunities in markets that will grow and on our ability to manage the operations of acquired or newly established businesses. Our strategy contemplates the acquisition of additional operations within the CIS in both the mobile and fixed broadband segments. These acquisitions may occur in countries that represent new operating environments for us and, in many instances, may be located a great distance from our corporate headquarters in Russia. We therefore may have less control over their activities. We may also face uncertainties with respect to the operational and financial needs of these businesses, and may, in the course of our acquisitions, incur additional debt to finance the acquisitions and/or take on substantial existing debt of the acquired companies. In addition, we anticipate that the countries into which we may expand will be emerging markets and, as with countries of our current presence, subject to greater political, economic, social and legal risks than more developed markets.

For example, see " Legal Risks and Uncertainties The inability of MTS-Turkmenistan to sustain its operations in Turkmenistan on commercially acceptable terms or at all may adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations," and " The inability of our subsidiaries in the countries in which we are present to maintain control over their operations and assets may adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations."

Our failure to identify attractive opportunities for expansion into new markets and to manage the operations of acquired or newly established businesses in these markets could hamper our continued growth and profitability, and have a material adverse effect on our financial condition, results of operations and prospects.

Acquisitions and mergers may pose significant risks to our business.

We have expanded our business through several acquisitions. As part of our growth strategy, we will continue to evaluate opportunities to acquire, invest in or merge with other existing operators or license holders in the CIS and in growing markets outside the CIS, as well as other complementary businesses.

Prior to 2009, most of our acquisitions were of regional operators with a focus on expanding our network and subscriber footprint. In 2011 and 2012, our acquisitions focus shifted to acquiring a minority stake in a subsidiary company of Multiregion JSC and other regional cable TV and broadband providers in furtherance of our strategy to become a provider of integrated telecommunications services. In 2010, we also acquired Sistema Telecom in order to obtain full control over our logos.

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These and other business combinations entail a number of risks that could materially and adversely affect our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects, including the following:

incorrect assessment of the value of any acquired target;

assumption of the acquired target's liabilities and contingencies;

failure to realize any of the anticipated benefits or synergies from any acquisitions or investments we complete;

problems integrating the acquired businesses, technologies or products into our operations;

incurrence of debt to finance acquisitions and higher debt service costs related thereto;

difficulties in retaining business relationships with suppliers and customers of the acquired company;

risks associated with businesses and markets in which we lack experience, including political, economic, social, legal and regulatory risks and uncertainties;

more onerous government regulation;

potential loss of key employees of the acquired company;

potential write-offs of acquired assets; and

lawsuits arising out of disputes over ownership of acquired assets and/or the enforcement of indemnities relating to the title to such assets.

In 2009, for example, we had write downs of \$349.4 million (RUB 11,084 million) related to Comstar's investment in Svyazinvest, the government-controlled holding for fixed line telephone companies, which contributed to our loss in the fourth quarter of 2009.

In addition, companies that we acquire may not have internal policies, including accounting policies and internal control procedures that are compatible, compliant or easily integrated with ours.

If any of our future business combinations is structured as a merger with another company, or we merge with or absorb a company subsequent to its acquisition by us, such a merger would be considered a corporate reorganization under Russian law. In turn, this would provide our creditors with a statutory-based right to file a claim seeking to accelerate their claims or terminate the respective obligations, as well as seek damages. To prevail, the creditors would need to prove in court that we will not perform our obligations in due course and the amount of damages suffered. Secured creditors would be required to further prove that the security provided by us, our shareholders or third parties is not sufficient to secure our obligations. Creditors whose claims are secured by pledges do not have the right to claim additional security.

In addition, in April 2013 we acquired a 25.095% stake in OJSC MTS Bank followed by a profit-sharing agreement whereby we and MTS Bank would realize 70% and 30% of the proceeds from the MTS Dengi (MTS Money) project respectively. The MTS Dengi project launched by us and MTS Bank is aimed at providing customers throughout Russia with payment tools, including credit cards, near-field communications-enabled SIM cards and PoS (point-of-sale) credit. If the risks associated with participating in the banking sector lead to our inability to receive the expected profits from MTS Dengi project it could have an adverse effect on our financial statements, financial condition and results of operations.

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We may also be involved in various litigation to protect our title or other rights related to acquired businesses and incur some unpredicted loss. For example, in December 2005, we acquired a 51% stake in Tarino Limited from Nomihold Securities Inc. for \$150.0 million (RUB 4,322 million) in cash and entered into a put and call option agreement for the remaining 49% interest for a price of \$170 million

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(RUB 4,898 million) as we believed, that at that time it was the indirect owner of Bitel, a Kyrgyz company holding GSM 900/1800 license for the entire territory of Kyrgyzstan. In the same year, following a decision of the Kyrgyz Supreme Court, Bitel's offices were seized by a third party and we lost operational control over Bitel. In 2007, Nomihold Securities Inc. exercised the put option for the remaining stake in Bitel. During 2005-2013 we wrote down more than \$320 million (RUB 8,798 million) relating to the loss of Bitel and other litigation with Nomihold Securities Inc. During the same period we also had other litigation in various jurisdictions to defend our rights relating to Bitel and its assets. In June 2013, an agreement was reached between Nomihold and other associated parties to settle all the claims arising in relation to Bitel and its assets, pursuant to which all proceedings between all the parties involved in such litigation were discontinued and waived and we received a total payment in cash in the amount of \$150 million (RUB 4,909 million). The settlement also fully discharged all our outstanding obligations to Nomihold Securities Inc. As a result of the settlement, we released a provision relating to the exercise the put option for acquisition of the remaining stake in Bitel plus damages, interest and other cost that have been provided for in relation to the dispute with Nomihold. See also Note 27 to our audited consolidated financial statements. In addition, a merger, as well as any corporate reorganization and any business combination that constitutes a "major transaction" under Russian law, would trigger the right of our shareholders who abstain from voting on or vote against such reorganization or transaction to sell, and our obligation to buy, their shares in an amount representing up to 10% of our net assets as calculated under Russian Accounting Standards. See " Legal Risks and Uncertainties Shareholder rights provisions under Russian law could impose additional obligations and costs on us, which could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects."

If our purchase of Ukrainian Mobile Communications ("UMC") is found to have violated Ukrainian law or the purchase is unwound, our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects would be materially adversely affected.

On June 7, 2004, the General Prosecutor of Ukraine filed a claim against us and others in the Kiev Commercial Court seeking to unwind the sale made to us by Joint Stock Company Ukrtelecom ("Ukrtelecom") of its 51% stake in UMC. The complaint also sought an order prohibiting us from disposing of our 51% stake in UMC until the claim was resolved on the merits. The claim was based on a provision of the Ukrainian privatization law that included Ukrtelecom among a list of "strategic" state holdings prohibited from alienating or encumbering its assets during the course of its privatization. Although the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine had issued a decree in May 2001 specifically authorizing the sale by Ukrtelecom of its entire stake in UMC, the General Prosecutor asserted that the decree contradicted the privatization law and that the sale by Ukrtelecom was therefore illegal and should be unwound. On August 12, 2004, the Kiev Commercial Court rejected the General Prosecutor's claim.

On August 26, 2004, the General Prosecutor's Office requested the Constitutional Court of Ukraine to review whether certain provisions of the Ukrainian privatization law limiting the alienation of assets by privatized companies were applicable to the sale by Ukrtelecom of UMC shares to us. On January 13, 2005, the Constitutional Court of Ukraine refused to initiate the constitutional proceedings arising from the request of the General Prosecutor's Office on the grounds that the request was incompatible with the requirements of Ukrainian constitutional law, and that the issue as it was raised in the request, did not fall within the jurisdiction of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine. The Constitutional Court of Ukraine's decision does not prevent other persons having the right to apply to the Constitutional Court of Ukraine from challenging the constitutionality of provisions of the Ukrainian privatization law applicable to the sale by Ukrtelecom of the UMC shares, and also does not preclude the future challenge of such sale in the commercial courts of Ukraine.

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If the Constitutional Court of Ukraine rules that the provisions of the Ukrainian privatization legislation applicable to Ukrtelecom's sale of its stake in UMC are unconstitutional, the Kiev Commercial Court could be requested by the General Prosecutor to re-open the case based on new circumstances and could potentially include additional persons that were not parties to the original proceeding and/or admit additional claims.

In addition, as UMC was formed at a time when Ukraine's legislative framework was developing in an uncertain legal environment, its formation and capital structure may also be subject to challenges. In the event that our purchase of UMC is found to have violated Ukrainian law or the purchase is subject to repeated challenge, or unwound, in whole or in part, our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects would be materially adversely affected.

If we cannot successfully develop our network, we will be unable to expand our subscriber base and maintain our profitability.

Our ability to increase our subscriber base depends upon the success of our network expansion. We have expended considerable amounts of resources to enable both organic expansion and expansion through acquisitions and plan to continue to do so. Limited information regarding the markets into which we have or are considering expanding, either through acquisitions or new licenses, complicates accurate forecasts of future revenues from those regions, increasing the risk that we may overestimate these revenues. In addition, we may not be able to integrate previous or future acquisitions successfully or operate them profitably. Any difficulties encountered in the transition and integration process and in the operation of acquired companies could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations.

The build-out of our network is also subject to risks and uncertainties, which could delay the introduction of services in some areas and increase the cost of network construction, including difficulty in obtaining base station sites on commercially attractive terms. In addition, telecommunications equipment used in Russia, Ukraine and other CIS countries is subject to governmental certification, and periodic renewals of the same. We are also required to receive permits for the operation of telecommunications equipment as well as governmental certification and/or permission for the import and export of certain network equipment, which can result in procurement delays and slow network development. The failure of any equipment we use to receive timely certification or re-certification could hinder our expansion plans.

For example, the import and export of products containing cryptographic hardware is subject to special documentation requirements and approvals. As telecommunication networks comprise various components with cryptographic hardware, we must comply with these requirements in order to import such components. Moreover, where imported equipment does not contain cryptographic hardware, the federal customs service requires manufacturers to provide written confirmation regarding the absence of such hardware. The range of goods requiring the provision of "certificates of conformance" by suppliers and manufactures prior to their import into Russia has also been expanded to cover most of our key network components, and imported radioelectronic equipment is required to be licensed by the Russian Ministry of Industry and Trade. Similar requirements regarding the import and export of cryptographic hardware exist in Ukraine.

Furthermore, as a result of the downturn in the global financial markets, certain banks have curtailed their lending programs, which may limit our ability to obtain external financing and, in turn, result in the reduction of our capital expenditure program. To the extent we fail to expand our network on a timely basis, we could experience difficulty in expanding our subscriber base. See also " Risks Relating to Our Financial Condition If we are unable to obtain adequate capital, we may have to limit our operations substantially, which could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects."

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Our inability to develop additional sources of revenue could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects.

Mobile penetration in Russia and Ukraine reached 170.0% and 133.1%, respectively, as of December, 31, 2013, according to AC&M-Consulting. Until recently, customer growth has been the principal source of revenue growth. Currently, however, increasing competition, market saturation and technological development lead to the increased importance of data services in the Russian market and, to a lesser extent, the markets of other CIS countries. As a result, data services became the key driver of our revenue growth and, therefore, we will need to continue to develop new competitive services, including value-added, 3G, LTE, and others, as well as consider vertical integration opportunities through the development or acquisition of dealers in order to provide us with sources of revenue in addition to standard voice services. Our inability to develop additional sources of revenue could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects.

Our failure to further develop and sustain our distribution network as well as the reduction, consolidation or acquisition of independent dealers may lead to a decrease in our subscriber growth rate, market share and revenues.

Following the restructuring of the Euroset Group, the largest mobile handset retailer and leading dealer for major mobile network operators in Russia, as a result of which MegaFon and Vimpelcom acquired equal shares of 50%, we have been working on developing our proprietary distribution network, have signed an additional agreement with Svyaznoy and have been working to increase our relationship with small regional dealers. If we are not successful in expanding and sustaining our proprietary network and maintaining and further developing our distribution network of national, regional and local retailers, our subscriber growth rate, market share and revenues may decrease, which would have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects. In addition, our ability to attract new customers through Euroset outlets is limited. If competitors continue to expand their footprint in Russia through the acquisition of Svyaznoy's operations, our opportunities for marketing our services through its outlets may be restricted. See "Item 4. Information on Our Company B. Business Overview Mobile Operations Sales and Marketing Sales and Distribution."

If we cannot interconnect cost-effectively with other telecommunications operators, we may be unable to provide services at competitive prices and therefore lose market share and revenues.

Our ability to provide commercially viable services depends on our ability to continue to interconnect cost-effectively with zonal, intercity and international fixed line and mobile operators in Russia, Ukraine and other countries in which we operate. Fees for interconnecting are established by agreements with network operators and vary depending on the network used, the nature of the call and the call destination.

In Ukraine, the government completed the privatization of Ukrtelecom, which, according to its public disclosure, has a 71% share of the local telephony market and an 83% share of the domestic and international long distance market in Ukraine. The auction to privatize Ukrtelecom was held by the State Property Fund of Ukraine in December 2010. On March 11, 2011, following the completion of an independent appraisal required by Ukrainian law, the State Property Fund of Ukraine and ESU LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of European Privatization & Investment Corporation ("EPIC"), signed an agreement for the sale of a 92.8% stake in Ukrtelecom to ESU LLC. On May 11, 2011, the ownership stake was transferred to ESU LLC upon the payment of a purchase price amounting to 10,575.1 million hryvnia (RUB 36,979.8 million as of May 11, 2011) and the fulfillment of certain requirements under Ukrainian law. It is currently unclear how the privatizations of Ukrtelecom will affect our interconnect arrangements and costs, but there is a chance that our ability to interconnect cost-effectively with other telecommunications operators could be hampered.

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Although Russian legislation requires that operators of public switched telephone networks that are deemed to be "substantial position" operators who cannot refuse to provide interconnects or discriminate against one operator over another, we believe that in practice, some operators attempt to impede wireless operators by delaying interconnect applications and establishing technical conditions for interconnecting that can be met only by certain operators.

Any difficulties or delays in interconnecting cost-effectively with other networks could hinder our ability to provide services at competitive prices or at all, causing us to lose market share and revenues, which would have a material adverse effect on our business and results of operations. See also " If we or any of our mobile operator subsidiaries operating in Russia are identified as an operator occupying a "substantial position," the regulator may reduce our interconnect tariffs which, in turn, may have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations."

In addition, as part of the restructuring of Svyazinvest, the Russian government has expressed its intent to establish a fourth national mobile operator in Russia. As Svyazinvest controls regional fixed line operators in all regions of Russia (other than Moscow), a mobile operator established as part of the Svyazinvest group may receive preferential terms for interconnecting with these operators, which would allow it greater flexibility in setting tariffs and put us at a competitive disadvantage. See also " We face increasing competition in the markets where we operate, which may result in reduced operating margins and loss of market share, as well as different pricing, service or marketing policies."

Governmental regulation of SMP operators in Ukraine could adversely affect our results of operations.

On June 24, 2010, MTS Ukraine and its competitors, including Kyivstar, Golden Telecom Ukraine, URS, Ukrtelecom, Astelit, Intertelecom and PEOPLeNet, were declared by the AMC to have a dominant position on the network interconnect market. As a result, the interconnect fees charged by us and our competitors for terminating calls connecting to any of our respective networks became subject to regulation by the National Commission for the Regulation on Communications (the "NCRC"), which since November 23, 2011 has been succeeded by the National Commission for the State Regulation of Communications and Informatization (the "NCCIR"). See "Item 4. Information on Our Company B. Business Overview Regulation of Telecommunications in the Russian Federation and Ukraine Regulation in Ukraine Competition" for additional information.

In 2011, the NCRC announced its intent to change the telecommunications regulations in Ukraine to regulate the interconnect rates of only those operators deemed by the AMC to have "significant market power." Kyivstar and MTS Ukraine are the largest mobile cellular operators in Ukraine with market shares of 43% and 37%, as of December 31, 2013, respectively, according to AC&M-Consulting.

In December 2011, the Telecommunications Law was amended to introduce the term "significant market power operator on traffic termination market" (SMP). An operator qualifies as a SMP in a particular market if its share of gross revenue from the provision of traffic transfer services on fixed or mobile telecommunications networks during the last 12 months exceeded 25% of total gross revenues of all telecommunications operators for the same services during the same period. Thus, on October 20, 2011, the NCRC recognized all telecommunications operators on the Ukrainian market as SMPs in the market of call termination on their respective networks.

On September 22 2011, the NCRC proposed a draft law on regulating SMP operators which called for, among other things, non-discriminatory access to their infrastructure for the wholesale market and for regulating the retail market. Under the proposed law, the NCRC may place an obligation on SMP operators to separate the accounting of revenues and costs for different services, to calculate the cost of their services according to NCRC rules and to price the services in accordance with NCRC's rules. The draft law was not adopted and as of January 31, 2014 is being amended. The NCCIR has assumed the NCRC's powers to consider interconnect rates and may reduce the interconnect rates that we

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charge, which, in turn, may have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations.

In June 2012, the definition of SMP was changed by an amendment to the Telecommunications Law which came into effect on January 8, 2013. From this date qualification as a SMP has been assessed with reference to the market as defined by NCCIR (and not only by reference to the traffic termination market). Criteria *i.e.* the SMP market share remained the same as in previous version of the Telecommunications Law. See also " Legal Risks and Uncertainties Changes in Ukrainian telecommunications legislation have caused uncertainty in relation to the regulation of the Ukrainian telecommunications industry and may adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations."

We may not realize the benefits we expect to receive from our investments in 3G and 4G wireless services, which could have a material adverse effect on our business and results of operations.

In May 2007, the Federal Service for Supervision in the Area of Communications and Mass Media awarded MegaFon, Vimpelcom and us a license to provide 3G services in the Russian Federation. In July 2012 these three companies and Rostelecom were awarded licenses to provide 4G services. The 3G license allows us to provide mobile radio telephone services using the International Mobile Telecommunications-2000 ("IMT-2000/UMTS") standard. The 4G license allows us to provide services using the LTE standard. 4G wireless services are expected to provide faster, higher quality data transfer and streaming capabilities as compared to 2G and 3G and may pose additional competition for 3G providers. Historically, mobile operators that have developed 3G and 4G networks have experienced various difficulties and challenges, including a limited supply of compatible handsets, limited international roaming capabilities, as well as 3G and 4G software and network-related problems. We may experience similar problems or encounter new difficulties when developing our 3G and 4G networks and may be unable to fully resolve them. For example, we cannot be certain that:

we will be able to build-out our 4G network in a timely manner or within the time frame stipulated by the license terms;

our 3G and 4G network and services will deliver the quality and level of service that our customers demand or prefer;

we will be able to provide all contemplated 3G and 4G services at reasonable prices and within a reasonable timeframe;

manufacturers and content providers will develop and offer products and services for our 3G and 4G network on a timely basis;

there will be sufficient demand for 3G and 4G services in the markets where we operate;

our 3G and 4G network will be commercially viable in all of the locations we are required to operate pursuant to our 3G and 4G licenses;

our competitors will not offer similar services at lower prices; and

changes in governmental policies, rules, regulations or practices will not affect our network rollout or our business operations.

See also " If we cannot successfully develop our network, we will be unable to expand our subscriber base and maintain our profitability."

In addition, Russian military authorities also use frequencies in the 3G and 4G spectrum, which may limit the availability of 3G and 4G frequencies for commercial use in certain areas. During the construction of our 3G and 4G network, there is also a risk that the frequencies assigned to us for commercial use may overlap with frequencies used by the Russian military. For example, conflicts over

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the availability of frequency reserved for military use in Moscow caused delay in the commercial launch of 3G services in Moscow by all 3G license holders, although some of these frequencies were cleared for commercial use in 2009. If additional overlap were to occur, it could cause problems or delays in the development and operation of our 3G and 4G network in Russia.

We may also face competition from operators using second generation ("2G") or other forms of 3G technology. For example, licenses for the use of CDMA technology have already been granted for the provision of fixed wireless services in a number of regions throughout Russia. CDMA is a 2G digital cellular telephony technology that can be used for the provision of both wireless and fixed services. If CDMA operators were able to develop widespread networks throughout Russia, we would face increased competition.

Potential competition from other 3G, CDMA and 4G providers, together with any substantial problem with the rollout of our 3G and 4G network and provision of 3G and 4G services in the future, could materially adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations.

In December 2013, the State Commission for Radio frequencies introduced several modifications to the conditions of using the frequency band for 3G and 4G. These modifications included the principle of technological neutrality for frequency bands 900 MHz (UMTS) and 1800 MHz (LTE), but also imposed additional obligations for network operators. Pursuant to these modifications, 3G and 4G operators will now be able to use bands in the frequency range as supplementary frequencies for GSM, UMTS and LTE coverage. However, in the event that we receive new bandwidth allocation, and also as a result of the renewal of the current decisions of State Commission for Radio Frequencies, we are obliged to provide network coverage to settlements with lower subscriber numbers, where the commercial rationale for doing so may otherwise be limited. Such changes lead to additional costs for the construction of our 3G and 4G wireless network and consequently may adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operations.

If we are unable to successfully develop and/or deploy 4G wireless services in the countries in which we operate or one of the operators in the market obtains significant technological and/or commercial advantage over us in 4G wireless services, it may have a material adverse effect on our business and results of operations in the long term.

The next step in the development of telecommunications in the countries where we operate is the deployment of 4G/LTE networks. The cost of 4G/LTE network development and quality of services (data speed, quality of coverage) depends on the band and the width of frequency range given to an operator.

In September 2011, the Russian government announced its intention to auction frequencies for LTE use on a national level in 2012. Additionally, outside of the auction process, the State Radio Frequencies Commission granted Scartel (operating the Yota retail brand) a paired range of LTE frequencies (2x30 MHz), in the 2.5-2.7 GHz band for use on the whole territory of Russia in exchange for 4G frequencies held by Scartel for Wi-Max technology with a total width of 70MHz. Four sets of frequencies in the 791-862 MHz band were planned to be sold during the auction in 2012, after which the winners of the frequencies would receive frequencies in the 2.5-2.7 GHz band. The remaining frequencies 40 MHz of the 2.5-2.7 GHz band were allocated evenly during the tender among four major market participants (us, Vimpelcom, MegaFon and Rostelecom).

Initially it was planned that all operators would receive equal access to the Scartel infrastructure, which would allow each operator to reduce its 4G/LTE network development costs. In March 2011, we, MegaFon, Vimpelcom and Rostelecom signed a non-binding memorandum of understanding with Scartel, according to which we, MegaFon, Vimpelcom and Rostelecom were to receive access to Scartel's 4G network infrastructure (which was yet to be built) and were to receive options to purchase

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shares in Scartel in 2014 at a price determined by an independent appraisal. MTS considered a preliminary value assessment of Scartel to be unduly high.

In July 2012, Alisher Usmanov and Scartel shareholders (Telconet Capital and Rostechnologyi) formed a telecommunications holding company, Garsdale. In exchange for an 82% interest in Garsdale, AF Telecom, which is controlled by Alisher Usmanov, contributed 50% of MegaFon's shares into Garsdale's share capital. Rostechnologyi and Telconet Capital, which held 25.1% and 74.9% stakes in Scartel, respectively, contributed 100% of Scartel into Garsdale's share capital, in return for which they received an 18% stake in Garsdale, which was split equally between Rostechnologyi and Telconet Capital. On 12 July 2012, the Federal Service for Supervision in the Area of Communications and Mass Media awarded each of MegaFon, Vimpelcom, Rostelecom and us a license to provide 4G services using LTE and its subsequent modifications in the frequency range of 791-862 MHz.

On October 1, 2013, MegaFon acquired Maxiten Co Limited, which in turn owned 100% of the shares in Scartel and Yota Ltd. from Garsdale. The transaction was approved by the general shareholders meeting of MegaFon and by the Federal Antimonopoly Service ("FAS"). At present, MegaFon holds 4G/LTE network through Scartel as well as controlling the continuous spectrum of frequencies 2 x 40 MHz in the band of LTE FDD 2600 MHz. As a result of this transaction, MegaFon obtained a competitive advantage in terms of LTE network development costs and may also obtain an advantage in LTE network performance. For example, in February, 2014, MegaFon launched LTE Advanced network in Moscow using LTE FDD 2600 MHz band and announced plans of further roll-out of its LTE Advanced network in the 15 largest cities in Russia. In addition, MegaFon will have an opportunity to consolidate financial and operational indicators of Scartel/Yota which will increase its formal market share in the mobile communications market.

According to the decision of State Commission for Radio Frequencies as of March, 16, 2012 all telecommunication operators excluding MegaFon and Rostelecom are not permitted to get LTE frequencies in the Krasnodarsky Region until the end of 2016. On April 11, 2013, we filed an application with the State Commission for Radio Frequencies to amend this decision and requested a postponement of the introduction of such restrictions until the end of 2014; however, the consideration of our application was postponed for the duration of the Olympic Games. Currently we are appealing a case against actions and inactions of State Commission for Radio Frequencies in the Arbitrazh Court of Moscow. The next court session is scheduled for June 3, 2014 as well as the next meeting of the State Commission for Radio Frequencies. Our inability to develop an LTE network in the Krasnodarsky Region until 2016 may have an adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

On September 18, 2013, the mobile operator Altyn Asyr, our major competitor in Turkmenistan, brought into operation a 4G network using LTE technology. At the moment MTS-Turkmenistan does not have a 4G-license which may lead to the loss of revenues from its data service which could have a material adverse effect on the results of our operations.

Furthermore, the limited number of available frequencies may prevent us from realizing the full benefits we expect to receive from the development of a 4G network, because our network capacity would be constrained and our ability to expand limited. Moreover, if we cannot develop a commercially viable 4G network, and one of our competitors does, that competitor would have an advantage over us, which in turn may have a material adverse effect on our business.

Our inability to obtain a UMTS license in Ukraine on commercially reasonable terms, or at all, may negatively affect our competitive position in Ukraine.

In September 2009, the NCRC announced plans to launch a tender for a single 3G/UMTS mobile services license in Ukraine with the starting price set at 400 million hryvnia (equivalent to RUB 1,515.1 million at December 31, 2009). However, the NCRC canceled the planned tender in November

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2009 following a decision by the President of Ukraine to put the tender and conversion of the radio frequencies on hold. Following the election of Viktor Yanukovich as Ukraine's President in February 2010, a tender for a 3G/UMTS license in Ukraine was expected in 2012 after the planned sale of Trimob, (formerly known as Utel), a subsidiary of Ukrtelecom, which is the only UMTS license holder in Ukraine. Trimob was expected to be sold by the end of 2012, subject to approval by the AMC and certain other regulatory bodies, but to date there have been no announcements regarding the progress of the sale of Trimob. A sale of Trimob to one of our competitors would provide that competitor with a significant advantage over us and would adversely affect our competitiveness in Ukraine, as well as our business, financial condition and results of operations.

The Ukrainian government has previously indicated that funds required for the conversion of the remaining UMTS frequencies have not been provided in Ukraine's 2013 State Budget. Therefore, there is a possibility of additional UMTS frequency spectrum being made available in 2014 as a means of generating revenue to tackle the problem with the state budget deficit. Nevertheless, if we do not acquire Trimob and we are unable to acquire a UMTS license when an auction is ultimately held, and our competitors do, those competitors would have an advantage over us.

Our ability to win a competitive tender for a 3G/UMTS license in Ukraine may require us to pay a significant amount for the license as well as incur significant costs in building out the 3G network, and we may not be able to recoup these costs through our service revenues. The listed potential price for one license is around 1 bln hryvnias. If we do not obtain a 3G/UMTS license, the award of the license to one of our competitors would increase the competition we face in the provision of both GSM and 3G services in Ukraine and inhibit our expansion efforts. Either of the foregoing may have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects.

Service disruptions on our networks could lead to a loss of subscribers, damage to our reputation, violations of the terms of our licenses and subscriber contracts and penalties.

We are able to deliver services only to the extent that we can protect our network systems against damage from communications failures, computer viruses, power failures, natural disasters and unauthorized access. Any system failure, accident or security breach that causes interruptions in our operations could impair our ability to provide services to our customers and materially adversely affect our business and results of operations. In addition, to the extent that any disruption or security breach results in a loss of or damage to customers' data or applications, or inappropriate disclosure of confidential information, we may incur liability as a result, including costs to remedy the damage caused by these disruptions or security breaches.

While we maintain back-up systems for our telecommunications equipment, network management, operations and maintenance systems, these systems may not ensure recovery in the event of a network failure. In particular, in the event of extensive software and/or hardware failures, significant disruptions to our systems could occur, leading to our inability to provide services. The quality of our services in roaming (including roaming between networks) also depends *inter alia* on the network quality of our roaming partners which is out of our control. Disruptions in our provision of services could lead to a loss of subscribers, damage to our reputation, violations of the terms of our licenses and subscriber contracts and penalties.

Our computer and communications hardware is protected through physical and software safeguards. However, it is still vulnerable to fire, storm, flood, loss of power, telecommunications failures, interconnect failures, physical or software break-ins, viruses and similar events. Although our computer and communications hardware is insured against fires, storms and floods, we do not carry business interruption insurance to protect us in the event of a catastrophe, even though such an event could have a material adverse effect on our business.

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Failure to fulfill the terms of our licenses could result in their suspension or termination, which could have a material adverse effect on our business and results of operations.

Each of our mobile licenses requires service to be offered by a specific date and some contain further requirements as to network capacity and territorial coverage to be reached by specified dates. In addition, all of our mobile licenses require us to comply with various telecommunications regulations relating to the use of radio frequencies and numbering capacity allocated to us, network construction, interconnect rules and technical requirements relating to compliance with law enforcement authorities' requests, among others. The license requirements applicable to our fixed line businesses include participation in a federal communications network, adherence to technical standards, investment in network infrastructure, employment of Russian technical personnel and the provision of certain services to the federal government and PSTN subscribers at regulated tariffs, among others. If we fail to comply with the requirements of Russian, Ukrainian or other applicable legislation or we fail to meet any terms of our licenses, our licenses and other authorizations necessary for our operations may be suspended or terminated which could significantly limit our operations. In addition to the impact on our operations, the suspension or loss of certain licenses could also cause an event of default under certain of our debt obligations and certain of our debt to be accelerated. A suspension or termination of our licenses or other necessary governmental authorizations could therefore have a material adverse effect on our business and results of operations.

Failure to renew our licenses or receive renewed or new licenses with similar terms to our existing licenses could have a material adverse effect on our business and results of operations.

Our telecommunications licenses expire in various years from 2014 to 2022. These licenses may be renewed upon application to the relevant governmental authorities. Government officials in Russia and the other CIS countries in which we operate consider the compliance with license requirements as well as the conditions of using the allocated frequency range when deciding whether to renew a license. License renewals may be subject to additional conditions, such as payment obligations or the mandatory modernization of our network.

In addition, we may be subject to penalties or our licenses may be suspended or terminated for non-compliance with the new license requirements. The suspension or loss of certain licenses could significantly limit our operations and cause certain of our debt to be accelerated.

The current license to construct and maintain the telecommunication network and provide services with them was granted to MTS Ukraine on July 20, 2010 and terminated on December 3, 2013. On October 15, 2013, the NCCIR refused to renew the current license and recommended that MTS Ukraine receive a new license to provide operations in telecommunications sphere. Receiving a new license involves additional costs in comparison with the renewal of the current one and MTS Ukraine filed a lawsuit against NCCIR seeking to declare the failure to renew the license as unlawful. On November 19, 2013, the claims of MTS Ukraine were satisfied and the license term was renewed until January 2019.

Failure to renew our telecommunications licenses or receive renewed or new licenses with similar terms to existing licenses could significantly limit our operations, which could have a material adverse effect on our business and results of operations.

Until recently, telecommunications operators carried out activities and received licenses in Crimea in compliance with Ukrainian legislation. However, following the referendum in Crimea on March 16, 2014 in favor of joining the Russian Federation and consequent developments in the region to date, various countries recognize Crimean secession whereas others do not, therefore, our licensing status in Crimea, as well as the ability to receive continuous cash flow is subject to uncertainty. See also " Political and Social Risks Political instability in Ukraine could have a material adverse effect on our operations in Ukraine and on our business, financial condition and results of operations," and

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" A deterioration in relations between Russia and other former Soviet republics and/or the United States and the European Union could materially adversely affect our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects and the value of our shares and ADSs."

If frequencies currently assigned to us are reassigned to other users or if we fail to obtain renewals of our frequency allocations, our network capacity will be constrained and our ability to expand limited, resulting in a loss of market share and lower revenues.

There is a limited number of frequencies available for wireless operators in each of the regions in which we operate or hold licenses to operate. We are dependent on access to adequate spectrum allocation in each market in which we operate in order to maintain and expand our subscriber base. If frequencies are not allocated to us in the future in the required quantities, as well as with the geographic span and for time periods that would allow us to provide wireless services on a commercially feasible basis throughout all of our license areas, our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may be materially adversely affected.

A loss of allocated spectrum, which is not replaced by other adequate allocations, could also have a substantial adverse impact on our network capacity. In addition, frequency allocations are often issued for periods that are shorter than the terms of the licenses, and such allocations may not be renewed in a timely manner or at all. If our frequencies are revoked or we are unable to renew our frequency allocations, our network capacity would be constrained and our ability to expand limited, resulting in a loss of market share and lower revenues.

An increase in the fees for frequency spectrum usage could have a negative effect on our financial results.

The terms of our licenses in Russia and the CIS require that we make payments for frequency spectrum usage. Any significant increase in the fees payable for the frequency channels that we use or additional frequency channels that we need in Russia or the CIS could have a negative effect on our financial results.

In late 2012, Russian network operators accepted that from 2014 the fees for frequency spectrum usage would be calculated based on the total frequency band allocated to each operator in each region with such frequency spectrum usage determined with reference to the decision of State Commission for Radio Frequencies, frequency allocation decisions or to the license conditions. It is expected that fees will increase up to 10% pursuant to the new approach. The application of the new fees is expected in the first half of 2014.

Similarly, in April 2010, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine significantly increased the fees for frequency spectrum usage in Ukraine for cellular communications. Furthermore, according to the Tax Code of Ukraine, the fees payable for frequency usage shall be determined based in part on the rate of inflation and reviewed annually effective January 1, 2011. Accordingly, the fees for frequency usage were increased by 8.9% in 2012 as compared to 2011, by 8% in 2013 as compared to 2012, and are doubled from April 1, 2014 as compared to 2013.

If we are unable to maintain our favorable brand image, we may be unable to attract new subscribers and retain existing subscribers, leading to loss of market share and revenues.

Developing and maintaining awareness of our brands is critical to informing and educating the public about our current and future services and is an important element in attracting new subscribers. We believe that the importance of brand recognition is increasing as our markets become more competitive. Successful promotion of our brands will depend largely on the effectiveness of our marketing efforts and on our ability to provide reliable and useful products and services at competitive prices. Brand promotion activities may not yield increased operating revenues, and even if they do, such operating revenues may not offset the operating expenses we incur in building our brands.

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Furthermore, our ability to attract new subscribers and retain existing subscribers depends, in part, on our ability to maintain what we believe to be our favorable brand image. Negative publicity or rumors regarding our company, our shareholders and affiliates or our services could negatively affect this brand image, which could lead to loss of market share and revenues. Our failure to successfully and efficiently promote and maintain our brands may limit our ability to attract new subscribers and retain our existing subscribers and materially adversely affect our business and results of operations.

We engage in transactions with related parties, which may present conflicts of interest, potentially resulting in the conclusion of transactions on terms not determined by market forces.

We have purchased interests in various telecommunications companies from Sistema and entered into arrangements with subsidiaries and affiliates of Sistema for the provision of advertising services (Open Joint Stock Company Advertising Agency Maxima ("Maxima"), IT services and hardware purchases (LLC Sitronics IT, Closed Joint Stock Company Sitronics Telecom Solutions, LLC Sitronics Smart Technologies and NVision Group), banking services (MTS Bank, formerly Moscow Bank of Reconstruction and Development ("MBRD")), telecommunication services (LLC Stream), medical services (Closed Joint Stock Company Medsi Group), the purchase of a new billing system (Open Joint Stock Company Sitronics), maintenance of the residential and commercial real estate (Closed Joint Stock Company City-Telecom). Related party transactions with Sistema and other companies within the Sistema group may present conflicts of interest, potentially resulting in the conclusion of transactions on terms not determined by market forces. See "Item 7. Major Shareholders and Related Party Transactions B. Related Party Transactions."

In the event that our minority shareholders or the minority shareholders of our subsidiaries were to successfully challenge past or future interested party transactions, or do not approve interested party transactions or other matters in the future, we could be limited in our operational flexibility and our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects could be materially adversely affected.

We own less than 100% of the equity interests in some of our subsidiaries. In addition, certain of our wholly owned subsidiaries have had other shareholders in the past. We and our subsidiaries in the past have carried out, and continue to carry out, transactions that may be considered to be "interested party transactions" under Russian law, requiring approval by disinterested directors, disinterested independent directors or disinterested shareholders depending on the nature of the transaction and parties involved. The provisions of Russian law defining which transactions must be approved as "interested party transactions" are subject to different interpretations and, as a result, it is possible that our and our subsidiaries' interpretation and application of these provisions could be subject to challenge. Any such challenges, if successful, could result in the invalidation of transactions, which could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects.

In addition, Russian law requires a three-quarters majority vote of the holders of voting stock present at a shareholders' meeting to approve certain transactions and other matters, including, for example, charter amendments, major transactions involving assets in excess of 50% of the assets of the company, repurchase of shares by the company and certain share issuances. In some cases, minority shareholders may not approve interested party transactions requiring their approval or other matters requiring minority shareholder or supermajority approval. In the event that these minority shareholders were to successfully challenge past interested party transactions, or do not approve interested party transactions or other matters in the future, we could be limited in our operational flexibility and our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects could be materially adversely affected.

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Our competitive position and future prospects depend on our senior managers and other key personnel and our inability to attract, retain and motivate qualified key personnel could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

Our ability to maintain our competitive position and to implement our business strategy is dependent to a large degree on the services of our senior management team and other key personnel. Moreover, competition in Russia and in the other countries where we operate for personnel with relevant expertise is intense due to the relatively small number of qualified individuals. As a result, we attempt to structure our compensation packages in a manner consistent with the evolving standards of the labor markets in these countries. We are not insured against the detrimental effects to our business resulting from the loss or dismissal of our key personnel. In addition, it is not common practice in Russia and the other countries where we operate to purchase key-man insurance policies, and we do not carry such policies for our senior management and other key personnel. The loss or decline in services of members of our senior management team or an inability to attract, retain and motivate qualified key personnel could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

The entry of mobile virtual network operators into the Russian mobile communications market could increase competition and subscriber churn, resulting in a loss of our market share and decreased revenue.

On December 29, 2008, the Ministry of Communications and Mass Media adopted an order establishing the requirements for mobile virtual network operators ("MVNOs"). MVNOs are companies that provide mobile communications services but do not own the radio frequencies and, often, the network infrastructure required to do so. According to the order, MVNOs in Russia must be licensed, and their use of frequencies and infrastructure and rendering of services will be done pursuant to agreements entered into between MVNOs and existing frequency holders. There is no requirement that existing frequency holders transact with the MVNOs, and agreements between them will be entered into at their option.

The aim of the Ministry in establishing the legal framework for MVNOs to operate is to increase competition in the Russian mobile services market, which is currently dominated by us, Vimpelcom and MegaFon. While existing frequency holders, including us, may receive revenues from MVNOs for the use of our frequencies and network infrastructure, we expect these revenues to be lower than the revenues we would receive if providing services directly to subscribers. In addition, in the event we lose subscribers to MVNOs that lease their frequencies and infrastructure from an operator other than us, we will be deprived of the revenue streams from both the subscribers and the MVNOs. The MVNOs may also establish aggressive tariffs, which could result in increased subscriber churn and/or driving down the tariffs of all mobile operators.

In December 2011, Scartel reached an agreement with MegaFon and Rostelecom to allow them to provide LTE services through Scartel's network in exchange for permitting Scartel to use the two companies' network infrastructure. In February 2012, Scartel and MegaFon received the necessary licenses to allow MegaFon to provide such services over the Scartel LTE network.

In February 2014, the Russian Government approved a "Development of competition in telecommunications" roadmap, which provides for the preparation of a report on realization of the MVNO business model. This report is expected to be presented to the Government in the second quarter of 2014.

While the impact of MVNOs' entry into the Russian mobile communications market as well as the way of MVNO development in Russia (including 4G network) is not yet clear, the emergence of any of the foregoing trends could increase market competition and subscriber churn and, as a result, have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects.

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A finding by FAS that we have acted in contravention of antimonopoly legislation could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operation.

Our businesses have grown substantially through the acquisition and formation of companies, many of which required the prior approval of, or subsequent notification to, FAS or its predecessor agencies. In part, relevant legislation in certain cases restricts the acquisition or formation of companies by groups of companies or individuals acting in concert without such prior approval or notification. While we believe that we have complied with the applicable legislation for our acquisitions and formation of new companies, this legislation is sometimes vague and subject to varying interpretations. If FAS were to conclude that our acquisition or formation of a new company was done in contravention of applicable legislation, it could impose administrative sanctions and require the divestiture of such company or other assets, which could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

In October 2010, FAS found that we, Vimpelcom and MegaFon violated antimonopoly laws on competition relating to our pricing for roaming services. As a result, FAS imposed an administrative fine on us in the amount of RUB 21.9 million which represents 1.0% of the revenues we derived from roaming services in CIS countries in 2009. We paid the fine imposed on us by FAS on March 28, 2011.

In addition, in October 2011, FAS began an investigation of our and Vimpelcom's actions, suspecting violation of antimonopoly laws by coordinated pricing of iPhone 4 handsets. On April 26, 2012 we and Vimpelcom were found to be in violation of the Competition law through coordinating prices from September 2010 through April 2011; however, FAS also noted that these violations were voluntarily rectified, and terminated the proceedings as a result. On July 17, 2012, FAS imposed a turnover-based fine of RUB 16.9 million on us, which we complied with.

In November 2012, FAS began an investigation of the contractual relationship between operators and content providers and in December 2012 issued a warning to us and Vimpelcom requesting each of us to cease the violation of antimonopoly laws, particularly relating, to solicitation of services to the subscribers. We and Vimpelcom complied with the requirements and on February 7, 2013, FAS closed the case.

In October 2013, the FAS regional office in the Pskov Region began an investigation in relation to an alleged violation by us, Vimpelcom and Megafon of antimonopoly law by coordinating pricing of the mobile data services on the territory of Pskov Region. The investigation was terminated in December 2013 due to the absence of breach of antimonopoly law of mobile operators.

If FAS finds our actions insufficient to rectify past violations or antimonopoly laws or issues new warnings and requests in the future, *inter alia*, in other regions, this could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects.

A finding by the AMC that we have acted in contravention of antimonopoly legislation could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

In December 2011, the AMC opened an investigation into whether MTS Ukraine violated antimonopoly legislation with its pricing of international roaming services. The AMC stated that the average price of international roaming services offered by MTS Ukraine and its roaming partners was higher than the corresponding prices in the European Union, which might demonstrate that the prices charged by MTS Ukraine were not economically justified. The investigation aimed to examine whether MTS Ukraine used its dominant position in the Ukrainian telecommunications market to establish prices that would not be possible if there was significant competition on the telecommunications market. Although we believe that we did not violate antimonopoly laws, we could be liable for up to 10% of MTS Ukraine revenues. In December, 2012 the AMC issued obligatory recommendations to MTS Ukraine and Kyivstar to lower the prices both for international roaming services and national

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mobile services. In December 2012 MTS Ukraine submitted a report discussing the implementation of these recommendations and in January 2013, both claims of AMC were dismissed and no penalties were imposed on us. However, the AMC may determine that we violated antimonopoly legislation in this or other matters (for example, through increasing prices for mobile services at a faster pace than the consumer price growth rate), and may impose fines on us, which may have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operation. In addition, we may be required to adjust the prices that we charge for international roaming services, which may adversely affect our revenues. See also " Governmental regulation of SMP operators in Ukraine could adversely affect our results of operations" and "Item 4. Information on Our Company B. Business Overview Regulation of Telecommunications in the Russian Federation and Ukraine Regulation in Ukraine Competition" for additional information.

If we are found to have a dominant position in the markets where we operate, the government may regulate our subscriber tariffs and restrict our operations.

Under Russian legislation, FAS may categorize a company controlling between 35%-50% or over 50% of a market or otherwise able to control market conditions as a dominant force in such market. Moreover, recent amendments to Russian antimonopoly regulations made it possible that any three companies collectively holding a market share of over 50% or five companies collectively holding a market share of over 70%, and in each case over 8% individually, can be found to have a dominant position on a certain market. However, in some cases a company could be categorized as dominant even if its share of the corresponding market is less than 35%. Companies controlling over 35% or otherwise occupying a dominant position on the market are listed by FAS in a special register and may become subject to monitoring and reporting requirements with respect to such markets. Current Russian legislation does not clearly define "market" in terms of the types of services or the geographic area. One of our subsidiaries, MGTS, is categorized by the Federal Tariff Service as a natural monopoly in the Moscow telecommunications market. As a result, MGTS' tariffs are subject to regulation by the Federal Tariff Service. Another of our subsidiaries, Comstar-regions, operating in Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous District among others, is categorized as a natural monopoly in the public telecommunications market. See " MGTS is subject to extensive regulation of tariffs, and these tariffs may not fully compensate us for the cost of providing required services."

We were also categorized by FAS as a company with a market share exceeding 35% in the mobile communications market in the Ivanovo Region, Kurgan Region, Magadan Region, Sakhalin Region, Nenets Autonomous District and Udmurt Republic. In the event that we are found in the future to have a dominant position on these or any additional markets, FAS would have the right to impose certain restrictions provided for under the antimonopoly laws, including a mandated reduction in our tariffs, and FAS would have the right to impose certain restrictions on our operations in such markets. See "Item 4. Information on Our Company B. Business Overview Regulation of Telecommunications in the Russian Federation and Ukraine Regulation in the Russian Federation Competition, Interconnect and Pricing" for additional information.

In case we are found to have dominant position we can be subject to penalties and turn-over based fine may be imposed on us in relation to certain violations of antimonopoly law. The level of fine is from 1% to 15% of revenue on the market where the violation was conducted, with 8% being the base level of the fine.

Additionally, MTS Ukraine, was categorized as a company with a dominant position in the telecommunications market and is subject to certain government imposed restrictions, including limitations on the interconnect rates it can charge other operators. See " Governmental regulation of SMP operators in Ukraine could adversely affect our results of operations" and "Item 4. Information on Our Company B. Business Overview Regulation of Telecommunications in the Russian Federation and Ukraine Regulation in Ukraine Competition" for additional information.

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If we or any of our subsidiaries were to be classified by FAS (or the AMC with respect to our operations in Ukraine) as a dominant market force or as having a dominant position in the market, FAS and the Federal Tariff Service (or the AMC, as the case may be) would have the power to impose certain restrictions on our or their businesses. In particular, the authorities may impose on us tariffs at levels that could be competitively disadvantageous and/or set interconnect rates between operators that may adversely affect our revenues. Moreover, our refusal to adjust our tariffs according to such government-determined rates could result in the imposition of fines. Additionally, geographic restrictions on our expansion could reduce our subscriber base and prevent us from fully implementing our business strategy, which may materially adversely affect our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects.

If we or any of our mobile operator subsidiaries operating in Russia are identified as an operator occupying a "substantial position," the regulator may reduce our interconnect tariffs which, in turn, may have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations.

In addition to the regulation of dominant operators by FAS, the Federal Law on Communications provides for the special regulation of telecommunications operators occupying a "substantial position," *i.e.*, operators which, together with their affiliates, have 25% or more of installed capacity or capacity to carry out transmission of not less than 25% of traffic in a geographically defined zone within the Russian Federation. These regulations provide for governmental regulation of the key terms of such operators' interconnect agreements, including the interconnect tariffs. In addition, such operators are required to develop standard key terms of interconnect agreements and publish them as a public offer made to all operators who intend to interconnect to the networks of those operators. For additional information, see "Item 4. Information on Our Company B. Business Overview Regulation of Telecommunications in the Russian Federation and Ukraine Regulation in the Russian Federation."

At present, the foregoing regulations apply only to fixed line operators in Russia and therefore apply to our fixed line business. Draft legislation was introduced in 2008 that would extend the law to apply to mobile operators. Although the proposed law was not adopted, the risk that similar legislation will be introduced and adopted in the future remains. If legislation which extends the foregoing regulations to apply to mobile operators is adopted, and we and any of our mobile operator subsidiaries operating in Russia are identified as operators occupying a "substantial position," regulators may reduce our interconnect tariffs which, in turn, may have a material adverse effect on our revenues, financial condition and results of operations.

In addition, MGTS is categorized as fixed line operator occupying a substantial position in the Moscow telecommunications market and therefore its interconnect tariffs are subject to state regulation. In January 2013, Comstar-UTS was excluded from the List of "substantial operators" in Moscow and MTS was not included therein. We believe that interconnect tariffs previously approved by the Federal Agency on Communications for Comstar-UTS also apply to MTS following the merger completed on April 1, 2011. There is however a probability that we could be categorized as fixed line operator occupying a substantial position in Moscow due to our affiliation with MGTS and because of our integration with Comstar-UTS. As a result of the state regulation of the relevant interconnection rates, substantial operators may be unable to increase these in line with economic developments or any increases of our relevant costs, resulting in a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations. See also " MGTS is subject to extensive regulation of tariffs, and these tariffs may not fully compensate us for the cost of providing required services."

MGTS is subject to extensive regulation of tariffs, and these tariffs may not fully compensate us for the cost of providing required services.

As the PSTN operator in Moscow, MGTS is considered to be a company holding a dominant position as well as a natural monopoly in the Moscow telecommunications market under Russian

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antimonopoly regulations. Consequently, the Federal Tariff Service regulates MGTS' tariffs for most services provided to its PSTN subscribers, including installation fees, fees for using customer lines, local call charges (flat-rate, time-based and combined payment systems), monthly subscription fees (for subscribers to the unlimited tariff plan) and local call charges (for subscribers who do not use the unlimited tariff plan). In addition, the Federal Law on Communications also provides for the special regulation of telecommunications operators occupying a "substantial position," *i.e.*, operators which together with their affiliates have, in the Russian Federation generally or in a geographically defined specific numerical zone, 25% or more of installed capacity or capacity to carry out transmission of not less than 25% of traffic. MGTS was added to the register of telecommunications operators occupying a substantial position in 2006. Accordingly, the interconnect tariffs of MGTS are subject to regulation by the Federal Agency on Communications. While we believe the tariffs currently set by the Federal Tariff Service and the Federal Agency on Communications are sufficient to compensate us for the costs of providing these services, future tariffs may increase in parallel with corresponding increases in our costs and/or inflation.

Although MGTS is permitted to petition the Federal Tariff Service for increases in tariffs based on such criteria as inflation, increased costs and the need for network investments, it is possible that future requested increases may not be granted or that the Federal Tariff Service may not adequately take such factors into account in setting tariffs. If the permissible tariffs applicable to MGTS do not compensate MGTS for the cost of providing services, the business and results of operations could be materially adversely affected. See also " If we or any of our mobile operator subsidiaries operating in Russia are identified as an operator occupying a "substantial position," the regulator may reduce our interconnect tariffs which, in turn, may have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations."

Changes to the rules and regulations involving roaming charges in Russia may adversely affect our financial condition and results of operations.

The Russian government has stated its intention to monitor the pricing of roaming services and several draft laws have been submitted for consideration to the State Duma, which are intended to change the regulation of so-called "national" (between networks) and "intra-network" (within network) roaming in Russia by introducing a flat national roaming tariff and eliminating intra-network roaming tariffs for incoming calls. It is not clear whether this legislation will be adopted. However, if the new legislation is adopted, we believe that our revenues from the provision of roaming services would decline considerably, which could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations. After an investigation by FAS of our and other telecommunications operators activities in this area in 2010, an administrative fine in the amount of RUB 21.9 million was imposed on us due to the violation of antimonopoly laws relating to our pricing for roaming services. See also " A finding by FAS that we have acted in contravention of antimonopoly legislation could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operation."

Compliance with the new regulations on International Mobile Equipment Identity ("IMEI") numbers may present us with technical difficulties and may lead to the expenditure of significant resources.

In Ukraine a draft law is being considered which will enable each mobile communications subscriber to register the user terminal free-of-charge on a database maintained by the operator, chiefly to prevent their unlawful use. Aimed at discouraging theft, the draft law will obligate operators to suspend or block the traffic transmission of the terminal upon the application of subscriber. It is still unclear if and when this regulation will be adopted. A similar draft law was rejected by the Russian State Duma. If this regulation is adopted in the future, we may be required to develop a system to monitor IMEI numbers, and we may need to establish and maintain a database of IMEI numbers, which would necessitate the expenditure of significant technical and financial resources.

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The accession of Russia into the World Trade Organization ("WTO") may lead to legislative and other changes which may adversely affect our business, financial condition and results of operation.

On December 16, 2011, Russia signed the accession protocol in order to enter into the WTO which was ratified by Federal Law on July 21, 2012 and became mandatory law in Russia. This may lead to potentially significant changes in Russian legislation including, among others, regulation of foreign investments in Russian companies, competition laws, telecommunications laws, changes in the taxation system and customs regulations in Russia. In addition, the implementation of the WTO rules may lead to the increase of competition on the markets we operate. It is unclear yet if and when these legislative developments may take place. However, if new legislation is implemented in Russia as a result of accession to the WTO and there is an increase in competition, this could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations.

We may be required to make significant investments beyond those that are currently planned to preserve our competitive advantage in response to the rapid evolution of fixed network technology (inter alia our subsidiaries, for example MGTS).

MGTS has completed its migration from analogue public switch telephone network to digital technologies. In 2011, MGTS commenced building an access network employing the Gigabit-capable Passive Optical Network ("GPON") technology which would enable MGTS to enlarge the range of services by introducing High definition television ("HDTV"), video monitoring and other interactive services. However, we could encounter certain difficulties in the process of installing fiber-optic equipment in the subscribers' apartments due to the necessity of conducting adjustment works which could result in fractional subscriber churn.

MGTS invested approximately RUB 1.5 billion in 2010, RUB 1.328 billion in 2011, RUB 9.232 billion in 2012 and RUB 13.547 billion in 2013 to upgrade its infrastructure. If MGTS is not able to upgrade its network in a timely manner or if it is required to make significant investments beyond those that are currently planned, our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects could be materially adversely affected.

Our intellectual property rights are costly and difficult to protect.

We regard our copyrights, trademarks, trade secrets and similar intellectual property, including our rights to certain domain names, as important to our continued success. We rely upon trademark and copyright law, trade secret protection and confidentiality or license agreements with our employees, customers, partners and others to protect our proprietary rights. Nonetheless, intellectual property rights are especially difficult to protect in the markets where we operate. In these markets, the regulatory agencies charged with protecting intellectual property rights are inadequately funded, legislation is underdeveloped, piracy is commonplace and enforcement of court decisions is difficult. For example, in Russia, legislation in the area of copyrights, trademarks and other types of intellectual property was significantly changed in 2008, and Russian courts have limited experience in applying and interpreting the new laws.

A special court for intellectual property began operating in July 2013 as a new body in the system of Arbitrazh court for dealing with cases relating to protection of intellectual property. It is too early to say how it will influence the quality of protection of intellectual property rights in Russia.

In addition, litigation may be necessary to enforce our intellectual property rights, to determine the validity and scope of the proprietary rights of others, or to defend against claims of infringement. Any such litigation may result in substantial costs and diversion of resources, and, if decided unfavorably to us, could have a material adverse effect on our business and results of operations. We also may incur substantial acquisition or settlement costs where doing so would strengthen or expand our intellectual property rights or limit our exposure to intellectual property claims of third parties.

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In August 2012, we received a claim on behalf of MTS LLC (Simferopol, Ukraine) regarding the invalidation of international registrations of our four trademarks within the territory of Ukraine (the word "MTS" written in Russian and English both in color and black and white). The decision of Kiev City Commercial Court dated July 16, 2013, refused all claims of MTS LLC. Subsequently, MTS LLC filed an appeal of the court decision which was ultimately refused by the Kiev Appellate Commercial court on December 2, 2013. Our inability to protect our rights to these trademarks could have a material adverse effect on our business and results of operations.

We are in the process of transferring to a new billing system and optimizing our information technology infrastructure, which could have a material adverse effect on our business and results of operations in the short term.

We have completed implementation of a new billing system in Russia and Belarus. We have also completed the transfer of our individual subscribers in Ukraine to a new billing system and commenced transferring B2B-subscribers to the new system. We may face difficulties and delays in implementing the new billing system in newly acquired companies. In Ukraine it is still necessary for us to run both the old and new billing systems simultaneously during the transition period, creating additional burdens on our technical support staff. We may also experience technical problems with the new billing system during the transition period. In addition, the introduction of new services by our subsidiaries, including pay-TV services, may result in increased complexity and prolong the duration of the upgrade of our billing system. These factors may increase our operational risks and expenses and inconvenience subscribers in the short term. In addition, we are also currently optimizing our information technology infrastructure, which may result in temporary technical disruptions. The failure or breakdown of key components of our infrastructure in the future, including our billing system and its susceptibility to fraud, could have a material adverse effect on our business and results of operations.

If leaks of confidential information, including information relating to our subscribers, occur it may negatively impact our reputation and our brand image and lead to a loss of market share, which could materially adversely affect our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects.

Although we make efforts to protect confidential information, breaches of security and leaks of confidential information, including information relating to our subscribers, may negatively impact our reputation and our brand image and result in a loss of market share or otherwise have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations. For example, in January 2003, part of our database of subscribers, containing private subscriber information, was illegally copied and stolen. In addition, in May 2003, certain subscriber databases of several operators in the North-West Region, including those of us, MegaFon, Delta Telecom and two other operators, were stolen. In each case, the stolen databases were thereafter available for sale in Russia. Despite the measures taken, we cannot completely exclude the possibility of such incidents in the future. See also " Legal Risks and Uncertainties Our failure to comply with new personal data protection laws and with the regulations of state authorities regarding information security in the telecommunications networks in Russia may have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations."

Alleged medical risks of cellular technology may subject us to negative publicity or litigation, decrease our access to base station sites, diminish subscriber usage and hinder access to additional financing.

Electromagnetic emissions from transmitter masts and mobile handsets may harm the health of individuals exposed for long periods of time to these emissions. The actual or perceived health risks of transmitter masts and mobile handsets could materially adversely affect us or our subsidiaries by reducing subscriber growth, reducing usage per subscriber, increasing the number of product liability lawsuits, increasing the difficulty in obtaining or maintaining sites for base stations and/or reducing the

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financing available to the wireless communications industry. Each of these potential circumstances may adversely affect our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects.

Under the draft law on "Defending against negative electromagnetic emissions from base stations of mobile network" which was proposed in Ukraine in December 2013, a mobile phone base station is classified as a potentially hazardous object. The installation of base stations would need to be made taking into account an environmental impact assessment at the expense of operators and a base station's operations could be terminated if a hazardous effect on health was established. If this draft law is adopted in the future it may lead to an increase in the costs of deploying base stations and increase the maintenance costs of MTS Ukraine.

Risks Relating to Our Financial Condition

We may be adversely affected by the current economic environment.

As a result of the credit market crisis (including uncertainties with respect to financial institutions and the global capital markets), decreased prices for major export commodities (including oil and metals) and other macro-economic challenges currently affecting many of the economies in which we operate, our subscribers' disposable incomes and our vendors' cash flows may be adversely impacted. Consequently, subscribers may modify or decrease their usage of our services or fail to pay the outstanding balances on their accounts, and vendors may significantly increase their prices, eliminate vendor financing or reduce their output.

We may also experience increases in accounts receivable and bad debt among corporate subscribers, some of whom may face liquidity problems and potential bankruptcy, as well as the potential bankruptcy of our corporate partners. For example, in 2008, we extended a short-term loan to Closed Joint Stock Company "Beta Link," or Beta Link, mobile handset retailer and MTS dealer, for \$28.2 million (RUB 700.9 million). Beta Link subsequently filed for bankruptcy in March 2009, and we believe it is unlikely that we will be able to recover the loan amount or accounts receivable due from Beta Link.

At the end of 2011, inflation in Belarus increased by 108.7% followed by the local currency depreciation which resulted in a decline of purchasing power. At the end of 2012 and 2013, inflation amounted to 21.8% and 16.5%, correspondingly.

In addition, Belarus is undergoing a balance of payments crisis which resulted from large government-mandated lending by local banks, rapid growth of public sector wages and pensions, and loose monetary policy. Furthermore, the three-year cumulative inflation rate for Belarus exceeded 100 percent as of September 30, 2011 and continues to exceed 100 percent, thereby meeting the quantitative requirement under U.S. GAAP for its economy to be considered highly inflationary, and we have accordingly accounted for this in our financial statements. See Note 2 to our audited consolidated financial statements. It is possible that the use of administrative methods by the Belarusian government to regulate the currency and consumer markets may lead to an aggravation of the crisis. As a result, our business, financial condition and results of operations could be materially adversely affected. See also " Inflation could increase our costs and adversely affect our results of operations."

A decline in subscriber usage, an increase in bad debts, material changes in equipment pricing or financing terms or the potential bankruptcy of our corporate subscribers or partners may have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects.

In addition, a deterioration in macroeconomic conditions could require us to reassess the value of goodwill on certain of our assets, recorded as a difference between the fair value of the assets of business acquired and its purchase price. This goodwill is subject to impairment tests on an ongoing basis. The weakening macroeconomic conditions in the countries in which we operate and/or a

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significant difference between the performance of an acquired company and the business case assumed at the time of acquisition could require us to write down the value of the goodwill or portion of such value. Future write downs relating to the value of the goodwill or portion of such value could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations.

Continued turmoil in the credit markets could cause our business, financial condition, results of operations and the value of our shares and ADSs to suffer.

Since the summer of 2007, turmoil in the international credit markets, the recession in the United States and several major European economies and the collapse or near collapse of several large banks and financial services companies in the United States and United Kingdom have resulted in increased volatility in the securities markets in the United States and across Europe, including Russia. In addition, many financial market indices in Russia and other emerging markets, as well as developed markets, have declined significantly since the summer of 2008, and continue to be depressed. Continued volatility in the United States, European and/or Russian securities markets stemming from these or other factors may continue to adversely affect the value of our shares and ADSs.

The downturn in the global financial markets has also caused some companies to experience difficulties accessing their cash equivalents, trading investment securities, drawing on revolvers, issuing debt and raising capital generally. A continuation or repetition of this downturn and resulting volatility of the trading price of our shares and ADSs may negatively impact our ability to obtain financing on commercially reasonable terms and could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects.

Our inability to generate sufficient cash flow to satisfy our debt service obligations or to refinance debt on commercially reasonable terms, could materially adversely affect our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects.

We have a substantial amount of outstanding indebtedness, primarily consisting of the obligations we entered into in connection with our notes and bank loans. As of December 31, 2013, our consolidated total debt, including capital lease obligations, was RUB 219,148 million. Our interest expense for the year ended December 31, 2013 was RUB 15,498 million, net of amounts capitalized.

Our ability to service, repay and refinance our indebtedness and to fund planned capital expenditures will depend on our ability to generate cash in the future. This, to a certain extent, is subject to general economic, financial, competitive, legislative, regulatory and other factors that are beyond our control. If we are unable to generate sufficient cash flow or otherwise obtain funds necessary to make required payments, we may default under the terms of our indebtedness, and the holders of our indebtedness would be able to accelerate the maturity of such indebtedness, potentially causing cross-defaults under and acceleration of our other indebtedness. Furthermore, as of December 31, 2013, approximately 16.1% of the debt we have incurred is at floating rates of interest linked to indices, such as LIBOR and EURIBOR, and we have hedged the interest rate risk with respect to approximately 73.1% of our floating interest rate debt. As a result, our interest payment costs can increase if such indices rise.

We may not be able to generate sufficient