

ARES CAPITAL CORP
Form N-2
June 03, 2011

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As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on June 3, 2011

Registration No. 333-

U.S. SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20549

FORM N-2

REGISTRATION STATEMENT

UNDER

THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

- o PRE-EFFECTIVE AMENDMENT NO.
- o POST-EFFECTIVE AMENDMENT NO.

ARES CAPITAL CORPORATION

(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in Charter)

**245 Park Avenue, 44th Floor
New York, New York 10167**

(Address of Principal Executive Offices)

Registrant's Telephone Number, including Area Code: **(212) 750-7300**

**Joshua M. Bloomstein
Ares Capital Corporation
245 Park Avenue, 44th Floor
New York, New York 10167
(212) 750-7300**

(Name and Address of Agent for Service)

Copies of information to:

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2049 Century Park East, 32nd Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90067-3206
(310) 557-2900**

Approximate Date of Proposed Public Offering: From time to time after the effective date of this Registration Statement.

If any securities being registered on this form will be offered on a delayed or continuous basis in reliance on Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, other than securities offered in connection with a dividend reinvestment plan, check the following box.

It is proposed that this filing will become effective (check appropriate box):

when declared effective pursuant to section 8(c).

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CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE UNDER THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

Title of Securities Being Registered	Amount Being Registered	Proposed Maximum Offering Price Per Unit	Proposed Maximum Aggregate Offering Price(1)	Amount of Registration Fee
Common Stock, \$0.001 par value per share(2)(3)				
Preferred Stock, \$0.001 par value per share(2)				
Subscription Rights(2)				
Warrants(4)				
Debt Securities(5)				
Total			\$2,000,000,000(6)	\$232,200

- (1) Estimated pursuant to Rule 457(o) solely for the purpose of determining the registration fee. The proposed maximum offering price per security will be determined from time to time, by the Registrant in connection with the sale by the Registrant of the securities registered under this registration statement.
- (2) Subject to Note 6 below, there is being registered hereunder an indeterminate number of shares of common stock or preferred stock, or subscription rights to purchase shares of common stock as may be sold, from time to time separately or as units in combination with other securities registered hereunder.
- (3) Includes such indeterminate number of shares of common stock as may, from time to time, be issued upon conversion or exchange of other securities registered hereunder, to the extent any such securities are, by their terms, convertible or exchangeable for common stock.
- (4) Subject to Note 6 below, there is being registered hereunder an indeterminate number of warrants as may be sold, from time to time separately or as units in combination with other securities registered hereunder, representing rights to purchase common stock, preferred stock or debt securities.
- (5) Subject to Note 6 below, there is being registered hereunder an indeterminate principal amount of debt securities as may be sold, from time to time separately or as units in combination with other securities registered hereunder. If any debt securities are issued at an original issue discount, then the offering price shall be in such greater principal amount as shall result in an aggregate price to investors not to exceed \$2,000,000,000.
- (6) In no event will the aggregate offering price of all securities issued from time to time pursuant to this registration statement exceed \$2,000,000,000.

THE REGISTRANT HEREBY AMENDS THIS REGISTRATION STATEMENT ON SUCH DATE OR DATES AS MAY BE NECESSARY TO DELAY ITS EFFECTIVE DATE UNTIL THE REGISTRANT SHALL FILE A FURTHER AMENDMENT WHICH SPECIFICALLY STATES THAT THIS REGISTRATION STATEMENT SHALL THEREAFTER BECOME EFFECTIVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 8(a) OF THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933, AS AMENDED, OR UNTIL THIS REGISTRATION STATEMENT SHALL BECOME EFFECTIVE ON SUCH DATE AS THE COMMISSION, ACTING PURSUANT TO SECTION 8(a), MAY DETERMINE.

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The information in this prospectus is not complete and may be changed. We may not sell these securities until the registration statement filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission is effective. This prospectus is not an offer to sell these securities and it is not soliciting an offer to buy these securities in any state where the offer or sale is not permitted.

Subject to Completion, dated June 3, 2011

PROSPECTUS

\$2,000,000,000

**Common Stock
Preferred Stock
Debt Securities
Subscription Rights
Warrants**

Ares Capital Corporation is a specialty finance company that is a closed-end, non-diversified management investment company incorporated in Maryland. We have elected to be regulated as a business development company under the Investment Company Act of 1940. Our investment objective is to generate both current income and capital appreciation through debt and equity investments. We invest primarily in first and second lien senior loans and mezzanine debt, which in some cases includes an equity component. To a lesser extent, we also make equity investments.

We are externally managed by Ares Capital Management LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Ares Management LLC, a global alternative asset manager and a Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") registered investment adviser with approximately \$40 billion of total committed capital under management as of March 31, 2011. Ares Operations LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Ares Management LLC, provides the administrative services necessary for us to operate.

Our common stock is traded on The NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol "ARCC." On June 3, 2011 the last reported sales price of our common stock on The NASDAQ Global Select Market was \$ 15.45 per share. The net asset value per share of our common stock at March 31, 2011 (the last date prior to the date of this prospectus on which we determined net asset value) was \$15.45.

Investing in our securities involves risks that are described in the "Risk Factors" section beginning on page 27 of this prospectus, including the risk of leverage.

We may offer, from time to time, in one or more offerings or series, up to \$2,000,000,000 of our common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, subscription rights to purchase shares of our common stock or warrants representing rights to purchase shares of our common stock, preferred stock or debt securities, separately or as units comprised of any combination of the foregoing, which we refer to, collectively, as the "securities." The preferred stock, debt securities, subscription rights and warrants offered hereby may be convertible or exchangeable into shares of our common stock. The securities may be offered at prices and on terms to be described in one or more supplements to this prospectus. In the event we offer common stock, the offering price per share of our common stock less any underwriting commissions or discounts will generally not be less than the net asset value per share of our common stock at the time we make the offering. However, we may issue shares of our common stock pursuant to this prospectus at a price per share that is less than our net asset value per share (a) in connection with a rights offering to our existing stockholders, (b) with the prior approval of the majority of our common stockholders or (c) under such circumstances as the SEC may permit. This prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement concisely provide important information about us that you should know before investing in our securities. Please read

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this prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement before you invest and keep it for future reference. We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. This information is available free of charge by calling us collect at (310) 201-4200 or on our website at *www.arescapitalcorp.com*. The SEC also maintains a website at *www.sec.gov* that contains such information.

Neither the SEC nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

This prospectus may not be used to consummate sales of securities unless accompanied by a prospectus supplement.

The date of this prospectus is _____, 2011.

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You should rely only on the information contained in this prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement. We have not authorized any other person to provide you with different information. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. We are not making an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement is accurate only as of the date on the front cover of this prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement, as applicable. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since that date.

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ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we have filed with the SEC, using the "shelf" registration process. Under the shelf registration process, we may offer, from time to time, in one or more offerings or series, up to \$2,000,000,000 of our common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, subscription rights to purchase shares of our common stock or warrants representing rights to purchase shares of our common stock, preferred stock or debt securities, separately or as units comprised of any combination of the foregoing, on terms to be determined at the time of the offering. The securities may be offered at prices and on terms described in one or more supplements to this prospectus. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities that we may offer. Each time we use this prospectus to offer securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. Please carefully read this prospectus and the prospectus supplement together with any exhibits and the additional information described under the headings "Available Information" and "Risk Factors" before you make an investment decision.

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PROSPECTUS SUMMARY

This summary highlights some of the information contained elsewhere in this prospectus. It is not complete and may not contain all of the information that you may want to consider. You should read carefully the more detailed information set forth under "Risk Factors" and the other information included in this prospectus. Except where the context suggests otherwise, the terms "we," "us," "our," "the Company" and "Ares Capital" refer to Ares Capital Corporation and its consolidated subsidiaries; "Ares Capital Management" and the "investment adviser" refer to Ares Capital Management LLC; "Ares Operations" and the "administrator" refer to Ares Operations LLC; and "Ares" refers to Ares Management LLC ("Ares Management") and its affiliated companies (other than portfolio companies of its affiliated funds).

As described in more detail below, we consummated the acquisition (the "Allied Acquisition") of Allied Capital Corporation ("Allied Capital") on April 1, 2010. Other than as set forth in the pro forma financial information or otherwise specifically set forth herein, financial information presented herein for and as of periods ending on or prior to March 31, 2010 does not include any information in respect of Allied Capital. In addition, other than as set forth in the pro forma financial information or otherwise specifically set forth herein, financial information for the three months ended March 31, 2011 and the year ended December 31, 2010, including, without limitation, with respect to the Company's consolidated statements of operations, stockholders' equity and cash flows, only includes results attributable to Allied Capital for the period beginning on April 1, 2010.

THE COMPANY

Overview

Ares Capital, a Maryland corporation, is a specialty finance company that is a closed-end, non-diversified management investment company. We have elected to be regulated as a business development company, or a "BDC," under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended, or the "Investment Company Act." We were founded on April 16, 2004, were initially funded on June 23, 2004 and completed our initial public offering on October 8, 2004. We are one of the largest BDCs with approximately \$13 billion of total committed capital under management as of March 31, 2011, including available debt capacity (subject to leverage and borrowing base restrictions), funds directly or indirectly managed or co-managed by us or one of our wholly owned subsidiaries and funds managed or sub-managed by our wholly owned portfolio company, Ivy Hill Asset Management, L.P. ("IHAM").

We are externally managed by our investment adviser, Ares Capital Management, a wholly owned subsidiary of Ares Management, a global alternative asset manager and a SEC registered investment adviser with approximately \$40 billion of total committed capital under management as of March 31, 2011. Our administrator, a wholly owned subsidiary of Ares Management, provides the administrative services necessary for us to operate.

Our investment objective is to generate both current income and capital appreciation through debt and equity investments. We invest primarily in U.S. middle-market companies, where we believe the supply of primary capital is limited and the investment opportunities are most attractive. However, we may from time to time invest in larger companies. In this prospectus, we generally use the term "middle-market" to refer to companies with annual EBITDA between \$10 million and \$250 million. As used herein, EBITDA represents net income before net interest expense, income tax expense, depreciation and amortization.

On April 1, 2010, we consummated the Allied Acquisition in an all stock merger whereby each existing share of common stock of Allied Capital was exchanged for 0.325 shares of our common stock. The Allied Acquisition was valued at approximately \$908 million as of April 1, 2010. In connection therewith, we issued approximately 58.5 million shares of our common stock to Allied Capital's then-existing stockholders, thereby resulting in our then-existing stockholders owning approximately

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69% of the combined company and the then-existing Allied Capital stockholders owning approximately 31% of the combined company.

We invest primarily in first and second lien senior loans and mezzanine debt, which in some cases includes an equity component. First and second lien senior loans generally are senior debt instruments that rank ahead of subordinated debt of a given portfolio company. These loans also have the benefit of security interests on the assets of the portfolio company, which may rank ahead of or be junior to other security interests. Mezzanine debt is subordinated to senior loans and is generally unsecured. Our investments have generally ranged between \$20 million and \$200 million each, although the investment size may be more or less than this range. Our investment sizes are expected to grow with our capital availability.

To a lesser extent, we also make preferred and/or common equity investments, which have generally been non-control equity investments of less than \$20 million (usually in conjunction with a concurrent debt investment). However, we may increase the size or change the nature of these investments. Also, as a result of the Allied Acquisition, Allied Capital's equity investments, which included equity investments larger than those we have historically made and controlled portfolio company equity investments, became part of our portfolio. We intend to actively seek opportunities over time to dispose of certain of the assets that were acquired in the Allied Acquisition, particularly non-yielding equity investments, as well as lower or non-yielding debt investments and investments that may not be core to our investment strategy, and generally rotate them into higher-yielding first and second lien senior loans and mezzanine debt investments. However, there can be no assurance that this strategy will be successful. See "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations Portfolio and Investment Activity" for further information on the rotation of investments acquired as part of the Allied Acquisition.

The proportion of these types of investments will change over time given our views on, among other things, the economic and credit environment we are operating in. In connection with our investing activities, we may make commitments with respect to indebtedness or securities of a potential portfolio company substantially in excess of our final investment. In such situations, while we may initially agree to fund up to a certain dollar amount of an investment, we may subsequently syndicate a portion of such amount to third parties, such that we are left with a smaller investment than what was reflected in our original commitment. In addition to originating investments, we may also acquire investments in the secondary market.

The first and second lien senior loans in which we invest generally have stated terms of three to 10 years and the mezzanine debt investments in which we invest generally have stated terms of up to 10 years, but the expected average life of such first and second lien loans and mezzanine debt is generally between three and seven years. However, we may invest in loans and securities with any maturity or duration. The instruments in which we invest typically are not initially rated by any rating agency, but we believe that if such instruments were rated, they would be below investment grade (rated lower than "Baa3" by Moody's Investors Service, lower than "BBB-" by Fitch Ratings or lower than "BBB-" by Standard & Poor's Ratings Services). We may invest without limit in debt or other securities of any rating, as well as debt or other securities that have not been rated by any nationally recognized statistical rating organization.

We believe that our investment adviser, Ares Capital Management, is able to leverage the current investment platform, resources and existing relationships with financial sponsors, financial institutions, hedge funds and other investment firms of Ares to provide us with attractive investments. In addition to deal flow, the Ares investment platform assists our investment adviser in analyzing, structuring and monitoring investments. Ares has been in existence for more than 13 years and its senior principals have an average of over 21 years experience investing in senior loans, high yield bonds, mezzanine debt and private equity securities. The Company has access to the Ares staff of approximately 170 investment professionals and approximately 145 administrative professionals who

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provide assistance in accounting, finance, legal, compliance, operations, information technology and investor relations.

Since our initial public offering on October 8, 2004 through March 31, 2011, our realized gains have exceeded our realized losses by \$113.2 million (excluding the one-time gain on the Allied Acquisition and gains/losses from the extinguishment of debt and other assets). For this same time period, our portfolio exits have resulted in an aggregate cash flow realized internal rate of return to us of approximately 15% (based on original cash invested of \$3.5 billion and total proceeds from such exits of \$4.2 billion). Approximately 79% of the exits resulted in an aggregate cash flow internal rate of return to us of 10% or greater. Internal rate of return is the discount rate that makes the net present value of all cash flows related to a particular investment equal to zero. Internal rate of return is gross of expenses related to investments as these expenses are not allocable to specific investments. Investments are considered to be exited when the original investment objective has been achieved through the receipt of cash and/or non-cash consideration upon the repayment of our debt investment or sale of an investment or through the determination that no further consideration was collectible and, thus, a loss may have been realized. These internal rate of return results are historical results relating to our past performance and are not necessarily indicative of future results, the achievement of which cannot be assured.

While our primary focus is to generate current income and capital appreciation through investments in first and second lien senior loans and mezzanine debt and, to a lesser extent, equity securities of eligible portfolio companies, we also may invest up to 30% of our portfolio in opportunistic investments in non-qualifying assets, as permitted by the Investment Company Act. See "Regulation." Specifically, as part of this 30% basket, we may invest in debt of middle-market companies located outside of the United States, in investment funds that are operating pursuant to certain exceptions to the Investment Company Act, in advisers to similar investment funds and in debt and equity of public companies that are not considered "eligible portfolio companies" (as defined in the Investment Company Act) because their market capitalization of publicly traded equity securities exceeds the levels provided for in the Investment Company Act. We expect that these public companies generally will have debt that may be non-investment grade. From time to time, we may also invest in high yield bonds, which, depending on the issuer, may or may not be included in this 30% basket.

We and General Electric Capital Corporation and certain of its affiliates (collectively, "GE") also co-invest through an unconsolidated senior debt fund, the Senior Secured Loan Fund LLC, which operates using the name "Senior Secured Loan Program" (the "SSLP"). The SSLP was initially formed in December 2007 to invest in "stretch senior" and "unitranche" loans (loans that combine both senior and subordinated debt, generally in a first lien position) of middle-market companies and currently has approximately \$5.1 billion of available capital, approximately \$2.9 billion in aggregate principal amount of which was funded as of March 31, 2011. At March 31, 2011, our total available capital provided to the SSLP was approximately \$1 billion, of which approximately \$300 million was unfunded. The SSLP is capitalized as transactions are completed and all portfolio decisions and generally all other decisions in respect of the SSLP must be approved by GE and the Company.

We also manage an unconsolidated fund, AGILE Fund I, LLC (the "AGILE Fund"), which had approximately \$67.9 million of total committed capital under management as of March 31, 2011.

In addition, our portfolio company, IHAM, manages ten unconsolidated credit funds, which are described in more detail under "Business Investments Managed Funds Portfolio" below, and sub-manages four other unconsolidated credit funds (such 14 funds managed or sub-managed by IHAM are collectively referred to as the "IHAM Funds"). We have also made direct investments in securities of certain of these vehicles. As of March 31, 2011, IHAM had total committed capital under management of approximately \$3.4 billion, which includes approximately \$0.4 billion invested by Ares Capital in IHAM or securities issued by funds managed or sub-managed by IHAM.

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About Ares

Founded in 1997, Ares is a global alternative asset manager and SEC registered investment adviser with approximately \$40 billion of total committed capital under management and over 380 employees as of March 31, 2011.

Ares specializes in originating and managing assets in both the leveraged finance and private equity markets. Ares' leveraged finance activities include the origination, acquisition and management of senior loans, high yield bonds, mezzanine debt and special situation investments. Ares' private equity activities focus on providing flexible, junior capital to middle-market companies. Ares has the ability to invest across a capital structure, from senior floating rate debt to common equity. This flexibility, combined with Ares' "buy and hold" philosophy, enables Ares to structure an investment to meet the specific needs of a company rather than the less flexible demands of the public markets.

Ares is comprised of the following groups:

Global Private Debt Group. The Ares Global Private Debt Group manages the assets of Ares Capital, the IHAM Funds, Ares Credit Strategies Fund II, L.P., Ares Credit Strategies Fund III, L.P. and Ares' private debt middle-market financing business in Europe, Ares Capital Europe ("ACE"), which together had approximately \$15 billion of total committed capital under management as of March 31, 2011, including capital which may be committed for investment both directly and through certain financial services portfolio companies of the Company. The Ares Global Private Debt Group focuses primarily on non-syndicated first and second lien senior loans and mezzanine debt, which in some cases may include an equity component. The Ares Global Private Debt Group also makes equity investments in private middle-market companies, usually in conjunction with a concurrent debt investment.

Capital Markets Group. The Ares Capital Markets Group had approximately \$19 billion of total committed capital under management as of March 31, 2011 through a variety of funds and investment vehicles, focusing primarily on syndicated senior secured loans, high yield bonds, distressed debt, other liquid fixed income investments and other publicly traded debt securities.

Private Equity Group. The Ares Private Equity Group had approximately \$6 billion of total committed capital under management as of March 31, 2011, primarily through Ares Corporate Opportunities Fund L.P., Ares Corporate Opportunities Fund II, L.P. and Ares Corporate Opportunities Fund III, L.P. (collectively referred to as "ACOF"). ACOF generally makes private equity investments in amounts substantially larger than the private equity investments anticipated to be made by Ares Capital. In particular, the Ares Private Equity Group generally focuses on control-oriented equity investments in under-capitalized companies or companies with capital structure issues.

Ares' senior principals have been working together as a group for many years and have an average of over 21 years of experience in leveraged finance, private equity, distressed debt, investment banking and capital markets. They are backed by a large team of highly disciplined professionals. Ares' rigorous investment approach is based upon an intensive, independent financial analysis, with a focus on preservation of capital, diversification and active portfolio management. These fundamentals underlie Ares' investment strategy and have resulted in large pension funds, banks, insurance companies, endowments and certain high net worth individuals investing in Ares' funds.

Ares Capital Management

Ares Capital Management, our investment adviser, is served by an origination, investment and portfolio management team of approximately 55 U.S.-based investment professionals led by the senior partners of the Ares Global Private Debt Group: Michael Arougheti, Eric Beckman, Kipp deVeer,

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Mitchell Goldstein, Michael Smith and Gordon Watters. Ares Capital Management leverages off of Ares' investment platform and benefits from the significant capital markets, trading and research expertise of Ares' investment professionals. Ares has approximately 170 investment professionals covering current investments in more than 1,100 companies across over 30 industries. Ares Capital Management's investment committee has nine members, including the senior partners of the Ares Global Private Debt Group and senior partners in the Ares Capital Markets Group and the Ares Private Equity Group.

Recent Developments

On April 27, 2011, we redeemed the \$161.2 million in outstanding aggregate principal amount of our unsecured 6.00% Notes due 2012 (the "2012 Notes") for a total redemption price (including a redemption premium) of \$169.3 million, which resulted in a loss on the extinguishment of debt of \$10.5 million, in accordance with the terms of the indenture governing the 2012 Notes.

As of April 29, 2011 we had made new investment commitments of \$171 million, of which \$142 million was funded, since March 31, 2011. Of these new commitments, 95% were in first lien senior secured debt, 3% were in equity securities, and 2% were in second lien senior secured debt. Of the \$171 million of new investment commitments, 95% were floating rate with a weighted average spread at amortized cost of 8.6% and 2% were fixed rate with a weighted average yield at amortized cost of 13.9%.

As of April 29, 2011, we had exited \$34 million of investments since March 31, 2011. Of these investments, 70% were in second lien senior secured debt, 17% were in equity and other investments, 11% were in first lien senior secured debt, and 2% were in senior subordinated debt. Of the \$34 million of investments, 80% were in floating rate investments with a weighted average spread at amortized cost of 9.3%. Of the remaining investments, 2% were fixed rate investments with a weighted average yield at amortized cost of 12.1%, 16% were non-interest bearing and 2% were in investments on non-accrual status. Also, of the \$34 million of investments exited since March 31, 2011, \$25 million were investments acquired as part of the Allied Acquisition. Additionally, we recognized net realized gains of approximately \$2 million on the investments exited that were acquired as part of the Allied Acquisition.

In addition, as of April 29, 2011, we had an investment backlog and pipeline of \$520 million and \$360 million, respectively. We may syndicate a portion of these investments and commitments to third parties. The consummation of any of the investments in this backlog and pipeline depends upon, among other things: satisfactory completion of our due diligence investigation of the prospective portfolio company, our acceptance of the terms and structure of such investment and the execution and delivery of satisfactory transaction documentation. We cannot assure you that we will make any of these investments or that we will syndicate any portion of such investments and commitments.

On April 28, 2011, we filed a definitive proxy statement on Schedule 14A (the "Definitive Proxy") in connection with our 2011 annual stockholders meeting expected to take place on June 6, 2011. In addition to seeking stockholder approval for customary annual meeting matters, we are asking our stockholders to approve, subject to certain determinations required to be made by our board of directors, our ability to sell or otherwise issue shares of our common stock, not exceeding 25% of our then outstanding common stock, at a price below the then current net asset value per share during a period beginning on the date of our 2011 annual stockholders meeting and expiring on the earlier of the one-year anniversary of the date of our 2011 annual stockholders meeting and the date of our 2012 annual stockholders meeting. In addition, we are asking stockholders to approve certain amendments to our amended and restated investment advisory and management agreement with Ares Capital Management, referred to herein as our "investment advisory and management agreement." See "Risk Factors Risks Relating to Our Business We are asking our stockholders to approve certain amendments to our investment advisory and management agreement at our 2011 annual stockholders

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meeting expected to take place on June 6, 2011. If our stockholders approve one or both of the amendments, our investment adviser may be eligible to receive an increased incentive fee or an incentive fee earlier than it otherwise would have" and "Management Investment Advisory and Management Agreement Duration, Termination and Amendment."

MARKET OPPORTUNITY

We believe that current market conditions present attractive opportunities for us to invest in middle-market companies. Specifically:

We believe that many senior lenders have, in recent years, de-emphasized their service and product offerings to middle-market businesses in favor of lending to large corporate clients and managing capital markets transactions. In addition, commercial and investment banks are limited in their ability to underwrite and syndicate bank loans and high yield securities for middle-market issuers as they seek to build capital and reduce leverage, resulting in opportunities for alternative funding sources and therefore higher new-issue market opportunities.

We believe that there is a lack of market participants that are willing to not only underwrite but also hold loans. As a result, we believe our ability to minimize syndication risk for a company seeking financing by being able to hold our loans without syndicating them is a competitive advantage.

We believe there is a large pool of uninvested private equity capital for middle-market businesses. We expect private equity firms will seek to leverage their investments by combining equity capital with senior secured loans and mezzanine debt from other sources, such as the Company.

A high volume of senior secured and high yield debt was originated in the calendar years 2004 through 2007 and will come due in the near term and, accordingly, we believe that new financing opportunities will increase as many companies seek to refinance this indebtedness.

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES

We believe that we have the following competitive advantages over other capital providers to middle-market companies:

The Ares Platform

As of March 31, 2011, Ares managed approximately \$40 billion of total committed capital under management in the related asset classes of non-syndicated first and second lien senior loans, syndicated loans, high yield bonds, mezzanine debt and private equity. We believe Ares' current investment platform provides a competitive advantage in terms of access to origination and marketing activities and diligence for Ares Capital. Specifically, the Ares platform provides the Company an advantage through its deal flow generation and investment evaluation process. Ares' asset management platform also provides additional market information, company knowledge and industry insight that benefit the investment and due diligence process. Ares' professionals maintain extensive financial sponsor and intermediary relationships, which provide valuable insight and access to transactions and information.

Seasoned Management Team

Ares' senior professionals have an average of more than 21 years of experience in leveraged finance, including substantial experience in investing in leveraged loans, high yield bonds, mezzanine

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debt, distressed debt and private equity securities. The investment professionals in the Ares Global Private Debt Group and members of our investment adviser's investment committee also have significant experience originating and investing across market cycles. As a result of Ares' extensive investment experience and the history of its seasoned management team, Ares has developed a strong reputation across U.S. and European capital markets. We believe that Ares' long history in the leveraged loan market and the extensive experience of its principals originating and investing across market cycles provides Ares Capital with a competitive advantage in identifying, originating, investing in and managing a portfolio of investments in middle-market companies.

Experience and Focus on Middle-Market Companies

Ares has historically focused on investments in middle-market companies and we benefit from this experience. In sourcing and analyzing deals, our investment adviser benefits from Ares' extensive network of relationships focused on middle-market companies, including management teams, members of the investment banking community, private equity groups and other investment firms with whom Ares has had long-term relationships. We believe this network enables us to identify well-positioned prospective portfolio company investments. The Ares Global Private Debt Group works closely with Ares' other investment professionals, who together currently oversee a portfolio of investments in over 1,100 companies across over 30 industries, and provide access to an extensive network of relationships and insights into industry trends and the state of the capital markets.

Disciplined Investment Philosophy

In making its investment decisions, our investment adviser has adopted Ares' long-standing, consistent, credit-based investment approach that was developed over 21 years ago by its founders. Specifically, our investment adviser's investment philosophy, portfolio construction and portfolio management involve an assessment of the overall macroeconomic environment and financial markets and company-specific research and analysis. Its investment approach emphasizes capital preservation, low volatility and minimization of downside risk. In addition to engaging in extensive due diligence from the perspective of a long-term investor, our investment adviser's approach seeks to reduce risk in investments by focusing on:

businesses with strong franchises and sustainable competitive advantages;

industries with positive long-term dynamics that have performed through the credit cycle;

businesses and industries with cash flows that are dependable and predictable, including those that have strategic M&A value;

management teams with demonstrated track records and appropriate economic incentives;

rates of return commensurate with the perceived risks;

securities or investments that are structured with favorable terms and covenants; and

businesses backed by experienced private equity sponsors.

Extensive Industry Focus

We seek to concentrate our investing activities in industries with a history of predictable and dependable cash flows and in which the Ares investment professionals have had extensive investment experience. Ares investment professionals have developed long-term relationships with management teams and management consultants in over 30 industries, and have accumulated substantial information and identified potential trends within these industries. In turn, we benefit from these relationships, information and identification of potential trends in making investments.

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Flexible Transaction Structuring and Scale

We believe that being one of the largest BDCs with approximately \$13 billion of total committed capital under management as of March 31, 2011, including available debt capacity (subject to leverage and borrowing base restrictions), funds directly or indirectly managed or co-managed by us or one of our wholly owned subsidiaries and funds managed or sub-managed by certain financial services portfolio companies makes us a more desirable capital provider, especially in competitive markets. We are flexible in structuring investments, including the types of investments and the terms associated with such investments. Ares has extensive experience investing in a wide variety of structures for companies with a diverse set of terms and conditions. We believe this approach and experience enables our investment adviser to identify attractive investment opportunities throughout economic cycles and across a company's capital structure so we can make investments consistent with our stated investment objective and preserve principal while seeking appropriate risk adjusted returns. In addition, we have the ability to provide "one stop" financing with the ability to invest capital across the balance sheet and syndicate and hold larger investments than many of our competitors. We believe that the ability to underwrite, syndicate and hold larger investments benefits our stockholders by (a) potentially increasing net income and earnings through syndication, (b) increasing originated deal flow flexibility, (c) broadening market relationships and deal flow, (d) allowing us to optimize our portfolio composition and (e) allowing us to provide capital to middle-market companies, which we believe currently have limited access to capital from traditional lending sources. In addition, we believe that the ability to provide capital at every level of the balance sheet provides a strong value proposition to middle-market borrowers and our senior debt capabilities provide superior deal origination and relative value analysis capabilities compared to traditional "mezzanine only" lenders.

Broad Origination Strategy

We focus on self-originating most of our investments by pursuing a broad array of investment opportunities in middle-market companies across multiple channels. We also leverage off of the extensive relationships of the broader Ares platform, including relationships with the companies in the funds managed by IHAM, to identify investment opportunities. We believe that this allows for asset selectivity and that there is a significant relationship between proprietary deal origination and credit performance. We believe that our focus on generating proprietary deal flow and lead investing also gives us greater control over capital structure, deal terms, pricing and documentation and enables us to actively manage our portfolio investments. Moreover, by leading the investment process, we are often able to secure controlling positions in credit tranches, thereby providing additional control in investment outcomes. We also have originated substantial proprietary deal flow from middle-market intermediaries, which often allows us to act as the sole or principal source of institutional capital to the borrower.

OPERATING AND REGULATORY STRUCTURE

Our investment activities are managed by Ares Capital Management, which is wholly owned by Ares, and supervised by our board of directors, a majority of whom are independent of Ares and its affiliates. Ares Capital Management is registered under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940, or the "Advisers Act." Under our investment advisory and management agreement, we have agreed to pay Ares Capital Management an annual base management fee based on our total assets, as defined under the Investment Company Act (other than cash and cash equivalents, but including assets purchased with borrowed funds), and an incentive fee based on our performance. See "Management Investment Advisory and Management Agreement."

As a BDC, we are required to comply with certain regulatory requirements. While we are permitted to finance investments using debt, our ability to use debt is limited in certain significant respects. See "Business Operating and Regulatory Structure" and "Regulation." We have elected to

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be treated for U.S. federal income tax purposes as a regulated investment company, or a "RIC," under Subchapter M of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the "Code." See "Certain Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Considerations."

MARKET CONDITIONS

Due to volatility in global markets, the availability of capital and access to capital markets has been limited over the last several years. As the global liquidity situation and market conditions evolve, we will continue to monitor and adjust our approach to funding accordingly. However, given the unprecedented nature of the recent volatility in the global markets and the uncertainty around the strength of the U.S. economic recovery, there can be no assurance that these activities will be successful. While levels of market disruption and volatility have improved, there can be no assurance that adverse market conditions will not repeat themselves. If they do, we could face materially higher financing costs. Consequently, our operating strategy could be materially and adversely affected. See "Risk Factors Risks Relating to Our Business Capital markets have recently been in a period of disruption and instability. These market conditions materially and adversely affected debt and equity capital markets in the United States, which had, and may in the future have, a negative impact on our business and operations."

In connection with prior depressed market conditions of the general economy, the stocks of BDCs as an industry have in the past traded at near historic lows as a result of concerns over liquidity, credit quality, leverage restrictions and distribution requirements. In some cases, certain BDCs became "forced sellers" of assets, defaulted on their indebtedness, decreased their distributions to stockholders or announced share repurchase programs. We cannot assure you that the market pressures we face will not have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

ACQUISITION OPPORTUNITIES

We believe the recent dislocation and illiquidity in the credit markets has increased the likelihood of further consolidation in our industry. To that end, we and our portfolio company IHAM are evaluating (and expect to continue to evaluate in the future) a number of potential strategic acquisition opportunities, including acquisitions of:

asset portfolios;

contracts to manage CLO vehicles and other investment vehicles;

other private and public finance companies or asset managers; and

selected secondary market assets.

We and our portfolio company IHAM have been and from time to time engage in discussions with counterparties in respect of various potential strategic acquisition and investment transactions, including potential acquisitions of other finance companies. Some of these transactions could be material to our business and, if consummated, could be difficult to integrate, result in increased leverage or dilution and/or subject us to unexpected liabilities. However, none of these discussions has progressed to the point where the consummation of any such transaction could be deemed to be probable or reasonably certain as of the date of this prospectus. Consummation of any such transaction will be subject to completion of due diligence, finalization of key business and financial terms (including price) and negotiation of final definitive documentation as well as a number of other factors and conditions including, without limitation, the approval of our board of directors (after having determined that such transaction is in the best interest of our stockholders), any required third party consents and, in certain cases, the approval of our stockholders. We cannot predict how quickly the terms of any such transaction could be finalized, if at all. Accordingly, there can be no assurance that definitive documentation for any such transaction would be executed or even if executed, that any such

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transaction will be consummated. In connection with evaluating potential strategic acquisition and investment transactions, we have, and may in the future, incur significant expenses for the evaluation and due diligence investigation of these potential transactions.

LIQUIDITY

As of March 31, 2011, our total consolidated indebtedness was \$1.5 billion aggregate principal amount, approximately \$1.4 billion aggregate principal amount of which was unsecured indebtedness of Ares Capital and approximately \$0.1 billion of which was secured indebtedness of our wholly owned subsidiaries.

As of March 31, 2011, of the \$1.5 billion aggregate principal amount of total outstanding indebtedness: (i) no amounts were outstanding under our \$810.0 million revolving credit facility (the "Revolving Credit Facility") or the \$400.0 million revolving funding facility of our wholly owned subsidiary, Ares Capital CP Funding LLC ("Ares Capital CP") (the "Revolving Funding Facility" and, together with the Revolving Credit Facility, the "Facilities"), (ii) \$138.6 million aggregate principal amount of our CLO Notes (as defined below) were outstanding under our debt securitization (the "Debt Securitization"), (iii) \$161.2 million aggregate principal amount of our 2012 Notes were outstanding; (iv) \$200.0 million aggregate principal amount of our 7.75% senior notes that mature on October 15, 2040 (the "2040 Notes") were outstanding, (v) \$230.0 million aggregate principal amount of our 6.875% senior notes due on April 15, 2047 (the "2047 Notes" and, together with the 2012 Notes and the 2040 Notes, the "Unsecured Notes") were outstanding, (vi) \$575.0 million aggregate principal amount of our convertible senior unsecured notes that mature on February 1, 2016 (the "February 2016 Convertible Notes") were outstanding and (vii) \$230.0 million aggregate principal amount of our convertible senior unsecured notes that mature on June 1, 2016 (the "June 2016 Convertible Notes" and, together with the February 2016 Convertible Notes, the "Convertible Notes") were outstanding.

On April 27, 2011, we redeemed the \$161.2 million in outstanding aggregate principal amount of 2012 Notes for a total redemption price (including a redemption premium) of approximately \$169.3 million, which resulted in a loss on the extinguishment of debt of \$10.5 million, in accordance with the terms of the indenture governing the 2012 Notes. See "Recent Developments" and "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations Recent Developments" for information on the redemption of the 2012 Notes. We intend to continue borrowing under the Facilities in the future and we may increase the size of the Facilities or otherwise issue additional debt securities or other evidences of indebtedness in the future.

For more information on the Company's debt, see "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations Financial Condition, Liquidity and Capital Resources."

RISK FACTORS

Investing in Ares Capital involves risks. The following is a summary of certain risks that you should carefully consider before investing in our securities. In addition, see "Risk Factors" beginning on page 27 for a more detailed discussion of the factors you should carefully consider before deciding to invest in our securities.

Risks Relating to Our Business

Capital markets have recently been in a period of disruption and instability. These market conditions materially and adversely affected debt and equity capital markets in the United States, which had, and may in the future have, a negative impact on our business and operations.

A failure on our part to maintain our status as a BDC would significantly reduce our operating flexibility.

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We are dependent upon certain key personnel of Ares for our future success and upon their access to other Ares investment professionals.

Our financial condition and results of operations depend on our ability to manage future growth effectively.

We may be unable to realize the benefits anticipated by the Allied Acquisition or it may take longer than anticipated to achieve such benefits.

Our ability to grow depends on our ability to raise capital.

Regulations governing our operation as a BDC affect our ability to, and the way in which we, raise additional capital.

We borrow money, which magnifies the potential for gain or loss on amounts invested and may increase the risk of investing with us.

In addition to regulatory requirements that restrict our ability to raise capital, the Facilities, the CLO Notes, the Unsecured Notes and the Convertible Notes contain various covenants that, if not complied with, could accelerate repayment under the Facilities, the CLO Notes, the Unsecured Notes and the Convertible Notes, thereby materially and adversely affecting our liquidity, financial condition and results of operations.

Our credit ratings may change and as a result the cost and flexibility under our debt instruments may change.

We operate in a highly competitive market for investment opportunities.

We may be subject to certain corporate-level taxes regardless of whether we continue to qualify as a RIC.

We may have difficulty paying our required distributions under applicable tax rules if we recognize income before or without receiving cash representing such income.

We may in the future determine to fund a portion of our investments with preferred stock, which would magnify the potential for gain or loss and the risks of investing in us in the same way as our borrowings.

We are exposed to risks associated with changes in interest rates.

Many of our portfolio investments are not publicly traded and, as a result, the fair value of these investments may not be readily determinable.

The lack of liquidity in our investments may adversely affect our business.

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We may experience fluctuations in our quarterly results.

There are significant potential conflicts of interest that could impact our investment returns.

Changes in laws or regulations governing our operations or the operations of our portfolio companies, changes in the interpretation thereof or newly enacted laws or regulations, such as the Dodd-Frank Act, and any failure by us or our portfolio companies to comply with these laws or regulations, could require changes to certain business practices of us or our portfolio companies, negatively impact the operations, cash flows or financial condition of us or our portfolio companies, impose additional costs on us or our portfolio companies or otherwise adversely affect our business or the business of our portfolio companies.

Our investment adviser's liability is limited under the investment advisory and management agreement, and we are required to indemnify our investment adviser against certain

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liabilities, which may lead our investment adviser to act in a riskier manner on our behalf than it would when acting for its own account.

We may be obligated to pay our investment adviser incentive compensation even if we incur a loss.

We are asking our stockholders to approve certain amendments to our investment advisory and management agreement at our 2011 annual stockholders meeting expected to take place on June 6, 2011. If our stockholders approve one or both of the amendments, our investment adviser may be eligible to receive an increased incentive fee or an incentive fee earlier than it otherwise would have.

We may not replicate Ares' historical success and our ability to enter into transactions with Ares and our other affiliates is restricted.

Risks Relating to Our Investments

Declines in market prices and liquidity in the corporate debt markets can result in significant net unrealized depreciation of our portfolio, which in turn would reduce our net asset value.

Economic recessions or downturns could impair our portfolio companies and harm our operating results.

Investments in privately held middle-market companies involve significant risks.

Our debt investments may be risky and we could lose all or part of our investment.

Investments in equity securities, many of which are illiquid with no readily available market, involve a substantial degree of risk.

There may be circumstances where our debt investments could be subordinated to claims of other creditors or we could be subject to lender liability claims.

Our portfolio companies may incur debt or issue equity securities that rank equally with, or senior to, our investments in such companies.

When we are a debt or minority equity investor in a portfolio company, we are often not in a position to exert influence on the entity, and other equity holders and management of the company may make decisions that could decrease the value of our portfolio holdings.

Our portfolio companies may be highly leveraged.

Our investment adviser's incentive fee may induce it to make certain investments, including speculative investments.

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Our investments in foreign companies may involve significant risks in addition to the risks inherent in U.S. investments. We may also expose ourselves to risks if we engage in hedging transactions.

We may initially invest a portion of the net proceeds of offerings pursuant to this prospectus primarily in high-quality short-term investments, which will generate lower rates of return than those expected from the interest generated on first and second lien loans and mezzanine debt.

The Allied Acquisition may have triggered certain "change of control" provisions and other restrictions in certain of our and Allied Capital's contracts and the failure to obtain any required consents or waivers could adversely impact us.

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Risks Relating to Offerings Pursuant to this Prospectus

Our shares of common stock have traded at a discount from net asset value and may do so again in the future, which could limit our ability to raise additional equity capital.

There is a risk that investors in our common stock may not receive dividends or that our dividends may not grow over time and that investors in our debt securities may not receive all of the interest income to which they are entitled.

Provisions of the Maryland General Corporation Law and of our charter and bylaws could deter takeover attempts and have an adverse impact on the price of our common stock.

Investing in our common stock may involve an above average degree of risk.

The market price of our common stock may fluctuate significantly.

The net asset value per share of our common stock may be diluted if we sell shares of our common stock in one or more offerings at prices below the then current net asset value per share of our common stock or securities to subscribe for or convertible into shares of our common stock.

Your interest in us may be diluted if you do not fully exercise your subscription rights in any rights offering. In addition, if the subscription price is less than our net asset value per share, then you will experience an immediate dilution of the aggregate net asset value of your shares.

Investors in offerings of our common stock will likely incur immediate dilution upon the closing of such offering.

Our stockholders will experience dilution in their ownership percentage if they opt out of our dividend reinvestment plan.

Our stockholders may experience dilution upon the conversion of the Convertible Notes.

Our stockholders may receive shares of our common stock as dividends, which could result in adverse tax consequences to them.

Sales of substantial amounts of our common stock in the public market may have an adverse effect on the market price of our common stock.

The trading market or market value of our publicly issued debt securities may fluctuate.

Terms relating to redemption may materially adversely affect your return on any debt securities that we may issue.

Our credit ratings may not reflect all risks of an investment in our debt securities.

OUR CORPORATE INFORMATION

Our administrative offices are located at 2000 Avenue of the Stars, 12th Floor, Los Angeles, California 90067, telephone number (310) 201-4200, and our executive offices are located at 245 Park Avenue, 44th Floor, New York, New York 10167, telephone number (212) 750-7300.

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OFFERINGS

We may offer, from time to time, in one or more offerings or series, up to \$2,000,000,000 of our common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, subscription rights to purchase shares of our common stock or warrants representing rights to purchase shares of our common stock, preferred stock or debt securities, or units comprised of any combination of the foregoing, on terms to be determined at the time of the offering. We will offer our securities at prices and on terms to be set forth in one or more supplements to this prospectus. The offering price per share of our common stock, less any underwriting commissions or discounts, generally will not be less than the net asset value per share of our common stock at the time of an offering. However, we may issue shares of our common stock pursuant to this prospectus at a price per share that is less than our net asset value per share (a) in connection with a rights offering to our existing stockholders, (b) with the prior approval of the majority of our common stockholders or (c) under such other circumstances as the SEC may permit. Any such issuance of shares of our common stock below net asset value may be dilutive to the net asset value of our common stock. See "Risk Factors Risks Relating to Offerings Pursuant to this Prospectus."

At our 2010 annual stockholders meeting, subject to certain determinations required to be made by our board of directors, our stockholders approved our ability to sell or otherwise issue shares of our common stock, not exceeding 25% of our then outstanding common stock, at a price below the then current net asset value per share during a period beginning on June 7, 2010 and expiring on the earlier of the one-year anniversary of the date of the 2010 annual stockholders meeting and the date of our 2011 annual stockholders meeting. On April 28, 2011, we filed the Definitive Proxy in connection with the 2011 annual stockholders meeting. The Definitive Proxy sets forth certain proposals to be voted upon at the 2011 annual stockholders meeting (currently expected to take place on June 6, 2011), including a proposal that, if approved by stockholders, would have the effect of extending this approval to the earlier of the one-year anniversary of the date of the 2011 annual stockholders meeting and the date of our 2012 annual stockholders meeting.

We may offer our securities directly to one or more purchasers, including existing stockholders in a rights offering, through agents that we designate from time to time or to or through underwriters or dealers. The prospectus supplement relating to each offering will identify any agents or underwriters involved in the sale of our securities, and will set forth any applicable purchase price, fee, commission or discount arrangement between us and our agents or underwriters or among our underwriters or the basis upon which such amount may be calculated. See "Plan of Distribution." We may not sell any of our securities through agents, underwriters or dealers without delivery of a prospectus supplement describing the method and terms of the offering of our securities.

Set forth below is additional information regarding offerings of our securities:

Use of proceeds	Unless otherwise specified in a prospectus supplement, we intend to use the net proceeds from the sale of our securities for general corporate purposes, which includes, among other things, (a) investing in portfolio companies in accordance with our investment objective and strategies and market conditions and (b) repaying indebtedness. Each supplement to this prospectus relating to an offering will more fully identify the use of the proceeds from such offering. See "Use of Proceeds."
Distributions	We intend to distribute quarterly dividends to our stockholders out of assets legally available for distribution. Our quarterly dividends, if any, will be determined by our board of directors. For more information, see "Price Range of Common Stock and Distributions."
Taxation	