

Herbert Smith Freehills Strengthens New York-Based Latin America Offering

Herbert Smith Freehills has strengthened the New York hub of its global Latin America offering, the firm announced in a release.

Projects and Infrastructure partner Juan-José Zentner relocated to **Herbert Smith Freehills'** New York Office on March 1 to advise clients on the development and financing of major infrastructure projects. Juan-Jose joins International Arbitration partner Christian Leathley and the rest of the team to focus on Latin America from the New York hub, with an emphasis on mining, power and general infrastructure opportunities in the region. He was previously based in Herbert Smith Freehills' office in Melbourne, Australia.

The release continues:

Fluent in English and Spanish and of Argentinean heritage, Juan-José has represented the firm's clients in South America for more than a decade, during that time living and working in Chile for more than a year. He specializes in all forms of design, engineering, procurement and construction contracts and offtake agreements. He also has extensive experience in corporate, project and structured finance.

Herbert Smith Freehills' highly regarded Latin America Group comprises an experienced global team in Madrid, London, Paris, Melbourne, Sydney, Perth, Tokyo, Beijing, and other offices across the firm's international network. Co-led by Christian Leathley, the New York hub includes US and UK-qualified lawyers, fluent in Spanish and Portuguese, with specialist projects and infrastructure and international arbitration experience. The practice offers expertise in

mining, power and general infrastructure and represents a large Australasian client base – which is one of the most active currently investing in Latin America.

The New York office also includes a team of US and UK-qualified disputes lawyers that represents clients in US courts in commercial litigation, investigations, cross-border matters and class actions. Lawyers working in the New York office are also qualified to practice in Paris, Singapore, Brazil, Ecuador, New Zealand and Australia.

Juan-José, who has been with the firm since 2001, commented:

“With the current pressure on commodity prices, many global corporates are looking to strengthen their balance sheets by selling assets and restructuring their investments, while others are acquiring or developing assets to capitalize on opportunities. Many of the banks, trading houses, pension funds, infrastructure funds and other investors we represent have large offices in New York with mandates to invest in Latin America. As the majority of the financing for cross-border transactions in Latin America originates from New York, there is acute demand for our transactional expertise in the City.”

Christian Leathley, co-head of the firm’s Latin American group, said: “We established the New York hub for our Latin American practice to better serve clients with interests in the region. Juan-Jose’s relocation to New York allows us to provide a broader, integrated offering that includes counsel on international best practice for risk allocation, bankability of project documents and project structures, arbitration and dispute resolution, with a multi-lingual team that has deep roots in the region. The development of this capability is key to the firm and we will continue to add strength to our local team.”