

# HERBERT SMITH FREEHILLS FURTHER EXPANDS SOUTH AFRICA PRACTICE WITH ADDITION OF CORPORATE PARTNER

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News

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Herbert Smith Freehills has appointed corporate lawyer, Rudolph du Plessis, as partner in its Johannesburg office. Rudolph, who has spent his entire legal career in South Africa, will be the firm's first M&A partner in the Johannesburg office.

Scott Cochrane, Global Head of the firm's Corporate practice, commented: "We welcome Rudolph to the firm and we look forward to working with him. He is a first-class lawyer with excellent experience who will be a great addition to our South Africa office and the wider Africa practice, as well as our top-tier global corporate M&A offering."

Rudolph has particular expertise in cross-border M&A transactions and regularly advises multi-nationals and foreign companies on investment in South Africa which includes advice on structuring issues and exchange control regulations.

Having been a partner for 15 years, Rudolph is a well-established and respected practitioner in the South African M&A market. The last 10 years of his practice has seen a split between domestic work for South African clients, work for multinationals investing in South Africa and Sub-Saharan work for domestic and multinational clients.

Commenting on joining Herbert Smith Freehills, Rudolph said: "This is an incredible opportunity to help grow and develop a South African corporate practice for a truly global law firm. I was attracted to Herbert Smith Freehills' ambitious plans in the corporate market and I look forward to helping maintain and grow the firm's presence in Africa."

Rudolph joins Herbert Smith Freehills from Bowman Gilfillan, where he has been a partner since 2001, and has been recognised for his corporate work by top legal directories.

Rudolph received his law degree from Northwest University in 1996 and an LLM from the University of Johannesburg in 2004, and was admitted to practice in South Africa in 1998 and as a Notary Public in 2000.

Rudolph is the latest addition to Herbert Smith Freehills' South African partnership and follows the partner appointments of Peter Leon and Brigette Baillie in October last year, including the relocation of partners Bertrand Montembault and Ed Baring.

Over the past 30 years, Herbert Smith Freehills has established a leading position in Africa, with one of the largest teams of common and civil law lawyers dedicated to Africa work, acting on matters in over 50 of Africa's 54 countries. The launch of the Johannesburg office in October 2015 further strengthened the firm's Africa practice. Consistently ranked in the top tier by Chambers and Legal 500, the firm has more ranked lawyers for Projects & Energy Africa in Chambers Global than any other firm and operates across a large number of sectors including Energy, Mining, TMT, Banks, Consumer & Retail and Financial Buyers.

Peter Leon, co-chair of the Africa practice, commented:

"Rudolph's appointment to the Johannesburg office is an important step in our commitment to provide an end-to-end service for leading global businesses via our pan-African offering. With clients from across our international network increasingly looking at the tremendous growth opportunities Africa has to offer, and South-African clients looking further north and across Africa in their expansion plans, Rudolph will be able to help us meet these demands with his broad experience on the continent."

#### About Herbert Smith Freehills' Global M&A Practice

Herbert Smith Freehills' M&A team provides market-leading capability on public and private mergers and acquisitions with particular strength and expertise in cross-border, high-value, complex M&A activity. We are consistently ranked in the top tiers in the UK and European directories for M&A and have a market-leading position in Asia-Pacific M&A league tables, by both volume and value of deals. Our key clients include major international and domestic corporate entities, the world's leading investment banks, financial buyers, and public sector and government clients.

We advise clients on their most complex domestic and cross-border transactions across the globe. Our role frequently puts us at the heart of industries that are reshaping, restructuring and expanding into the world's emerging markets. Our distinctive breadth of industry sector expertise gives us a top-tier reputation in industries such as energy, mining and infrastructure, financial services and TMT, some of the busiest industries for M&A activity in recent years.

## About Herbert Smith Freehills' Africa Group

Africa is an exciting region which continues to attract the interest of many of Herbert Smith Freehills' clients. The firm already has a leading and long-established practice in Africa, having advised on numerous matters throughout the whole of the continent over the last three decades.

Our experience over the past 12 months includes advising on over 300 matters across a range of industry sectors and practice areas involving over 150 partners from across our global network. Recent deal highlights include advising Bharti Airtel on the sale of its operations in Burkina Faso and Sierra Leone to Orange SA; Vitol SA on the project finance and commercial aspects of its US\$7 billion oil and gas project in Ghana with ENI supplying gas for power generation, reportedly the largest single project Foreign Direct Investment inflow to Ghana since Independence; and Mitsui on the negotiation of the acquisition from Vale of an interest in the Moatize coal mine in Mozambique and in the related Nacala rail and port infrastructure.

Herbert Smith Freehills is ranked top tier for Africa by Legal 500 EMEA 2016, which says that our "Johannesburg presence now gives the firm a virtually unrivalled offering in Africa". Peter Leon is recognised as a "leading mining specialist" and Brigette Baillie is regarded as "hugely impressive".

## **About Herbert Smith Freehills**

Operating from over 26 offices across Asia Pacific, EMEA and North America, Herbert Smith Freehills is at the heart of the new global business landscape providing premium quality, full-service legal advice. We provide many of the world's most important organisations with access to market-leading dispute resolution, projects and transactional legal advice, combined with expertise in a number of global industry sectors, including energy, natural resources, infrastructure, technology and financial services. [www.herbertsmithfreehills.com](http://www.herbertsmithfreehills.com)  
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