



PETER LEON

PARTNER

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Peter is the global Chair of our Africa Group

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BACKGROUND

Peter holds a LLM (first class honours) and Diploma in Comparative Legal Studies from the University of Cambridge. Additionally, he has an LLB (cum laude) and a BA (awarded with distinction in Roman Law) from the University of Cape Town. He was elected as senior scholar of Christ's College, Cambridge and is a council member of the Legal Practice Division of the International Bar Association responsible for the Africa Regional Forum and the section for energy, natural resources and infrastructure law.

KEY SERVICES

Projects
Energy, Natural Resources and
Infrastructure Finance

KEY SECTORS

Mining
Oil and Gas

EXPERIENCE

Peter, based in Johannesburg, is a partner and our global Africa Chair.

During the last decade *International Who's Who of Mining Lawyers*, *BestLawyer*, *Legal500 EMEA*, *Chambers and Partners* and other peer reviewed global legal directories have consistently identified him as one of the world's pre-eminent mining lawyers and in 2021 named him "as one of the top mining lawyers in the world" (*Who's Who Legal: Mining 2021*).

Peter excels in helping resolve contentious issues arising from mining projects and related developments in Africa. His areas of expertise include crisis management, resource nationalism, mineral and petroleum regulation in developing countries (including international best practice) black economic empowerment and indigenisation law, international investment law and investment protection.

Owing to Peter's expertise he has significant experience in resource regulatory issues across Anglophone Africa. As a consequence, he regularly advises clients on an array of contentious matters involving States in sub-Saharan Africa, including disputes arising from the negotiation and implementation of major mine development agreements. He is also well versed in the sub-Saharan African geopolitical climate and accordingly provides strategic advice not only on issues related to the mineral regulatory framework but also on how to navigate the framework within the prevailing economic and political conditions in key African mining jurisdictions. He is particularly skilled in crisis management and has provided expert advice on an urgent basis to clients to assist them in managing and mitigating significant country risks.

Peter's experience also includes the Middle East where he has recently represented the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as international legal counsel on the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources' mineral law reform project. In this regard, Peter led a team of Herbert Smith Freehills lawyers who advised the Ministry on the full suite of implementing regulations and guidelines supporting the recently promulgated Mining Investment Law, 2020, which came into force in January 2021. The project entailed providing advice on international best practice in the mining sector, drafting detailed regulations to supplement the Mining Investment Law, 2020, and preparing the different sets of guidelines which will complement the regulations.

Peter is an accomplished speaker and a regular presenter and panellist at conferences, courses and Parliamentary hearings in South Africa and internationally. He has also written extensively on the topics of mining, resource nationalism, the regulation of foreign direct investment, and black economic empowerment and indigenisation law. He was a council member of the Legal Practice Division of the International Bar Association responsible for the Africa Regional Forum, the chair of the International Bar Association's mining law committee advisory board and is an honorary lecturer at the University of Dundee in Scotland's Centre for Energy, Petroleum and Mineral Law and Policy.

Peter's recent experience includes advising:

- the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as international legal counsel on the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources' mineral law reform project

- a globally diversified natural resources company on disputes with the Government of Zambia including developing and facilitating an international advocacy strategy
- a confidential pharmaceutical company on negotiations with the African Union member states regarding its COVID-19 vaccine
- advising Harmony Gold Mining Company on the ZAR 4.4 billion transaction in which it purchased AngloGold Ashanti Limited's South African assets
- a multinational mining company of the indigenous customs and laws of the Bakgatla Community in the North West Province of South Africa and the consequences of the Baloyi Commission of inquiry report