

## Legal Briefs:

International law firms in Hong Kong on global trade, litigations, mergers & acquisitions, investment opportunities and multi-national business transactions

By Jennifer Khoo

### Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld

Akin Gump partners specializing in global trade, Stephen Kho and Tatman Savio, have spoken on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement in an article by *The Asian Lawyer*, "TPP's Uncertain Prospects Weigh on Asia-based Lawyers," which noted that if the United States were to not ratify the TPP, it would render the trade deal a failure.

*"Akin Gump partners speak on TPP prospects in trade journal The Asian Lawyer."*

Savio said that a failed TPP would be a lost opportunity for Vietnam and Malaysia, given that neither country has a bilateral trade agreement with the United States, but also noted that the impact on countries with

which there are existing trade deals, such as Australia and Singapore, would be less.

"China's regional strength may be emboldened, if the TPP is not ratified," Savio points out. "At a minimum, China may capture opportunities and relationships that the US might have otherwise leveraged to the extent that TPP had entered into force."

However, Kho believes, "The Asia region will continue to be a dynamic area for future global trade, and the setback of TPP non-implementation will not change this."

### AlixPartners Hong Kong

According to a new study by AlixPartners, restaurant chains and their suppliers across the world are facing complex, often-conflicting demands from today's ever-more health- and technology-conscious consumers who are also, in many cases, more value-conscious than in recent times.

At the same time, opportunities await those in the industry who can uncover international growth opportunities, focus on the right technology and maximize supply chains to help them profit from such trends today, such as "on-the-go" dining and a growing demand for sustainable ingredients and supply practices.

The report includes a survey of 4,600 diners from nine industrialized countries – Brazil, China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, South Korea, the United Kingdom and the United States (where 515 diners were surveyed). Also, more than 60 C-level executives from more than 40 different restaurant concepts based in the US (with total revenues over US\$90 billion in 2015) provided their insights on international restaurant development as well as global consumer issues.

*"Restaurant chains face complex demands from today's diners, AlixPartners finds."*

## Allen & Overy

Allen & Overy Hong Kong partner and Global Head of Arbitration, Matt Gearing QC has been elected as the new chairperson of the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre (HKIAC). He will take on the role in 2017, succeeding Teresa Cheng SC who has served as HKIAC Chair since 2014.

*“Allen & Overy Hong Kong partner elected as HKIAC Chairperson.”*

Gearing has been actively involved with the HKIAC for a number of years and is currently an HKIAC Council member and Chair of the HKIAC's Executive and Proceedings Committees. He also led the revision of the HKIAC

Rules as head of the drafting committee.

Commenting on his election, he said, “It is a privilege and an honor to be elected Chair of the HKIAC. Teresa has done a fantastic job taking the HKIAC to a new level of success over the past three years, and I will continue to build on her great work in ensuring the HKIAC and Hong Kong continue to be a leading center of international arbitration.”

## Anderson & Anderson LLP

On 26th and 27th September, Anderson and Anderson LLP presented at a two-day intellectual property rights seminar entitled, “*Technical Assistance Program on Commercial Law: A Look at Intellectual Property Rights in Mongolia*,” hosted by the American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) in Mongolia, in cooperation with the US Department of Commerce and the US Embassy in Mongolia.

The two-day seminar also featured insightful presentations by international experts from the US Department of Commerce and the US Department of Justice, and case study presentations by AmCham members.

*“Anderson & Anderson LLP presents at IP rights seminar in Mongolia.”*

Anderson and Anderson LLP is an international law firm with over 100 years of experience since its opening in 1885. Currently, it represents clients in the US, Greater China including Hong Kong and

Macao, Mongolia, India and Israel. With over twenty years of experience operating in Mongolia, the firm has worked with and represented some of the country's biggest players in various sectors of business, both domestic and international.

## Ashurst

Ashurst advised the joint bookrunners and lead managers, Deutsche Bank, Investec, JP Morgan, Morgan Stanley and UBS, in India's first high-yield green bond issuance. The seven-year bond, in an aggregate principal amount of US\$500 million, was issued by Greenko Investment Company in August earlier this year to address the financing needs of Greenko Energy Holdings' Indian operating subsidiaries.

Greenko Group is one of the largest clean energy independent power producers in India, with more than one GW of projects across hydro, wind and thermal energy. Huge demand for the bond came in from 275 accounts from Asia (59%), US (20%), Europe/Asia (21%); clients included fund managers (89%), public sector banks (8%), insurers and private equity players (2%), and the rest from others.

With experience spanning almost 200 years, global law firm Ashurst currently have 25 offices in 15 countries, with over 400 partners and a further 1,450 lawyers working across 10 different time zones.

*“Ashurst advises underwriters in India's first green bond offering.”*

## Baker & McKenzie

At the conclusion of its annual partner meeting held in Barcelona last month, international law firm Baker & McKenzie announced a number of changes to its leadership teams with immediate effect, including the appointment of Paul Rawlinson as the new and 15th chairman of the firm.

Gary Seib and Michael Wagner have taken over the chairing role of the firm's Asia Pacific and North American regional councils, replacing Bruce Hambrett and Jim Holloway. The firm has also announced two new Executive Committee members: Ai Ai Wong from Singapore and Duane Webber based in Washington DC.

In addition, it was decided that a new industry group – Global Consumer Goods – will be created, and led by Alyssa Gallot-Auberger, while Fiona Carlin will be taking over as Global Chair of the firm's Antitrust & Competition Group from Samantha Mobley; and Simone Musa will be taking over from Duane Webber to lead the firm's Tax Group.

*“Baker & McKenzie announces changes in leadership following annual meeting.”*