

The world's largest law firm votes to combine with five leading law firms in Africa

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Dentons, the world's largest law firm, has voted to combine with five leading law firms in Angola, Morocco, Mozambique, Uganda and Zambia.

On a continent scarred by the legacy of colonial domination and in a market where the operations of every leading law firm are hierarchical, Dentons' unique polycentric and anti-colonial approach has been a stark differentiator, disrupting the traditional model for providing legal services in Africa.

These combinations build on Dentons' strategy to become the first Pan-African law firm owned and controlled by Africans. These firms will help position Dentons as the largest global law firm in those countries from launch, connecting clients to top-tier legal talent in Africa and more than 10,000 lawyers around the globe.

The firms are LEAD Advogados in Angola, Sayarh & Menjra in Morocco, Fernanda Lopes & Associados Advogados in Mozambique, Kyagaba and Otatiina Advocates in Uganda, and Eric Silwamba, Jalasi and Linyama Legal Practitioners in Zambia.

These combinations follow the firm's launch with Kenya's Hamilton, Harrison & Mathews and Dentons Mauritius, and its approved combination in Zimbabwe with MawereSibanda. Further, they build on the strength of the brand Dentons has already established in Egypt and South Africa, as well as enhance the firm's presence and capabilities in Morocco.

Dentons first entered the region with a legacy law firm in Egypt in 1964. More recently, Dentons has become the fastest growing law firm in Africa. In 2015, Dentons joined with KapdiTwala to become the first Level 1 Black Economic Empowerment qualified global law firm in South Africa, disrupting the traditional model for providing legal services in South Africa.

In 2017, Dentons created a new Africa Region, making Africa a distinct governance and organizational unit within the law firm. By establishing an Africa Region, Dentons guarantees that law firms in new markets involved in future combinations within the region will join the firm as members of Dentons, retaining local control of their governance and financial decisions while also securing a voice in the global governance of the firm.

An early success in the new strategy came soon after the following year, when partners approved a combination with Hamilton, Harrison & Mathews in Kenya and Mardemootoo Solicitors and Balgobin Chambers in Mauritius, demonstrating the attractiveness of Dentons' strategy and polycentric approach in the region. Then in 2019, Dentons' partners approved a combination with a high-quality firm in Zimbabwe, MawereSibanda.

The practice and sector synergies of these firms in relation to Dentons will give the combined firms a competitive advantage in international panel competition and build on Dentons' strength in the areas of Banking and Finance, Corporate and M&A, Energy, Intellectual Property and Trademarks, Labor and Employment, Litigation and Dispute Resolution, Natural Resources, Real Estate, and Tax, among others.

Like Dentons, these firms are dedicated to a polycentric approach that values inclusion and diversity and in and of the community roots, and they have strong traditions of giving back to the communities they serve through pro bono work, volunteerism and financial support.

The five combinations, following approval by partners and subject to meeting regulatory requirements, are expected to launch in the next several months.

In 2019, Dentons' partners have approved combinations with six firms in Africa, LEAD Advogados in Angola, Sayarh & Menjra in Morocco, Fernanda Lopes & Associados Advogados in Mozambique, Kyagaba and Otatiina Advocates in Uganda, Eric Silwamba, Jalasi and Linyama Legal Practitioners in Zambia and MawereSibanda in Zimbabwe. In Latin America and the Caribbean, they have approved combinations with Rattagan Macchiavello Arocena in Argentina and Jiménez de Aréchaga, Viana & Brause in Uruguay. They have also approved combinations with Kensington Swan in New Zealand and Lee International in South Korea. Also in 2019, Dentons launched Dentons Venezuela in Venezuela, Dentons Larraín Rencoret in Chile and Dentons Muñoz Zacapa in Honduras.

About Dentons

Dentons is the world's largest law firm, delivering quality and value to clients around the globe. Dentons is a leader on the Acritas Global Elite Brand Index, a BTI Client Service 30 Award winner and recognized by prominent business and legal publications for its innovations in client service, including founding Nextlaw Enterprise, Dentons' wholly owned subsidiary of innovation, advisory and technology operating units. Dentons' polycentric approach, commitment to inclusion and diversity and world-class talent challenge the status quo to advance client interests in the communities in which we live and work. www.dentons.com.

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