

PRESS RELEASE

CMS Legal Services EEIG

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Subject CMS opens office in Hong Kong

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CMS opens office in Hong Kong

Frankfurt – International law firm CMS has opened an office in Hong Kong. Following years of previous activity by the CMS International Arbitration Group in Hong Kong and intense preparations, approval was recently received from the Law Society of Hong Kong. This enables the firm to be represented in this location from September 2016. This is the second international office to be opened in 2016, after Tehran in February.

“We see huge opportunities for the future throughout the entire South-East Asia region. The obvious success of our offices in Shanghai and Beijing, along with the success of our legal services in the region over many years, gives us every reason to be optimistic. Opening an office in Hong Kong is thus a natural development,” said Hubertus Kolster, Managing Partner, CMS Germany. “Hong Kong itself and especially China and, of course, the entire Asia-Pacific region, have very dynamic economies and are a focal point for international investors.”

The firm has also been advising on the growing Chinese investments in other countries for a number of years now. Many of the strongest Chinese companies with promising international strategies for future growth are located in Hong Kong and the neighbouring province of Guangdong.

Cornelius Brandi, Executive Chairman of CMS, commented, “We look for markets that offer the greatest business potential for us. Geographic expansion is often a part of our clients’ growth strategy. So, we move primarily into regions where we expect that there will be future opportunities for them.”

Nicolas Wiegand, a partner in the CMS International Arbitration Group and head of the Hong Kong office, said, “Setting up our own office in Hong Kong will allow us to provide effective local support to clients from Europe, China, the Asia-Pacific region and the US. As such, we are responding to growing business volumes and meeting the need for client proximity and cross-border advice.”

The Hong Kong office will initially focus on dispute resolution and mergers and acquisitions. Hong Kong has long since been one of the key global arbitration locations and attracts clients from all over the world who use Hong Kong as a dispute resolution hub. As a neutral, independent and reliable location with a stable legal system, Hong Kong, in particular, has become indispensable for handling disputes connected with China. Consolidating the firm's expertise in Hong Kong is therefore a logical step for CMS as a leading law firm for international arbitration, with the move being driven and supported by the CMS International Arbitration Group.

The services offered by the Hong Kong office will be gradually extended, according to Wiegand. CMS intends to establish a Banking & Finance practice in the office in 2017, for example. However, clients already have access to the full range of services across CMS in more than 60 offices worldwide.

Nicolas Wiegand has been advising German, Chinese and international clients for many years in Hong Kong, as well as assisting companies from the region requiring support for their activities in Europe and beyond. He has particularly extensive experience with arbitration proceedings in or connected with Hong Kong, China, Singapore, South Korea, Australia, Thailand, Vietnam and Japan. Wiegand also frequently acts as an arbitrator in the region, in addition to representing clients. He is a member of numerous arbitration panels, including the panel of arbitrators at the Hong Kong International Arbitration Center (HKIAC), the Shenzhen Court of International Arbitration (SCIA) and the Dubai International Arbitration Centre (DIAC). He delivers trainings on arbitration law for the Hong Kong International Arbitration Center.

The new CMS office enjoys a prime location in the Central district of Hong Kong Island. CMS occupies the entire 27th floor of an office building on Queen's Road Central. Alongside Nicolas Wiegand, the local CMS team will include other German as well as Chinese and Russian lawyers. Additionally, a lawyer who previously worked not only for other major law firms, including in Hong Kong and Singapore, but also for the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, has been hired. She brings with her particularly extensive experience in investment-related disputes. The entire team is thoroughly acquainted with the conditions and structures in Hong Kong and Asia. As well as speaking Mandarin and English, the team also includes German, French, Russian and Norwegian speakers.

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Notes to editors:

Founded in 1999, CMS is a full-service top 10 international law firm, based on the number of lawyers (Am Law 2015 Global 100). With 61 offices in 35 countries across the world, employing over 3,200 lawyers, CMS has longstanding expertise both at advising in its local jurisdictions and across borders. CMS acts for a large number of Fortune 500 companies and the FT European 500 and for the majority of the DAX 30. Revenues totalled EUR 1,01bn in 2015.

CMS provides a wide range of expertise across 19 expert practice and sector areas, including Corporate/M&A, Energy, Funds, Lifesciences, TMC, Tax, Banking and Finance, Commercial, Competition & EU, Dispute Resolution, Employment & Pensions, Intellectual Property and Real Estate & Construction.

For more information, please visit www.cms.law

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