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CMS expands its partnership with A4ID

Leading European legal and tax services provider CMS has shown its commitment to supporting international pro bono activity by partnering globally with Advocates for International Development (A4ID), an award winning provider of free legal advice and assistance to the developing world. Joining A4ID will enable CMS will enable all its lawyers across its 53 offices to deliver much needed pro bono support across multiple practice areas globally.

A4ID facilitates increased access to justice by enabling lawyers from across the world to use their skills to support poverty eradication. Examples of requests for assistance include:

- Advising on the set up and transfer of funds to support humanitarian initiatives in Africa
- Training microfinance institutions on banking law in the Middle East
- Assisting on corporate restructuring of development organisations operating globally
- Employment and risk management guidance to agencies operating in post conflict zones

The new partnership expands participation by CMS to all 27 jurisdictions where it operates, as CMS Cameron McKenna (UK & Central & Eastern Europe) has been a strong supporter of A4ID since its inception. Already, CMS lawyers have provided advice to international child protection charity, EveryChild, as to how to protect and manage the use of its intellectual property throughout its network, and on the local registration requirements of its Ukraine and Russia members. Further, CMS lawyers assisted Our Sansar – an organisation which helps orphans and street children in Nepal – to develop its internal equal opportunities, diversity and harassment policies and to ensure its volunteer and intern agreements comply with applicable law. On a different note, lawyers with energy and environmental law expertise provided advice to Christian Aid on the standards under English and international law imposed on companies to reduce and to take responsibility for their carbon emissions, as the organisation considers new ways to encourage sustainable development.

CMS' support for A4ID has also gone beyond providing free legal assistance. In 2009, CMS Cameron McKenna sponsored a significant A4ID event in St Paul's Cathedral at which Archbishop Desmond Tutu spoke about the moral challenge for everyone, including lawyers, to address the UN Millennium Development Goals.

Elisabeth Baraka, Projects Officer at A4ID, comments:

"I am thrilled that now all of CMS' lawyers throughout the world are able to bring significant benefit to A4ID's partner organisations working to alleviate poverty and bring about social and economic development for the world's poorest people. CMS' office locations are widespread, particularly in Europe, enabling A4ID to service legal needs in more countries than ever before."

Yasmin Batliwala, CEO at A4ID, comments:

“I congratulate the leadership of CMS for deciding to enable all their lawyers to participate in free legal work for A4ID’s Development Partners. We look forward to seeing the fruit of their endeavours in the lives of people around the world.”

Dick Tyler, Executive Partner for CMS, comments:

“Our core skill as a commercial enterprise is delivering high-quality legal and tax advice. We believe strongly that we should also use those skills to make a difference by empowering and improving communities around the world. By partnering with A4ID, we are able to quickly and efficiently match our people with projects where our expertise will have the greatest impact.”

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS

Contact

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About Advocates for International Development (A4ID)

A leading international pro bono organisation, A4ID (www.a4id.org) harnesses the skills of the legal profession to work with development NGOs and developing country governments in the eradication of poverty. All projects focus on supporting the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals (<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>).

A4ID works with over 27,000 lawyers across 55 countries to harness pro bono support for over 200 different international development organisations. It facilitates well over 100 different projects each year and saves the development sector in excess of £2 million per annum in legal fees. By enabling an extensive range of pro bono projects covering most areas of practice and an education programme specially focused on training legal professionals on development related issues, A4ID supports lawyers to contribute effectively to international development.

A4ID’s programmes span Africa, Asia and Latin America. Its Legal Partners include all Magic Circle firms, the majority of the major international firms together with leading chambers and academic institutions. Through a combination of legal and development expertise, A4ID provides an innovative, sustainable and effective contribution to global development.

Legal Partners

A list of A4ID’s Legal Partners can be found at: <http://www.a4id.org/content/legal-partners>.

Development Partners

A list of A4ID’s Development Partners can be found at <http://www.a4id.org/content/development-partners>.

Further details about A4ID can be found at www.a4id.org.

About CMS

CMS aims to be recognised as the best European provider of legal and tax services. Clients say that what makes CMS special is a combination of three things:

- strong, trusted client relationships
- high quality advice
- industry specialisation

CMS combine deep local expertise and the most extensive presence in Europe with cross-border consistency and coordination. CMS has a common culture and a shared heritage which make it distinctively European - it's about geography and it's about bringing together the best of Europe in delivering a better, more valuable service to clients.

CMS member firms are: CMS Adonnino Ascoli & Cavasola Scamoni (Italy); CMS Albiñana & Suárez de Lezo, S.L.P. (Spain); CMS Bureau Francis Lefebvre (France); CMS Cameron McKenna LLP (UK); CMS DeBacker (Belgium); CMS Derks Star Busmann (The Netherlands); CMS von Erlach Henrici Ltd. (Switzerland); CMS Hasche Sigle (Germany) and CMS Reich-Rohrwig Hainz Rechtsanwälte GmbH (Austria).

CMS offices and associated offices: Amsterdam, Berlin, Brussels, London, Madrid, Paris, Rome, Vienna, Zurich, Aberdeen, Algiers, Antwerp, Arnhem, Beijing, Belgrade, Bratislava, Bristol, Bucharest, Budapest, Buenos Aires, Casablanca, Cologne, Dresden, Duesseldorf, Edinburgh, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Kyiv, Leipzig, Ljubljana, Lyon, Marbella, Milan, Montevideo, Moscow, Munich, Prague, São Paulo, Sarajevo, Seville, Shanghai, Sofia, Strasbourg, Stuttgart, Utrecht, Warsaw and Zagreb.