

PRESS RELEASE

1st February, 2010

New name, new team members and enhanced status put a spring into Stephenson Harwood's step as it leaps into the Year of the Tiger

The Hong Kong office of leading international law firm Stephenson Harwood is entering the Lunar New Year – its 31st year in Asia – under a new name, with a stronger professional team than ever, and with a reputation that has been further increased by receiving several major plaudits within the legal profession.

A brand new name

To reflect the firm's worldwide footprint (it has offices in Asia, Europe and the Middle East) and maintain a consistent identity, its Hong Kong office has been rebranded from Stephenson Harwood & Lo to Stephenson Harwood, with effect from 1st February, 2010. Its offices in Mainland China will follow suit after PRC regulatory approvals have been obtained; estimated to be in six months' time.

Announcing the name change of the firm's Greater China Practice, Andrew Sutch, the Senior Partner of Stephenson Harwood worldwide commented:

"The background to this decision is that SHL was originally established in 1979 as a joint venture between ourselves and the Hong Kong firm of Lo & Lo. The joint venture came to an end in 2008 and the three Greater China Offices became fully owned by Stephenson Harwood. Our relationship with Lo & Lo meanwhile remains warm and friendly.

In view of the above, we felt it sensible to change the name of the Greater China Offices formally to 'Stephenson Harwood'."

New appointments in Hong Kong and Mainland cities

Stephenson Harwood has been strengthening its professional teams in Hong Kong, Guangzhou and Shanghai by making a number of key appointments during recent months.

Paul Westover rejoined the Hong Kong office as a Partner in its Corporate Department on 1st February, 2010. Paul was previously a Partner at Tanner De Witt, and he has wide-ranging experience in corporate and commercial work, including M&A, regulatory advice, private equity, hedge fund formations, employment and China FDI.

Pertaining to his new position, Paul said: *"I am very pleased to be re-joining SH, and in particular to be part of its excellent and well established corporate group. It is the resources of the team, along with the strength of its other offices worldwide, that led me to re-join the firm and to be confident that the firm can provide a strong and cost effective platform to support clients."*

Senior solicitor, **Karen Cheng** has also joined Paul in moving to Stephenson Harwood's Hong Kong office from Tanner De Witt. Karen specialises in fund formation and advisory work, as well as M&A and China-related legal issues. She also has extensive experience in China FDI, corporate and regulatory matters.

Simon Wong joined the Hong Kong office's Finance Department as a Senior solicitor specialising in Aviation Finance towards the end of last year. Simon's role in Stephenson Harwood focuses on the fast-growing aviation industry in Mainland China, as well as Hong Kong and North Asia. A specialist in aviation law and asset finance, he has advised financiers, lessors, airlines, MRO service providers and business jet managers on operating leases, wet leases, finance leases, mortgage loans, and sale and purchase agreements, MRO service agreements, aviation joint ventures in Mainland China, licensing arrangements and the restructuring of tax leases.

Karen He joined the Hong Kong office's Corporate Department from Baker & McKenzie as a Registered Foreign Lawyer on 4th January, 2010. Karen specialises in M&A, private equity, venture capital, FDI, IPOs, corporate and regulatory matters, with a particular focus on Mainland China.

Zoe Zhou joined the Guangzhou office as an Associate on 9th October, 2009. Zoe focuses on advising Stephenson Harwood's clients about legal issues related to their FDI in Mainland China. She has six years' experience in advising foreign investors engaged in various industries about their investments in China, either in the form of greenfield investments or M&A, as well as advising foreign invested enterprises that are already established there about legal issues they encounter.

Steven Jin joined the Shanghai office as an Associate on 12th October, 2009. Steven specialises in China FDI, M&A, maritime and dispute resolution related to Mainland China. He has a significant amount of experience in advising domestic and multinational businesses in establishing, operating and making acquisitions in China. He also has a strong background in litigation and arbitration connected with maritime, trade, IPR infringement disputes, both in the Mainland China and in other parts of the world.

Firm honoured in 2009 British Legal Awards

Stephenson Harwood's leadership status in the legal world received further recognition when it was named as the "Law Firm of the Year" at the 2009 British Legal Awards presentation ceremony held in during December 2009.

The firm was chosen to receive this accolade by an 18-strong independent judging panel that included the general counsel of a number of major international companies. In selecting the winner, the judges took into account the candidates'

legal knowledge and innovation, strategic vision, new business, client care, employee development, corporate social responsibility and business performance.

They also drew upon the findings of a survey of general counsel, board directors and others in 680 companies (including 60% of the FTSE 100 companies) conducted by the research arm of *Legal Week* magazine, which hosted the Awards.

The survey reported that Stephenson Harwood's clients regard it as one of a small group of "stand-out advisers". The firm also received some of the highest scores for commercial advice and the quality of client relationships. This bears out Stephenson Harwood's assertion that its key strengths are its strong client relationships, highly commercial approach, and the good value for money that it offers.

"ALB Fast 30" listing recognises rapid growth

Stephenson Harwood has also been included on the *Asian Legal Business* "ALB Fast 30", a list of the region's 30 fastest-growing law firms. This acknowledges the growth in the number of its partners and other lawyers, increased revenue results and expanded service offerings.

It also recognises Stephenson Harwood's significant senior lateral hires, such as the recruitment of insurance and reinsurance specialists Steven Dewhurst from DLA Piper Hong Kong and Pierre-Paul Soulou, and Alex Gordon from Clifford Chance. Meanwhile, Paul Ng, formerly of Freshfields, has been appointed to lead its Global Aviation Practice. Hong Kong-based Jason Toms and Yeeling Wan were both promoted to Partners, and nine new lawyers of varying levels of seniority were also hired during recent months.

Excellence in Asia and global capabilities position firm for further growth

Commenting on the firm's expectations for its business in the region in 2010, Stephenson Harwood's Managing Partner in Greater China, Voon Keat Lai, noted that it has started the year in a much stronger position than ever. *"We have substantially augmented the breadth and depth of our services by recruiting a number of very high-calibre professionals during the past months. This has allowed us to serve a larger spectrum of clients. We have also gained even greater recognition of the quality of our services, both in the region and worldwide. The excellence of our people, together with our long experience in the region and our global capabilities, make Stephenson Harwood the ideal partner when dealing with the increasing complexity of legal issues in Asia."* he added.

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Note to editors:

ABOUT STEPHENSON HARWOOD

Stephenson Harwood is a full-service international law firm with offices and affiliates around the world.

The firm has 150 staff working in its offices in Hong Kong, Mainland China and Singapore. Backed by its global network, the multinational, multiethnic and multicultural backgrounds of its professional team, Stephenson Harwood is well positioned to serve clients throughout the region.

The quality of Stephenson Harwood's people is recognised not only by its clients, but by many of its peers in the legal profession. The firm's lawyers are regularly nominated for awards, and many of them are ranked as leading specialists in their fields of practice by key legal guides. Stephenson Harwood was named as the Law Firm of the Year in the 2009 British Legal Awards.

For further information please visit www.shlegal.com .