

Friday 24 March 2006

LAUNCH OF INTERNATIONAL LAWYERS FOR AFRICA

This week saw the launch of **International Lawyers for Africa (“ILFA”)**. ILFA is an initiative by major City and international law firms, leading international lawyers and academics to provide on the job training and specialist legal skills education for young lawyers from Africa. The candidates will be chosen on a competitive basis from throughout Africa.

ILFA director, Tim Taylor, Partner at SJ Berwin LLP said:

“Delivery of development goals in Africa depends on a dialogue that takes place in international institutions such as the UN, World Bank, IMF and WTO and its implementation in the African states. You can’t make good laws without good lawyers and you can’t make good laws effective laws without effective lawyers. ILFA will set out to find the best talent available and match that talent to the know-how to make it work for Africa.”

Quotes from some ILFA Advisory Committee Members (a full list of members available in Notes to Editors section)

The Rt. Hon. Clare Short MP, former Secretary of State for International Development:

“Spreading know-how and helping to strengthen the rule of law are two vital ingredients of international development. ILFA has been a catalyst to harness the legal and commercial skills of the City legal community and begin to share them with the brightest and best of the coming generation across Africa; young people who might otherwise never have had the opportunity to be exposed to how capital markets and international institutions work in the global economy and global governance.”

Ahmadou Ould-Abdallah, Kofi Anan’s Special Envoy to West Africa and Head of UNOWA (United Nations Office for West Africa):

“In international relations it is the job of government lawyers to make political promises work in practice. The more skilled and competent these people are, the better the world works from trade to aid to the environment and the elimination of corruption and conflict.”

H.E. Roberto Dañino, former Peruvian Prime Minister Ambassador, to the United States and General Counsel of the World Bank:

“My recent experience at the World Bank and ICSID confirm the urgent need for better training of lawyers in all developing countries, but the need in Africa is quite dramatic.”*

* International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes.

Sir Franklin Berman QC, International Lawyer and former Foreign Office Legal Adviser:

“Africa (my own home continent) has enormous untapped potential in the legal field. ILFA is committed to the cumulative growth of local professional skills in the vital areas of investment, trade and development. African Governments and African economies alike need these skills to play a full part in international negotiations and in implementing their results, and to benefit to the full from the opportunities they offer.”

- ENDS -

For further information, please contact the following ILFA Directors:

Tim Taylor, T: +44 (0)20 7111 2231 E: tim.taylor@sjberwin.com
Catherine Bailey, T: +44 (0)20 7111 2538 E: catherine.bailey@sjberwin.com
Rukia Baruti Dames, T: +44 (0)20 7111 2984 E: rukia.dames@sjberwin.com

Notes to Editors:

- International Lawyers for Africa is a UK company Limited Guarantee. A company formed for charitable objects - registered charity number pending.
- Members of the Advisory Committee:
 - Dapo Akande
 - Shaheed Fatima
 - Jeremy Sandelson
 - Sir Franklin Berman QC
 - David Gold
 - Professor Phillipe Sands QC
 - Professor Ben Chigara
 - Oliver Heald MP
 - Judge Stephen M Schwebel
 - Professor James Crawford, SC, FBA
 - Baroness Helena Kennedy QC
 - The Rt. Hon. Clare Short MP
 - Tim Daniel
 - Professor Maurice Mendelson QC
 - Donna St. Hill
 - His Excellency Roberto Dañino
 - Fidelis Oditah QC
 - William H Taft IV
 - Professor Nelson Enonchong
 - Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah
 - Dr Ralph Wilde
- Directors:
 - Catherine Bailey
 - Rukia Baruti Dames
 - Tim Taylor