

LALIVE

New Business and Human Rights Lawyers Association launched

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We are delighted to announce the launch of the new Business and Human Rights Lawyers Association (BHRLA) today, with LALIVE as one of the 22 founding law firm members.

The BHRLA is established to inspire and advance business and human rights leadership, learning, collaboration and practice among commercial law firms and business lawyers around the world. It will be dedicated to the principle that business has a responsibility to respect human rights as set out in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) and will promote and support action by lawyers around the world to advise commercial clients on human rights risks and opportunities associated with business activities.

Sandrine Giroud, partner at LALIVE and BHRLA board member said: “As a member of the United Nations Global Compact, LALIVE is committed to align its strategy and operations with the Ten Principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption; and to take strategic actions to advance broader societal goals, such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals. A key component in our ESG practice, Business and Human Rights is an established but constantly growing field to which LALIVE is actively contributing by supporting its clients to fully integrate respect for human rights in the conduct of their businesses and help find practical and responsible solutions and processes.”

The responsibility to respect human rights entails more than merely refraining from committing or being complicit in human rights abuse. It means that business enterprises should seek to prevent, mitigate and address human rights impacts in which they may be involved through their own operations and activities, and their business relationships. In practice, this includes implementing considered human rights due diligence processes as well as processes to enable remediation in appropriate cases. Many major global businesses – as well as an increasing number of smaller and medium-sized enterprises – embrace this responsibility.

Commenting on the launch, BHRLA co-chair Rae Lindsay, partner at Clifford Chance said: “The formation of this Association is both timely and overdue. There is a need to accelerate the dissemination of good practice in the field of business and human rights across the commercial legal profession globally. We encourage lawyers around the world to join and support the Association’s ambitions.” Co-chair Douglass Cassel, counsel at King & Spalding added: “The formation of the Association reflects a commitment by 22 of the world’s leading law firms to ensure topflight legal advice to companies on the crucial matters of business and human rights.”

The BHRLA will promote awareness in the business and legal communities of the responsibility to respect human rights, and of the responsibility of lawyers to incorporate business and human rights advice in their client services in a manner consistent with their professional responsibilities. This will be done through educational and engagement activities, including seminars, publications, conferences and sharing of best practices. It will also provide a forum for leadership, collaboration and peer learning among business and human rights lawyers and commercial firms.

The launch of the BHRLA builds on the Law Firm Business and Human Rights Peer Learning Process, in which a number of founding member firms participated. It has been supported by Catie Shavin, Anna Triponel and Malin Helgesen, who were invited to co-facilitate the design and launch of the BHRLA with founding member firms, fostering an inclusive and collaborative

