

## Withers extends its corporate and finance offering to Asia

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### Head of International Finance and Projects Denis Petkovic moves from London to Hong Kong to lead the practice

International law firm Withers announces that it is extending its corporate and finance offering to Asia in response to growing client demand. Denis Petkovic, Head of the International Finance and Projects Practice at Withers in London, will lead the firm's initiative to build an Asian regional corporate and finance team from Hong Kong that bridges Withers' unparalleled wealth planning and associated corporate and finance expertise across the firm's global offices.

Denis has 30 years of experience representing lenders, developers and investors in transactions in many sectors including energy, telecommunications, ports, oil and gas, real estate, transportation, steel and hotels across Asia, Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States, Africa and the Middle East. His clients have also included multilateral institutions such as the International Finance Corporation and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (for whom he has recently led Withers teams in a number of real estate financings including the Abdali Shopping Mall financing in Amman, Jordan and the Forum shopping mall financing in Lviv, Ukraine).

*'Withers has spent the first five years in the region focused uniquely on expanding our Wealth Planning and Family Practices,'* said Withers Managing Partner Margaret Robertson. *'We have seen a growing demand to extend our service to include sophisticated corporate and finance advice related to wealth planning and also stand alone transactions in the corporate and banking space.'*

Sharon Ser, regional senior partner Asia for Withers added:

*'We have achieved great success in the region as the leading law firm to successful people, their families, advisers and financiers. Many of our core clients and practices require sophisticated finance skills. We are delighted to have Denis Petkovic heading this practice from Hong Kong. Denis is recognized as a leading project finance lawyer and our international finance and projects practice has recently won accolades under his leadership. We look forward to 2014 with great anticipation as we continue to develop our offering to clients in Asia.'*

Withers has seen rapid growth in the last 18 months in the region, having hired seven partners across the Hong Kong and Singapore offices in the last year. As part of its growth strategy for the region, since 2012, Withers has:

- opened its Singapore office to meet rapidly growing high net worth client demand;
- relocated partner Erik Wallace from London to Hong Kong to support its US tax and wealth planning team;
- hired partner Simon Michaels to focus on tax and wealth planning;
- promoted Rita Ku to become Withers' first Chinese partner;
- promoted Sharon Ser to Senior Regional Partner;
- promoted Stacey Devoy to partner to support its Asian matrimonial practice;
- promoted Philip Munro and Fernando Gandioli to partners as part of the wealth planning practice expansion; and
- launched its first regulatory practice in the region, with the appointment of partner Gez Owen, Head of International Regulatory and Corporate Crime.