



## Harvard Law School collaborates with local business, academic institutions and a law firm to address policy issues in Africa

The Institute for Global Law and Policy (IGLP) at Harvard Law School has initiated a faculty development initiative with the University of Cape Town in South Africa. The initiative, which is co-sponsored by Bowman Gilfillan Africa Group and Old Mutual, aims to strengthen law teaching and scholarship and to nurture innovative approaches to global policy throughout Africa.

Professor David Kennedy, who heads the IGLP explains the approach, “The IGLP conducts annual workshops at universities with a view to empowering junior, doctoral and post-doctoral students in the fields of law and economic policy and facilitating creative dialogue among young experts from around the world. We are very excited to bring this initiative to Africa for the first time”.

As a result of the initiative, 56 young scholars from 30 African countries gathered in Cape Town for an intensive week of peer-to-peer discussion and mentoring alongside 47 senior faculty from 18 countries and 32 universities.

Chosen from a globally competitive pool of over 250 applicants, each scholar brought an ongoing project for discussion, placing the next generation of African scholars in collaborative policy and regulatory conversations with their global peers as they addressed pressing issues in their own countries.

Deon de Klerk, partner and head of Bowman Gilfillan Africa Group’s Corporate Practice said, “We are proud to be part of Harvard’s IGLP initiative. Its aims to create a hub for African scholarship at UCT and to support the emergence of innovative ideas about the role of law in African economic and political life tie in well with our core competence in law and our own long-standing engagement in Africa.”

Participants in the workshop were encouraged to recognise the link between academic endeavour and policy. They were able to discuss regulatory and policy solutions and ideas in small teams and research groups, setting in motion the processes needed for positive change.

Joel Baepi, chief legal adviser at Old Mutual said, “We must ensure we work with communities and other partners to build a better world by contributing to education, skills development and local economic development. Old Mutual supports this initiative for two reasons. First, we recognise that the problems that the world and specifically our continent face will require an exceptional brain trust to analyse and solve. We support the development of comprehensive and enabling governance frameworks that will create growth possibilities for the continent and ensure fairness and justice for its citizens. Second, as we grow into different markets on the continent we wish to promote cooperation and to establish relationships.”

Faculty and participants alike stressed the intensity and value of the policy discussions. The young African participants were equally enthusiastic about their experience.

De Klerk concluded, “We believe that this initiative is the start of great things. We encourage participants to continue their collaboration and strengthen their network relationships with one another and the wider IGLP global network.”

## About Bowman Gilfillan Africa Group

Bowman Gilfillan Africa Group is a leading Pan-African law firm. Its track record of providing domestic and cross-border legal services in the fields of corporate law, banking and finance law and dispute resolution, spans over a century.

With 400 specialised lawyers, Bowman Gilfillan Africa Group is differentiated by its geographical reach, independence and the quality of legal services it provides.

The firm delivers integrated legal services to clients throughout Africa from eight offices (Antananarivo, Cape Town, Dar es Salaam, Durban, Gaborone, Johannesburg, Kampala and Nairobi) in six countries (Botswana, Kenya, Madagascar, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda) and provides coverage of francophone OHADA jurisdictions across the continent from its office in Madagascar.

Bowman Gilfillan Africa Group works closely with leading Nigerian firm, Udo Udoma & Belo-Osagie, which has offices in Lagos, Abuja and Port Harcourt, and has strong relationships with other leading law firms across the rest of Africa. Its Kenyan, South African and Ugandan offices

are representatives of Lex Mundi, a global association with more than 160 independent law firms in all the major centres across the globe.

Clients include corporates, multinationals and state-owned enterprises across a range of industry sectors as well as financial institutions and governments.

Bowman Gilfillan Africa Group's expertise is frequently recognised by independent research organisations. Most recently, the group was named Africa Legal Adviser by *DealMakers* and won the Competition and Regulatory Team of the Year and IP Team of the Year Awards at the prestigious African Legal Awards hosted by *Legal Week* and the Corporate Lawyers Association.

For further information please contact:

**Melody Makeka**

Marketing Officer

t +27 21 480 7800 | d +27 21 480 7898

e [melody@bowman.co.za](mailto:melody@bowman.co.za)