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Our Firm

We help our clients overcome legal complexity and unlock opportunity in Africa.

Our track record of providing specialist legal services in the fields of corporate law, banking and finance law and dispute resolution, spans over a century.

With nine offices in seven African countries and over 400 specialist lawyers, we draw on our unique knowledge of the business and socio-political environment to advise clients on a wide range of legal issues.

Everywhere we work, we offer clients a service that uniquely blends expertise in the law, knowledge of the local market and an understanding of their businesses. Our aim is to assist them to achieve their objectives as smoothly and efficiently as possible while minimising the legal and regulatory risks.

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

Our expertise is frequently recognised by independent research organisations. We received awards in three out of four categories at the Dealmakers East Africa Awards for 2019: top legal adviser in the M&A Category for both deal flow and deal value, and advised on the Deal of the Year. In the Dealmakers South Africa Awards for 2019, we were placed third for deal value in the M&A Category and advised on both the Deal of the Year and the BEE Deal of the Year.

We help our clients overcome legal complexity and unlock opportunity in Africa.
Our Footprint in Africa

We provide integrated legal services throughout Africa from nine offices (Cape Town, Dar es Salaam, Durban, Johannesburg, Kampala, Lilongwe, Lusaka, Moka and Nairobi) in seven countries (Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia).

We work closely with our alliance firm, Aman Assefa & Associates Law Office, in Ethiopia, and our best friends in Nigeria and Mozambique (Udo Udoma & Belo-Osagie and Taciana Peão Lopes & Advogados Associados, respectively). We also have strong relationships with other leading law firms across the rest of Africa.

We are representatives of Lex Mundi, a global association with more than 160 independent law firms in all the major centres across the globe. This association gives us access to the best firms in each jurisdiction represented.
Our Mining Sector

As the long-term demand for Africa’s resources grows, we anticipate a growing demand for related legal services.

We have established ourselves as a leading legal adviser within the mining industry in Africa and offer a full complement of legal services in this sector.

We have a strong record of acting on the most significant mining-related mergers and acquisitions across the African continent. We support our clients through every aspect of mining and resource related transactions from the initial due diligence through regulatory compliance to negotiating and closing the deals. We have also advised on some of the largest and most innovative debt and equity capital market transactions on the continent.

We are able to co-ordinate our service through a single point of contact offering a seamless service and making the execution of cross-border transactions less cumbersome, time-consuming and costly.

Whether clients are negotiating offtakes, supply side contracts or require day-to-day commercial agreement support, we have the necessary depth of expertise and skills to assist.

We regularly advise clients on all matters relating to local mining legislation, including but not limited to compliance, mining title and other legal opinions, applications and acquisitions of rights, review applications, appeals and due diligences.

We have assisted numerous clients on the interaction of environmental and mining legislation, including licensing, appeals and court reviews of licensing decisions.

We have experience in successfully objecting to the grant of prospecting or mining right applications and pursuing appeals against decisions regarding the grant or refusal of mining and prospecting applications.

Our experience extends to mine incident and accident enquiries, dealing with notifications and assisting with legal compliance associated with health and safety.

Our clients include global mining and resources companies, investors, banks and financial institutions, state-owned enterprises and various government departments within the mining and resources sector.
Our Specialist Services

We regularly advise clients on all matters relating to local mining and resources and related legislation across the African continent, including but not limited to:

- senior and strategic local government and local regulator engagements in Africa;
- mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures and joint operating agreements;
- capital markets transactions;
- advising borrowers in the mining and resources industry and financiers on mining finance transactions;
- drafting of commercial mining and resources contracts, such as contract mining, offtake and supply agreements;
- environmental, occupational health-and-safety and mining regulation issues in Africa;
- indigenisation and black economic empowerment in the mining and resources industry in Africa;
- various regulatory applications in Africa, including applications for the grant of mineral rights, applications for the Minister’s consent to transfer mineral rights and applications to amend mineral rights;
- appeal or review proceedings;
- collective bargaining and union reorganisation and retrenchment and general labour law procedures, processes and appearances; and
- drafting of mining title and transferability opinions and conducting due diligence investigations on mining titles.

“Bowmans has continued its emergence and now has a hugely impressive client base.”
– Legal 500, 2018
Our Signature Matters

Some of our notable experience in the mining and resources sector includes advising:

• Africa Barrick Gold (now Acacia plc) with respect to numerous regulatory, compliance, environmental and employment law matters affecting Acacia’s group of mines in Tanzania (including Bulyankulu Mine, Buzwagi Mine and North Mara Gold Mining Ltd);
• African Rainbow Minerals Ltd (ARM) on the proposed restructuring of the ARM Broad-Based Economic Empowerment Trust. This involved a specific repurchase by a wholly owned subsidiary of ARM of 12,717,328 million shares in ARM from the ARM Broad-Based Economic Empowerment Trust and the refinancing of the ARM Broad-Based Economic Empowerment Trust. This transaction was valued at ZAR 1.9 billion;
• African Rainbow Minerals on its joint venture with Vale for mining assets in Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia;
• AngloGold Ashanti Ltd in respect of its proposed restructuring (demerger) of the current portfolio of AngloGold Ashanti into separate listed vehicles for each of its South African and international mining operations. The proposed demerger was coupled with a proposed rights offer, both of which were withdrawn following lack of shareholder appetite (total deal value of USD 71 billion);
• Assmang Ltd, Sumitomo Corporation and China Steel Corporation in a joint venture, in respect of the construction, commissioning and operation of high carbon ferromanganese and/or silico-manganese smelting plant in Sarawak, Malaysia with a value of ZAR 3.3 billion;
• Bank of China Ltd, FirstRand Bank Ltd, Nedbank Ltd, ABSA Bank Ltd, Investec Bank Ltd, JP Morgan Chase Bank and Standard Bank of South Africa in the negotiation and conclusion of a ZAR 4.5 billion secured term and revolving facility comprising a ZAR 2.5 billion revolving credit facility and a ZAR 2 billion term loan facility provided to Sibanye Gold Ltd, a company listed on the JSE Ltd;
• Barrick Gold Corporation (Canada) in the disposal of three of its mines in Western Australia to Gold Fields Ltd, where the consideration received was part cash and part shares in Gold Fields Ltd;
• BMO Nesbitt Burns Inc, CIBC World Markets Inc, Macquarie Capital Markets Canada Ltd, RBC Dominion Securities Inc, Merrill Lynch Canada Inc, GMP Securities LP, Raymond James Ltd in respect of a public offering of 95,834,100 units for an aggregate amount CAD 143,751,150 by Canadian mining company, Ivanhoe Mines Ltd;
• A major Canadian fund on its investment into mining assets in Burkina Faso and Mali. We conducted a full due diligence on both the Burkinabé and Malian assets and provided detailed opinions;
• Credit Suisse AG and Standard Chartered Bank (jointly), as South African and English lead counsel, in the debt and equity restructure of a South African mining company, Southgold, and its Canadian parent company;
• Dodsal Resources FZCO with respect to numerous regulatory, compliance, environmental and employment law matters affecting their two mining companies in Tanzania – Dodsal Resources Mining Itilima and Dodsal Resources Mining Itingi.
• ENRC NV in the sale of 51,732,782 ordinary shares held in Northam Platinum Ltd (constituting approximately 13.01% of Northam’s issued share capital), followed by a bookbuild in respect of such shares which resulted in the placement of all of the shares held by ENRC NV (deal value approximately ZAR 2.5 billion);
• South African counsel to the joint bookrunners in relation to Gold Fields Ltd’s recent accelerated bookbuild share placement valued at ZAR 2.3 billion;
• The Government of Guinea (together with international counsel) on the USD 18 billion Simandou Iron Ore Project. We reviewed all aspects of the project, from corporate to environmental to employment law;
• Hulamin in respect of the establishment of the black economic empowerment entity, Isizinda Aluminium (Pty) Ltd, and the subsequent acquisition of BHP Billiton’s Bayside casthouse in the Richard’s Bay industrial development zone;
• Competition counsel to Komatsu Ltd in its acquisition of indirect sole control of Joy Global, Inc. We attended to the merger filing in relation to this transaction. The deal is Komatsu’s largest deal ever and once it is completed, Komatsu and its closest competitor will account for at least a quarter of the world’s sales of mining equipment. The global transaction is valued at USD 2.9 billion;
• Minmetals on the Zambian and South African aspects of its approximately USD 1.3 billion offer for Anvil Mining;
• Northam Platinum in relation to the establishment of a broad based consortium of Historically Disadvantaged South Africans (HDSA), which will hold 31.4% of Northam’s issued shares, bringing Northam’s total effective HDSA ownership level to approximately 35.4% (deal value ZAR 6.6 billion);
• Rio Tinto on the South African aspects of its acquisition of Africa focused Riversdale Mining, listed on the Australian Stock Exchange, and (i) the subsequent sale of its coal assets in Mozambique to International Coal Ventures Pvt Ltd and (ii) the disposal of 100% of its shares in Riversdale Holdings (Pty) Ltd to Galaxy BV (a subsidiary of Menar Holding);
• Royal Bafokeng Platinum Ltd in relation to a combined offering of its shares (involving a primary issue by the company, and a secondary issue by its shareholders);
• Shanduka Group (Pty) Ltd and the majority shareholders in relation to the restructuring of Shanduka Group (Pty) Ltd and merger with Pembani Group (Pty) Ltd, to create a new ZAR 13.5 billion black-controlled natural resources and industrial holding group;
• The Standard Bank of South Africa Ltd in the disposal of its entire stake in Shanduka Gold (Pty) Ltd to Pan African Resources Ltd in a transaction valued at ZAR 176 million;
• Trans Hex Group Ltd, Johannesburg Stock Exchange listed diamond mining company, in relation to a mandatory offer by Cream Magenta 140 (Pty) Ltd, Metcap 14 (Pty) Ltd, and RAC Investment Holdings (Pty) Ltd;
• The Tanzanian National Development Corporation with respect to its Mchuchuma Coal Project as well as its joint venture with Sichuan Hongda Group Ltd on the Liganga Iron Ore Project;
• Wogen Pacific Ltd in respect of a pre-finance agreement in the amount of USD 2 million and offtake agreement which is estimated to have a net present value of USD 68.9 million.
Accolades

AFRICAN LEGAL AWARDS 2019
We won two practice awards - for Transportation and Infrastructure Team of the Year and TMT Team of the Year.

CHAMBERS AFRICA AWARDS 2018
We were named South African Law Firm of the Year.

DEALMAKERS EAST AFRICA AWARDS 2019
We received awards in three out of four categories: top legal adviser in the M&A Category for both deal flow and value, and advised on the Deal of the Year (the NIC/ CBA merger).

DEALMAKERS SOUTH AFRICA AWARDS 2019
We were placed third for deal value in the M&A Category and advised on the Deal of the Year (PepsiCo’s acquisition of Pioneer Foods) and the BEE Deal of the Year (Isanti Glass acquisition of Nampak Glass).

MERGERMARKET LEAGUE TABLES 2018
We were ranked first by deal value and second by deal count in the Africa league tables for legal advisors, and third by deal count in the Middle East & Africa league table for legal advisors.
CHAMBERS & PARTNERS 2020 RANKED US IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

BAND 1

KENYA
Banking & Finance
Corporate/ M&A
Employment
FinTech
Intellectual Property
Real Estate

SOUTH AFRICA
Capital Markets: Debt
Capital Markets: Equity
Competition/ Antitrust
Corporate Investigations
Corporate/ M&A
Employment
Environment
IT & Telecommunications
Projects & Energy
Public Procurement
Shipping
Tax
TMT

TANZANIA
General Business Law

UGANDA
General Business Law

BAND 2

SOUTH AFRICA
Banking & Finance
Dispute Resolution
FinTech
Media & Broadcasting
Restructuring/ Insolvency

KENYA
Projects & Energy

IFLR1000 2020 RANKED US IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

TIER 1

KENYA
Financial & Corporate
Mining

SOUTH AFRICA
Capital Markets: Debt
Capital Markets: Equity
Energy & Power
M&A

UGANDA
Financial & Corporate
Project Development

TIER 2

KENYA
Energy & Power
Infrastructure

SOUTH AFRICA
Banking
Infrastructure
Mining
Oil & Gas
Project Finance

TANZANIA
Financial & Corporate

THE LEGAL 500 EMEA 2020 RANKED US IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

TIER 1

KENYA
Banking, Finance & Capital Markets
Commercial, Corporate & M&A
Employment
Real Estate & Construction

SOUTH AFRICA
Commercial, Corporate & M&A
Competition
Employment
Projects & Infrastructure
Shipping & Transport

TANZANIA
Leading Firm

UGANDA
Leading Firm

TIER 2

KENYA
Dispute Resolution
Privatisation & Projects

SOUTH AFRICA
Banking & Finance
Dispute Resolution
Investment Funds
Tax

TIER 3

TANZANIA
Project Development

77 Recognised Lawyers

39 Recognised Lawyers

74 Recognised Lawyers
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