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Our Firm

Bowmans is a leading African law firm. Our track record of providing specialist legal services, both domestic and cross-border, in the fields of corporate law, banking and finance law and dispute resolution, spans over a century.

With six offices in four African countries and over 400 specialised lawyers, we are differentiated by our independence and the quality of legal services we provide.

We draw on our unique knowledge of the African business environment and in-depth understanding of the socio-political climate to advise clients on a wide range of legal issues. Our aim is to assist our clients in achieving 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 were ranked first by deal value and second by deal count in Mergermarket’s 2018 Africa league tables for legal advisors. We received awards in five out of six categories at the Dealmakers East Africa Awards for 2018: top legal adviser in M&A for both deal flow and value, top legal adviser in General Corporate Finance for both transaction flow and value, and advised on the Deal of the Year. In the Dealmakers South Africa Awards for 2018, we were placed first for deal flow in the General Corporate Finance category.

We were named South African Law Firm of the Year for 2018 in the Chambers Africa Awards for Excellence and African Law Firm of the Year (Large Practice) at the African Legal Awards hosted by Legal Week and the Corporate Counsel Association of South Africa. We were also one of only two firms that took home three practice awards – for Property and Construction Team of the Year, Energy and Natural Resources Team of the Year and TMT Team of the Year.
Our Footprint in Africa

We provide integrated legal services throughout Africa from six offices (Cape Town, Dar es Salaam, Durban, Johannesburg, Kampala and Nairobi) in four countries (Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda).

We work closely with leading Nigerian firm, Udo Udoma & Belo-Osagie, and Mozambique-based boutique firm, Taciana Peão Lopes & Advogados Associados. 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 Employment and Benefits Practice

The drive by governments in Sub-Saharan Africa to stimulate employment, protect workers’ rights and address historical imbalances has produced a variety of distinct regulatory systems for employment in the region. This is made more complex by a strong culture of collective bargaining, and an overlap between labour and social issues, between strikes and social protest across the region.

We have been at the forefront of employment law in the region for many years. We offer a breadth and depth of knowledge and experience in the fields of industrial relations, employment, employee benefits and pensions law in Africa that is hard to match. Legal 500 (2015) believes that we have “unrivalled public sector experience”; advise “a vast array of multinationals and blue-chip South African corporates”; and have built “a strong record in strikes and retrenchment exercises”.

We keep our clients at the forefront of developments in employment laws, regularly contribute to employment law publications and provide training and present lectures in a variety of forums.

We deliver a wide range of employment law services across both the public and the private sectors in the African countries in which we operate.
Our Specialist Services

**EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT**
- Establishing a local corporate presence (regulatory obligations, registrations)
- Contractual arrangements (contracts of employment, atypical employment)
- Executives (bespoke contractual arrangements, directorships, compensation, tax)
- Employment equity and business diversity
- Policy development
- Benefit schemes (pension, medical insurance, share schemes)
- Employee mobility (immigration, secondment, cross-border and multi-jurisdictional employment)

**INVESTIGATIONS AND EMPLOYEE RISK MANAGEMENT**
- Offences against the employer (fraud, corruption, theft syndicates)
- Vicarious liability
- Governance and regulatory issues (health and safety, data protection, privacy, information technology)
- Social media
- Employee assistance (illness, injury, disability)
- Confidentiality, restraints of trade, unlawful competition and team poaching
- Discrimination (prohibited grounds, equal pay, recruitment and selection, medical testing, harassment, employment equity and affirmative action)

**BUSINESS TRANSFERS, OUTSOURCING AND RESTRUCTURING**
- Mergers and acquisitions (due diligence, transaction support, change of control provisions, competition law issues)
- Privatisation
- Outsourcing exercises
- Corporate restructuring
- Strategic retrenchment management
- Business rescue and insolvency

**DISPUTE RESOLUTION**
- Boardroom conflict
- Dismissals (executive, mass redundancies)
- Employment discrimination
- Unfair labour practices (promotion, demotion, probation, benefits, whistleblowing)
- Mediation, facilitation and arbitration
- Urgent court proceedings (strike interdicts, confidentiality and restraints of trade)
- Appeals and judicial review

“Bowmans has a hugely impressive senior bench and a team that delivers a ‘high work ethic’ and ‘quality service’.”
– Legal 500, 2018
Key Contacts

CHRIS TODD
Head of Dispute Resolution
Cape Town, South Africa
T: +27 21 480 7816
E: chris.todd@bowmanslaw.com

HENRY NGCOBO
Partner
Johannesburg, South Africa
T: +27 11 669 9530
E: henry.ngcobo@bowmanslaw.com

AUDAX KAMEJA
Partner
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
T: +255 76 898 8640
E: audax.kameja@bowmanslaw.com

JERRY KAAPU
Partner
Johannesburg, South Africa
T: +27 11 669 9519
E: jerry.kAAPu@bowmanslaw.com

ERNEST WILTSHIRE
Partner
Kampala, Uganda
T: +256 41 425 4540
E: ernest.wiltshire@bowmanslaw.com

KAREN FULTON
Partner
Johannesburg, South Africa
T: +27 11 669 9513
E: karen.fulton@bowmanslaw.com

GRAHAM DAMANT
Partner
Johannesburg, South Africa
T: +27 11 669 9508
E: graham.damant@bowmanslaw.com

KESHNI PILLAY
Partner
Johannesburg, South Africa
T: +27 11 669 9226
E: keshni.pillay@bowmanslaw.com

HELEN WILSENACh
Partner
Johannesburg, South Africa
T: +27 11 669 9527
E: helen.wilsenach@bowmanslaw.com

KHOMOTSO MAKAPANE
Partner
Johannesburg, South Africa
T: +27 11 669 9433
E: khomotsO.makapane@bowmanslaw.com
LUSANDA RAPHULU  
Partner  
Johannesburg, South Africa  
T: +27 11 669 9532  
E: lusanda.raphulu@bowmanslaw.com

ROSLIND DAVEY  
Partner  
Johannesburg, South Africa  
T: +27 11 669 9510  
E: rosalind.davey@bowmanslaw.com

LUWAY MONGIE  
Partner  
Johannesburg, South Africa  
T: +27 11 669 9457  
E: luway.mongie@bowmanslaw.com

SEAN OMONDI  
Partner  
Nairobi, Kenya  
T: +254 20 289 9000  
E: sean.omondi@bowmanslaw.com

MENDEL SASS  
Partner  
Cape Town, South Africa  
T: +27 21 480 7841  
E: mendel.sass@bowmanslaw.com

SHELLEY WILSON  
Partner  
Cape Town, South Africa  
T: +27 21 480 7815  
E: shelley.wilson@bowmanslaw.com

RANDALL VAN VOORE  
Partner  
Cape Town, South Africa  
T: +27 21 480 7840  
E: randall.vanvoore@bowmanslaw.com

TALITA LAUBSCHER  
Partner  
Johannesburg, South Africa  
T: +27 11 669 9522  
E: talita.laubscher@bowmanslaw.com

ROBIN CARR  
Partner  
Johannesburg, South Africa  
T: +27 11 669 9504  
E: robin.carr@bowmanslaw.com

RAINBOW FIELD  
Director  
Nairobi, Kenya  
T: +254 20 289 9000  
E: rainbow.field@bowmanslaw.com
LENJA DAHMS-JANSEN
Senior Associate
Johannesburg, South Africa
T: +27 11 669 9610
E: lenja.dahms-jansen@bowmanslaw.com

MONIQUE JEFFERSON
Senior Associate
Johannesburg, South Africa
T: +27 11 669 9211
E: monique.jefferson@bowmanslaw.com

NIKITA REDDY
Senior Associate
Cape Town, South Africa
T: +27 21 480 7862
E: nikita.reddy@bowmanslaw.com

MELISSA COGGER
Senior Associate
Cape Town, South Africa
T: +27 21 480 7808
E: melissa.cogger@bowmanslaw.com

ROVINA ASRAY
Senior Associate
Johannesburg, South Africa
T: +27 11 669 9289
E: rovina.asray@bowmanslaw.com

NADINE MATHER
Senior Associate
Johannesburg, South Africa
T: +27 11 699 9602
E: nadine.mather@bowmanslaw.com

NONKULULEKO MKHWANAZI
Senior Associate
Johannesburg, South Africa
T: +27 11 669 9605
E: nonkululeko.mkhwanzai@bowmanslaw.com

To view profiles of our lawyers, please visit www.bowmanslaw.com
Cape Town
T: v  E: info-cpt@bowmanslaw.com

Dar es Salaam
T: +255 76 898 8640  
E: info-tz@bowmanslaw.com

Durban
T: +27 31 265 0651  
E: info-dbn@bowmanslaw.com

Johannesburg
T: +27 11 669 9000  
E: info-jhb@bowmanslaw.com

Kampala
T: +256 41 425 4540  
E: info-ug@bowmanslaw.com

Nairobi
T: +254 20 289 9000  
E: info-ke@bowmanslaw.com

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