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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 Peaño 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 Construction Practice

We are proud to be one of the most recognised full service construction teams in the sector in Africa.

We assist clients throughout the project life cycle of complex infrastructure and construction projects. This includes all stages of development and delivery and extends to financing and disputes under all forms of construction contracts.

We have a thorough understanding of various international standard forms of contract, including FIDIC, the NEC and the JBCC, along with a wealth of experience that cuts across multiple specialist sectors including energy, manufacturing, mining, real estate, transport, telecoms and utilities.

Our disputes expertise extends from mediation, arbitration and litigation to negotiating and structuring major settlement agreements which often deal with interconnected and complex commercial and regulatory issues.

‘One source described the service as “utterly excellent,” adding: “Their knowledge on the subject matter has been exceptional.”’ - Chambers and Partners, 2018

Through our footprint in Africa and our strong relationships with firms on the ground in other key jurisdictions, we are well placed to provide cross-border advice spanning the full range of legal services to clients doing business in this sector.

Our specialist construction and engineering lawyers serve clients ranging from major contractors to promoters, leading developers, funders, purchasers, tenants and occupiers among others.
Our Specialised Services

We advise/act for clients on:

- Applicable legislation across the African continent.
- The entire spectrum of construction and engineering law and the related regulatory environment.
- Various standard forms of contracts, including FIDIC, the NEC and the JBCC.
- Construction aspects of financing agreements, purchase agreements, PPP project agreements and agreements for lease.
- Operation and maintenance and facilities management agreements on completed projects.
- Construction and engineering disputes including mediation, arbitration and litigation.

Clients appreciate the support they receive from Bowmans, describing us as ‘very responsive and proactive’ - *Chambers and Partners, 2017*
Some of our recent work includes advising:

- A confidential client in defending a claim referred to arbitration relating to the construction of a sub-station in Zimbabwe.
- A confidential client in the development of a cancer hospital. We drafted the construction agreement (adopting the Agreement and Conditions of Contract for Building Works published by the Joint Building Council, Kenya (the JBC Contract)) to suit the project; as well as service agreements for the project managers, the architect, the engineer and the quantity surveyor.
- AECOM, on a variety of matters, including the post-merger integrations of legacy companies Davis Langdon and BKS into the AECOM group in South Africa. Our ongoing work for AECOM includes the rationalisation of its construction and engineering contractual structures, empowerment structures, shareholdings, and operational platforms, as well as its appointment as consulting engineers on a variety of projects.
- Betafence South Africa on a subcontractor’s claim on a payment guarantee issued by a contractor.
- The Bombela Concession Company and the Gauteng Provincial Government on one of the largest commercial settlements in the history of the country’s construction industry (South Africa).
- Centum Investment Company Ltd on consultancy contracts for construction projects in Runda Estate (Kenya) and in the Garuga Peninsula (Uganda).

- Civicon Engineering Africa on its civil works contracts with Tullow Oil and Schlumberger and in its negotiations with Lake Turkana Wind Power Ltd in providing civil works services (Kenya).
- Development Bank of Southern Africa on the application of procurement legislation, regulations and standards, the Construction Regulations, the Built Environment regulations, the Constitution, PFMA and MFMA and related intergovernmental framework legislation for the design of an appropriate contractual framework for its Infrastructure Development Division (South Africa).
- An equity sponsor and offtaker on the procurement strategy for the construction of a greenfields glass manufacturing plant, as well as the EPC, O&M, feedstock supply and foodstuff offtake tender and contract documentation (South Africa).
- An equity sponsor and offtaker on the procurement strategy for the construction of a greenfields cans manufacturing plant, as well as the EPC, O&M, feedstock supply and foodstuff offtake tender and contract documentation (South Africa).
- The equity sponsors and offtakers on the procurement strategy for the construction of a Greenfields Wet Mill project to produce maltose, dextrose and high fructose corn syrup, as well as the EPC, O&M, feedstock supply and foodstuff offtake tender and contract documentation (South Africa).
- Eskom, on various procurement matters relating to the Medupi and Kusile power stations, and in defending claims referred to adjudication by various contractors in relation to the construction of the power stations (South Africa).
• Eskom, as owner, on all construction related aspects of the Ingula Pumped Storage Scheme Power Station (South Africa).
• LSG SkyChefs on the development and construction of the second inflight catering kitchen at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (Kenya).
• Gigawatt as owner/ developer of the construction of the 100MW gas fired power station (Mozambique).
• Group Five as a lead member of the Munitoria PPP Consortium which in 2015 successfully reached financial close for the City Of Tshwane Metropolitan office accommodation public private partnership (South Africa).
• Hass Consult, one of Kenya’s leading real estate agents and developers, on various construction law related matters on their residential and commercial properties, including the construction and development of Le Mac, a state-of-the-art, 22-storey tower geared to be the tallest mixed-used tower in the country.
• IFC and the Ministry of Health on a feasibility study for the construction of four regional cancer centres across Kenya on a PPP basis.
• Intex Construction on all EPC and O&M aspects of a Kenyan roads PPP project.
• Kalangala Infrastructure Services Project (KIS), where we advised an international developer based in the UK on a project involving transport, water and energy infrastructure (Uganda).
• Kooba Africa on the tax and legal aspects and drafting of all transaction documents including sale and purchase agreements for the land, FIDIC Yellow for the design and supply of the data centre, FIDIC Red for the main civil works (not directly linked to data centre), various consultancy contracts, contracts with data centre customers such as cloud based service providers one of whom is listed on the NASDAQ and S&P 500 and regulatory approvals with the Communications Authority (Kenya).
• Old Mutual Property Africa Ltd on its USD 63 million investment in the Two Rivers Shopping Mall under development in Nairobi, the largest mall in East and Central Africa. The due diligence on this transaction was largely on construction matters as the investment was being made while the construction of the Two Rivers Shopping Mall was ongoing (Kenya).
• On FIDIC Yellow Book contracts for the “Avana” development in Nairobi comprising a 10 floor residential building of 80 apartments and four penthouses (Kenya).
• Palabora Mining Company on their Lift II brownfield copper mining expansion project in Palabora (South Africa).
• Tatu City Ltd in a KES 1.4 billion contract dispute filed by Ongata Works Ltd (Kenya).
• Transnet Freight Rail, in defending a number of claims referred to adjudication and arbitration by a contractor relating to the maintenance of the rail network (South Africa).
• UAP Holdings Ltd on various construction and consultancy contracts in relation to the ongoing construction of UAP Tower in Upper hill, Nairobi (Kenya).
• WBHO in respect of a national road project in Swaziland.
• White Arkitekter AB on a construction contract and related agreements in relation to the construction of a Leadership Centre for the College of Insurance in Nairobi (Kenya).
• Xstrata Coal on the establishment of its Tweefontein mining operations, including the drafting of all EPC, mining and contractor agreements, construction agreements, supply agreements and general service agreements for its operations (South Africa).

‘Very knowledgeable and well-recognised lawyers...They are very good lawyers who are attentive to the needs of clients. Their work is excellent.’
- Chambers and Partners, 2016
Accolades

AFRICAN LEGAL AWARDS 2018
We were named African Law Firm of the Year (Large Practice). 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.

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

DEALMAKERS AWARDS 2018
We have been identified as the leading legal adviser in Africa by volume. This is the fourth consecutive year we have been recognised this way.

CHAMBERS AND PARTNERS 2018
RANKED US IN:

Band 1 for Real Estate in Kenya
‘One of the top teams in the Kenyan market’ when it comes to real estate… the group stands out for its “excellent client relations and strategic thinkers”.

Band 3 for Construction in South Africa
‘Solid practice with valued experience handling transactional construction and a range of disputes… Regularly called upon by significant international firms to serve as local counsel.’

Band 1 for Projects and Energy in South Africa
‘Pre-eminent firm in the projects and energy space with an enviable reputation for its work in renewables and power, as well as on important infrastructure projects.’ - Chambers and Partners, 2018

Band 1 for Environment in South Africa
‘Impressive environmental group with a prominent position in the market.’
CHAMBERS & PARTNERS 2019 RANKED US IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

BAND 1

KENYA
- Banking & Finance
- Corporate/ M&A
- Employment
- 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 Law
- Shipping
- Tax

TANZANIA
- General Business Law

UGANDA
- General Business Law

BAND 2

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

KENYA
- Fintech
- Projects & Energy

TIER 1

KENYA
- Financial & Corporate
- Mining

SOUTH AFRICA
- Capital Markets
- Power
- M&A

UGANDA
- Financial & Corporate
- Project Development

TIER 2

KENYA
- Power
- Infrastructure

SOUTH AFRICA
- Banking
- Infrastructure
- Mining
- Oil & Gas
- Project Finance

TANZANIA
- Legal Markets Overview

TIER 3

TANZANIA
- Financial & Corporate
- Project Development

IFLR1000 2019 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

UGANDA
- Legal Markets Overview

TIER 2

KENYA
- Dispute Resolution
- Projects & Energy

SOUTH AFRICA
- Banking & Finance
- Construction
- Dispute Resolution
- Investment Funds
- Tax

TANZANIA
- Legal Markets Overview

THE LEGAL 500 EMEA 2018 RANKED US IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

TIER 1

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

SOUTH AFRICA
- Banking
- Construction
- Dispute Resolution
- Investment Funds
- Tax

TANZANIA
- Legal Markets Overview

71 Recognised Lawyers

37 Recognised Lawyers

32 Recognised Lawyers
Key Contacts

ALEX NJAGE
Head of Real Estate and Construction
Nairobi, Kenya
T: +254 20 289 9000
E: alex.njage@bowmanslaw.com

ANDREW VAN NIEKERK
Partner
Johannesburg, South Africa
T: +27 11 669 9370
E: andrew.vanniekerk@bowmanslaw.com

LIZE-MERÉ LUDICK
Partner
Johannesburg, South Africa
T: +27 11 669 9473
E: lize-mere.ludick@bowmanslaw.com

LLOYD CHATER
Partner
Johannesburg, South Africa
T: +27 11 669 9315
E: lloyd.chater@bowmanslaw.com
To view profiles of our lawyers, please visit www.bowmanslaw.com
Cape Town
T: +27 21 480 7800
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

Follow us on Twitter:
@Bowmans_Law

www.bowmanslaw.com