

Robert Lewis Senior International Consultant

Expertise: Cross-border M&A, Belt and Road Initiative & Outbound

Investments, Technology, Telecoms & Internet

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Areas of Practice

Robert Lewis is a Senior International Consultant for Chance Bridge Law Firm in Beijing. He has practiced law for more than 35 years, with nearly 30 years in China.

His practice has focused on cross-border corporate and commercial transactions, with a particular emphasis on M&A, infrastructure projects, project financing, energy, mining, telecoms/IT transactions and strategic partnering arrangements generally. Notable transactions include acting for the lead Beijing municipal government investor as lead international legal counsel on the Bird's Nest and Water Cube venue projects for the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

He also has advised Chinese enterprises on outbound investments in the US, Latin America, Western and Eastern Europe, India, Russia, Canada, Australia and Africa for more than 15 years. He also advises major Chinese tech and social media companies in global compliance issues.

Education Background

- J.D. (cum laude), Brigham Young University, School of Law, Provo, Utah, USA
- B.A. English Literature, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, USA
- Admitted to the California bar in 1985

Work Experience

Prior to joining Chance Bridge, from March 2011 to January 2021, Mr. Lewis was Senior International Counsel of Zhong Lun Law Firm. Prior to that he served as managing partner of the Beijing office of Lovells (now Hogan Lovells) for nine years and, prior to his stint with Lovells, he was Asia General Counsel for Nortel Networks.

When he moved to China in 1993, he initially joined the China Practice Group of Baker & McKenzie in Hong Kong and Shanghai. Before relocating to China, he practiced for six years in the Los Angeles office of Sidley & Austin. Mr. Lewis was one of the first senior foreign lawyers to make the move from a leading international law firm to a top Chinese law firm.

Mr. Lewis has consistently been rated as a leading corporate/M&A lawyer in China by leading directories.

Representative Transactions

Mr. Lewis has worked on numerous inbound and outbound M&A and investment projects in China, including:

- Acted as lead international legal counsel for Bird's Nest and Water Cube venue projects for 2008 Beijing Olympics, advising Beijing State Asset Management Company, the lead domestic investor in these projects appointed by the Beijing Municipal Government
- Acted as lead international legal counsel for ALSTOM acquisition of Wuhan Boiler Company – the only acquisition by a foreign party of majority interest in a B-share listed target company in China
- Advised a leading EU company on its bid to acquire 50% equity interest of BP in a US\$3.6 billion Sino-foreign petrochemical joint venture in Shanghai
- Advised leading Chinese social media company on structuring alternatives to address Chinese app ban in India
- Advised leading Chinese mobile handset manufacturer on global compliance management issues in US, EU and India in respect of export controls, data protection, anti-trust and digital services taxes

- Worked with leading Chinese telecommunications equipment manufacturing on analysis of global compliance issues involving US sanctions and counter-sanctions
- Represented Faurecia (China) Holding Company Limited in its US\$420 million acquisition of an automotive infotainment OEM in China with accompanying due diligence and related antitrust advisory work in Australia, Belarus, China, Pakistan, Russia, South Africa, United Arab Emirates and Vietnam
- Acting as lead China counsel for Yihaodian (a subsidiary of Walmart e-Commerce) in respect of the formation of a foreign-invested telecommunications enterprise joint venture in the new Shanghai Free Trade Zone and launch of its new e-commerce marketplace platform
- Acted for the international banks on the Dachang Water Treatment Plant project in Shanghai, the first BOT project in China
- Acted for IBM in connection with China aspects of its US\$450 million acquisition of Platform Computing, involving spin-off of non-acquired China assets to third parties and related issues
- Advising Midea on review of Equity Transfer Agreement whereby Wuxi Little Swan to buy out the shares held by General Electric in the joint venture company co-established by the foregoing parties

Publications

- *The Dawn of a New Era for FDI in China*, published by Law Press China. Former MOFCOM Vice Minister Wei Jianguo wrote the foreword for this book. This book includes a suite of new foreign investment templates that conform to the Company Law. These bilingual templates, together with related detailed annotations, were prepared by Mr. Lewis in consultation with an expert committee comprised of senior lawyers from leading international and domestic law firms as well in senior in-house counsel from major MNCs and SOEs.
- *The Rules of the Game of Global M&A: Why So Many Chinese Outbound Deals Fail*, published by China Machine Press, for which Qi Bin, Deputy GM of China Investment Corporation, wrote a

foreword. This book includes nearly 100 case studies from published reports and confidential sources from top law firms around the world.

- US Secondary Sanctions Provoke Strong Backlash Among Both Friends and Foes Around the World
- China Joins EU and Others in Adopting Tough Counter-measures to Push Back Against Perceived US Sanctions Overreach
- Can De-coupling from the US Dollar De-fang US Secondary Sanctions?
- Navigating the Minefields of Potential Conflicts-of-Law Stalemates Arising from Anti-Sanctions Counter-Measures
- A Case of Divided Loyalties: In an Environment of Heightened Risks Arising From Sanctions and Counter-measures, Banks Are in the Cross-Hairs
- In addition to the books and articles mentioned above, he has written a series of articles on Chinese law and practice for the IFLR, was a regular contributor to The Lawyer, and has written for many other leading publications. He also has regularly been interviewed by leading Chinese television and print media. In addition, he is a guest lecturer for EMBA programs for HKU and HKUST. He has lectured at Peking University, Qinghua University, Renmin University, Wuhan University, Fudan University law schools.

Professional Activities

- Mr. Lewis has frequently been invited by the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council (SASAC), National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), All China Lawyers Association (ACLA), and other leading government organizations in China to make presentations on practical legal skills, the structure and management of corporate law departments as well as management of international legal risks.
- While at Lovells, he conducted the first training and consulting projects for major Chinese

companies on the structure, management and operation of corporate law departments, including China Mobile, Sinopec and other leading SOEs. He also led a consulting project for Ping An Group to design a compliance management system for their insurance business. He has cooperated with, and has close ties to, the Association of Corporate Counsel in D.C., leading in-house organizations in China and the IACCM in London (now known as World Commerce and Contracting). Mr. Lewis has also published a book on legal risk management for Chinese companies.

- Mr. Lewis was the founder of the Sino-Global Legal Alliance (SGLA), comprised of top regional law firms across China, and served as the initial chairman. The SGLA was the first domestic law firm alliance to be recognized by Chambers and later expanded to more than 4,000 lawyers across more than 20 provinces.
- Mr. Lewis is also co-founder and Chief Expert of docQbot, the first bilingual automated contract and knowhow service platform in China. docQbot also has worked with LegalSifter to produce a tool to assist Chinese users to review an English-language foreign trade contract using AI technology. The tool provides users with localized guidance in Chinese together with sample reference clauses in English from the docQbot clause library.
- He is also co-founder of the China Going Global Think-tank (CGGT), an outbound investment information platform with more than 50,000 followers on its WeChat channel.
- Together with the CGGT and Dow Jones Risk & Compliance, Mr. Lewis has spearheaded the development of the China Global Compliance Newsletter, which incorporates content from leading law firms around the world.

Language

English, Chinese