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Why choose Charles Russell Speechlys?

We’re here to support your international ambitions in an increasingly globalised world. We can help you navigate the challenges of doing business and managing complex matters across borders.

We combine our excellence in business services and legal advice in our key sectors, with our focus on international private wealth and investment. In Africa we have significant experience in assisting “private” and “discrete” equity through advising funds, corporates and family businesses (including family offices) investing on the continent.

We will put together the right legal team for you, drawing upon the firm’s different disciplines, sector expertise and geographies, and working with the best law firms in the markets in which you operate or invest.

An overview of our Africa Group:

- Well-established team focused on Africa since 1990s.
- Includes lawyers based in London, Paris, Luxembourg and Dubai working with the best local law firms to meet our clients’ needs.
- Team members have lived in and worked on major projects in Africa and others have undertaken secondments with companies focusing on African markets.
- We act for corporates, sponsors, investors and funders.

Our key sectors include:

- Agriculture
- Real Estate and Construction
- Infrastructure
- TMT
- Financial Services
- Education
- Healthcare
- Sport
- Retail & Leisure
- Renewables and Energy & Natural Resources

Geographically, we have a depth of experience in West Africa, focusing primarily on Nigeria, Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire; and in East and Southern Africa, on Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, Zambia, Tanzania and Mozambique. However, we have recently been involved in many other countries, including Cameroon, Sierra Leone, Angola, South Africa and some North African countries, specifically Tunisia, Egypt and Morocco.
We understand investment into Africa

Increasing urbanisation in Africa, a growing middle class and more disposable income is creating new hotspots and market opportunities.

Investors need to be more precise and thoughtful about what they want to invest in, whether it is a specific sector, country or region.

We recognise that the political and regulatory environment can often be a barrier to growing companies. We have experience advising in numerous African jurisdictions and can assist you with your transactions and investment activity.

Our team understands investment into Africa. We’re here to help you navigate the opportunities and challenges of some of the world’s fastest growing and most dynamic economies.

Our clients include local and international corporates, institutions, investors and individuals. We advise on their business interests across Africa, including Corporate and M&A, Real Estate and Construction, Litigation and Dispute Resolution, and Private Client services.

The team includes lawyers in our London, European and Middle Eastern offices, many of whom have lived and worked in Africa. We provide a multi-disciplinary approach backed by a deep understanding of the key growth sectors on the continent.

We’ve built strong relationships with some of Africa’s leading law firms and professional advisers to provide ‘on the ground’ advice if you need local support. We regularly partner with them on events and insights to ensure our clients are up-to-date on the issues that affect them.

Awards and accolades

- Member of, and partner with, Invest Africa
- Deals Legal Advisor of the Year - Private Equity Africa Awards 2022
- Winner of Best Legal Services: Private Equity – Pan-Africa - AGF Africa Service Providers Awards 2022
- Highly recommended by Leaders League: Africa Desk - Law firm - 2022
- Media commentators and authors on Africa legal matters with recent coverage in the Law Society Gazette and LRC Bulletin
Corporate

The current climate has required businesses to show adaptability and resilience in the midst of uncertainty. With expert guidance from our market-leading team of corporate lawyers we can help you to successfully achieve your business goals.

We invest time to get to know you and understand how we can best support your business. Whether you are a start-up company backed by investors, entrepreneurs and venture capital, a growth company looking to scale-up and win new investment or a private equity fund, or a large multinational with full-service legal requirements, we are here to help you. We create bespoke teams to ensure your needs are met and you are provided with a cost-effective solution.

With our extensive experience in Africa, we provide clarity on the priorities for each individual transaction or project - where law and business are complex, we aim to be clear. We deliver a high level of partner involvement which, we believe together with our sector and geographical experience in Africa, differentiates us from other firms. Our approach is to provide a highly professional but not over-lawyered service, complemented by sound commercial advice and a keen eye on costs.

Our team handles the full range of corporate transactions from cross-border acquisitions and divestments to complex reorganisations and restructurings, international joint ventures, management buy-outs and buy-ins, corporate rescues (such as pre-packs) and distressed transactions, for local and international corporates, institutions and investors.

Our service goes beyond handling individual transactions. We offer a broad range of complementary advisory services and seek to build strong professional relationships over the long term, based on trust and cooperation.

Daystar Power Group Limited
Charles Russell Speechlys has advised Daystar Power Group, a leading provider of hybrid solar power solutions to businesses in West Africa, on its recent acquisition by Shell. Shell acquired Daystar Power to deliver carbon emission reductions and power cost savings to commercial and industrial businesses across Africa.

M-KOPA
We advised M-KOPA, a leading fintech platform that combines the power of digital micropayments with the Internet of Things (IoT) to provide customers in Africa with access to productive assets such as smartphones, in connection with the equity elements of its recent $250+ million fundraising of debt and equity, one of the largest fundraisings by an African technology start-up and the highest ever for a Kenyan start-up.
AgDevCo
Advised AgDevCo, a specialist impact investor in African agribusinesses on its recent $70m equity funding from the CDC Group, and Norfund which will allow AgDevCo to continue to grow its investment activities in agriculture across Sub-Saharan Africa.

AgDevCo
Advised AgDevCo regarding Oba Pack Company Limited, a Ghanaian-owned agribusiness, purchase of the Babator Farming Company Limited (BFC). Prior to the sale, AgDevCo Limited was the sole owner of BFC.

Metier
Metier, a leading South African private equity fund manager, invested US$39m into Africa Mobile Networks Ltd (AMN). AMN builds, owns, operates and maintains mobile network infrastructure in Africa, delivering services for the biggest Mobile Network Operators across the continent. Our team were delighted to assist with the transaction drawing on both our experience of the region and our telecoms sector expertise.

GHL Bank
Harborough Limited (as the holding company of GHL) and the management team of GHL Bank plc (GHL) required advice on the sale of the bank to First National Bank of Ghana (FNB).

Lango Real Estate
Lango (formerly GIAP), a pan-African real estate investment management business, required advice on two shopping centre acquisitions in Ghana and Zambia, and on the acquisition of Westport Real Estate Development Fund, which holds a portfolio of 9 commercial real estate assets across Sub-Saharan Africa. We were able to provide the advice needed for 3 successful acquisitions.

fastjet Plc
AIM listed client, fastjet Plc, proposed a restructuring of the fastjet group involving the disposal of its Zimbabwean subsidiary to an investor consortium comprised of fastjet’s major shareholder, Solenta Aviation Holdings, and a number of Zimbabwean investors. Our team were alongside supporting the client throughout.

L.A.B International Limited
L.A.B International Limited sold 90% of Rwandan company, Pfunda Tea Company Limited, to Borelli Tea Holdings Limited for US$19.5m.
Daystar Power Group and its founder, Sunray Ventures, required our advice on the acquisition of a US$10m equity stake in Daystar by Verod Capital Management and Persistent Energy.

Daystar Power Group required our advice on a US$38m investment in Daystar by a consortium of investors including the Investment Fund for Developing Countries (the Danish development finance institution), STOA, a French impact infrastructure fund, PROPARCO (the French development finance institution) backed by a guarantee from the European Union under the African Renewable Energy Scale-Up facility (ARE Scale-Up) and Morgan Stanley Investment.


We advise AgDevCo on various investments across Africa, for example into Minimex Limited, one of Rwanda’s leading producers of maize product, and the second into the development of a commercial pig farm in Kampala, Uganda.
Private Equity, Venture and Impact Capital

The private equity, venture and impact capital world is fast paced, with ever-evolving structures and trends. It remains an exciting arena of business growth and development with rewarding investment opportunities for owners, managers and investors alike.

Whatever stage of the corporate growth journey, we can support you. From fund formation, MBOs and MBIs, buy-and-builds, secondary buy-outs, through to investment and ultimate exit, members of the team have experience of working across a range private equity transactions across Africa and over many years.

Our experienced team will support your business and team no matter the size. We have experience advising:

- entrepreneurs as they seek to establish and develop their businesses;
- early stage and high growth companies seeking investment including SEIS, EIS and VCT qualifying investments, rounds of venture capital funding and growth capital investment;
- venture and growth capital investors, (business angels, high net worth investors, venture capital or venture debt funders or growth capital providers); and management teams and private equity houses.

A unique aspect of our offering is our capacity to provide legal advice for our clients’ business and personal needs, advising family offices, high and ultra-high net worth individuals as well as business owners.

You’ll get a full service offering in all areas necessary to support you on your transaction, with the additional support of our Banking & Finance and Corporate Tax teams covering debt financing and tax related matters, as well as specialist areas including intellectual property, competition, employment, pensions, real estate, commercial dispute resolution and restructuring, which are integral to private equity transactions.

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Actis

We have advised Actis, the growth markets investor, on numerous transactions over many years in Africa (and elsewhere) involving investment funds, real estate, construction, financing and related matters.

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Emerging Markets Payments (EMP)

We advised the management team of EMP on the sale of the company by Actis to Network International.
Daystar Power Group
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Daystar Power Group required our advice on a US$38m investment in Daystar by a consortium of investors including the Investment Fund for Developing Countries (the Danish development finance institution), STOA, a French impact infrastructure fund, PROPACRO (the French development finance institution) backed by a guarantee from the European Union under the African Renewable Energy Scale-Up facility (ARE Scale-Up) and Morgan Stanley Investment.

Kasada Hospitality Fund
We advised the Kasada Hospitality Fund (a US$500m private equity fund backed by Katara Hospitality – the hospitality arm of the Qatar Investment Authority – and AccorHotels), which is managed by Kasada Capital Management, on proposed transactions in Sub-Saharan Africa involving hospitality and real estate.
Financial Services Regulation and Funds

The pace of regulatory change in financial services and investment funds is unprecedented.

At the same time new technology, markets and customers offer innovative companies great opportunities for growth.

Financial service businesses need to constantly review and revise their practices and procedures to meet the challenges of this evolving landscape. We make it our business to be at the forefront of anticipating and understanding these changes so that we can guide and support you through them.

We assist throughout the lifecycle of a fund from structuring, establishment and distribution to ongoing operational and compliance issues (both for the fund and its manager and other advisers), secondary transactions and restructurings.

The funds typically take the form of companies, limited partnerships or LLPs and are typically incorporated in any of Luxembourg, Ireland, UK, Guernsey, Jersey, Mauritius or the Cayman Islands. The funds may permanent capital or limited life entities and may be open-ended or hybrid.

We are actively involved in the work of a number of industry bodies including the BVCA, AIC and LPeC.

We are currently advising a substantial investor in a recently established manager that invests in healthcare and consumer entities in Africa. In Asia, we act for VinaCapital Investment Management, which manages a number of private equity and real estate funds investing in Vietnam and greater Indo-China and for Ocean Dial Asset Management (a UK subsidiary of Avendus, the Indian financial services Group), which manages the main market listed India Capital Growth Fund Limited as well as a number of open-ended funds which invest in Indian assets and are established in Ireland.

In addition to helping you with your regulatory and legal issues, we are focused on advising on transactional and strategic matters. This includes advising you on contentious matters where you are dealing with regulatory and investigations, helping to protect your business and client relationships.
Ascent Rift Valley Fund
Ascent Capital Africa formed its second fund, Ascent Rift Valley Fund II, in 2021. Investors in the Fund include leading Africa investors such as BIO (Belgian Investment Company for Developing Countries), CDC Group (the UK’s development finance institution), FMO (Dutch entrepreneurial development bank), IFC (the International Finance Corporation), Norfund (the Norwegian investment fund for developing countries), Proparco (through AFD Group’s FISEA fund), SDG Frontier Fund, certain European impact investors and major Kenyan pension funds. Ascent Rift Valley Fund II (ARVF II) has had its first rolling close at more than USD 100 million, significantly exceeding its initial target of USD 80 million. The final close of ARVF II has a target of USD 140 million.

A SINGLE FAMILY OFFICE
Single Family Office
We advised a US single family office on various matters relating to its investment in the Ilera Fund, a private equity fund managed by Alta Semper Capital which will invest in African growth companies with a focus on consumer goods and the healthcare sector.

VARIOUS MATTERS
We have a variety of experience acting for multi-national clients undertaking cross-border M&A transactions, private equity funds and investment funds particularly from Luxembourg. For example, we advised on the Luxembourg aspects of the legal reorganisation of an independent private equity investor specialised in growth capital investing in Europe and Africa.
Banking & Finance

Global banking and finance markets are becoming increasingly complex.

We can provide you with clear, jargon-free advice. Our team will advise you on the whole range of domestic and cross-border financing transactions including leveraged, real estate, structured, Islamic and receivables as well as restructuring existing facilities.

We work with both lenders and borrowers, including the major clearing banks, commercial and private banks, non-bank lenders, investment funds, institutional investors, corporate borrowers, hedge funds and family offices. Our team has acted for banks and funders in Africa including Investec, First Rand, Arab African International Bank and Banque Audi.

We can assist you with complex transactions, whilst providing the hands-on, practical and tailored support that you need. With a Partner-led service and international relationships across Europe, Africa and the Middle East, our client relationships are long standing and we will work alongside you as your trusted adviser.

M-Kopa
We advised M-Kopa, the world’s leading ‘pay-as-you-go’ energy provider to off-grid homes, on a receivables based syndicated loan of USD $55 million, backed by Standard Bank, covering Kenya and Uganda.

Actis
We have advised Actis, the growth markets investor, on numerous transactions over many years in Africa involving investment funds, real estate, construction, financing and related matters.

Persianas Limited
Persianas required our advice on equity and debt financing from IFC in connection with its Nigerian business operations.

CONFIDENTIAL CLIENT
Confidential client
We advised an African-based house builder in relation to various corporate actions across the region including development finance facilities.

Investec Bank
Investec Bank plc required our advice on a bespoke equity warrant in connection with a financing structure provided by Investec and UK Export Finance to a specialist equipment supplier.

“...has an impressive network of contacts.”
Chambers, 2021, Banking & Finance
CONFIDENTIAL CLIENT
Pan-African private equity fund group
We were able to advise on various transactions in East Africa (real estate/agriculture) and West Africa (real estate/hospitality/timber) drawing on debt, construction, corporate and commercial expertise of the Africa team.
Capital Markets

As global disruption caused by COVID-19 continues to impact the global capital markets publicly listed companies and their advisers and sponsors must remain agile to sustain successful growth.

Whether you are an issuer, investment bank or investor, AIM or main markets listed company, you’ll need legal advisers with technical and practical capital markets experience, and the ability to work seamlessly with other professionals, advisers and sponsors, both in the UK and overseas.

We will advise you on the full range of listed company transactions, including takeovers (whether by way of public takeover offer), scheme of arrangement or reverse takeover and helping clients put in place innovative equity and debt financing arrangements. As well as advising on complex cross-border transactions involving dual-listed businesses around the world and across a wide range of sectors, we have a particular focus in equity capital market fundraising for AIM-listed, mid-cap and smaller quoted companies and their sponsors.

As your company grows, we support and value our ongoing relationship with you, offering ongoing strategic and practical advice. Our corporate advisory work covers all the day-to-day issues affecting quoted companies, including advising on AGM and annual report related matters. Our corporate governance team handles a broad range of governance and compliance issues and a broad range of equity and debt capital markets transactions.

We are active supporters of the Quoted Companies Alliance (QCA) – the only organisation dedicated to representing the interests of quoted companies outside the FTSE 350. Our lawyers sit on a number of QCA technical committees, and work with the alliance to lobby the UK and European legislators on behalf of mid-cap and smaller companies.

Centamin
Centamin plc, an Egyptian gold miner, transferred its corporate domicile from Australia to Jersey. Our work involved detailed structuring advice, the listing of Centamin on the Main Market and the coordination of Australian, Canadian, Jersey and US law advisers. The market value of the company was approximately £900m post-transaction, and it re-joined the FTSE 250 on admission.

fastjet plc
We acted for fastjet plc, a low-cost African airline on a number of transactions including its US$10m capital raising, its entry into a memorandum of understanding with Solenta Aviation Holdings Limited, and its proposed fundraise of up to a further US$2.1m by way of an open offer to existing shareholders.
Predator Oil & Gas Holdings plc
We advised oil and natural gas explorer and producer Predator Oil & Gas Holdings plc on its standard listing on the Main Market of the London Stock Exchange. The company raised approximately £1.3m as part of the IPO (it was oversubscribed), which gives the company an initial market cap of £2.8m. Novum Securities and Optiva Securities were the joint brokers.

Kropz plc
We advised Grant Thornton as nominated adviser and both Hannam & Partners and Mirabaud Securities as joint brokers on the IPO of Kropz plc, an emerging African plant nutrient producer, on AIM with a placing of US$35m.
The vibrant Real Estate & Construction market is dynamic and so are the needs of individuals and businesses who operate in this space in Africa.

Whether we are representing your personal or your business interests, we aim to build a long-term partnership with you. We will get to know you thoroughly so that we can offer strategic advice on how to achieve your objectives.

We work collaboratively, both inside our firm and outside it. That way, we are better equipped to look at the bigger picture and achieve the best result for your real estate investments.

We act for institutional and private investors, developers, corporate occupiers, house builders, contractors and engineers, urban estates, property financiers, charities and private landowners.

We provide comprehensive property-related advice to clients that draws on the integrated resources of our banking, tax, corporate, construction, environmental, planning and property litigation lawyers. We advise at all stages of the property asset lifecycle including buying and selling, planning and development, and management and investment of property.

Our combined expertise in these key disciplines, coupled with our commercial, forward-thinking and practical approach, and our experience of advising across Africa helps us build long-term client relationships. We provide clients with strategic vision, first class service and introduce them to opportunities whenever possible.

We handle major construction and infrastructure projects and disputes, both domestically and internationally. Our team of lawyers manage complex, high-profile transactions for which we have the full range of specialist knowledge to take projects from inception to completion.

With experience of some of the most challenging and complex assignments, our multi-disciplinary team has 'seen it all before' and can apply this understanding to each transaction. Careful management of our resources enables us to progress matters efficiently and effectively, while our informed and skilful team works across business boundaries to ensure clients’ objectives are met.
Qatari Diar
We acted for Qatari Diar in relation to a number of North African projects, including advice on bonds, procurement, changes to forms of contract, contentious issues and on other active projects during the period of the Arab Spring.

Crowie Holdings
Crowie Holdings, a South African development company, required our advice in relation to the proposed development of NASCO Town, a large scale mixed-use project in Lagos, Nigeria.

Ansan Wikfs
Egyptian investor Ansan Wikfs required our advice in connection with the formation of a joint venture with ZincOx Resources plc for a US$200m project to exploit zinc oxide mining rights in the Jabal Salab region of the Yemen under a license granted by the Government of the Yemen.

Well and Able Solutions
We supplied Real Estate & Construction advice to Well & Able Green Solutions in connection with the construction of social housing units in Angola, Nigeria, Namibia, Ivory Coast and Rwanda.

TKIS
We acted for TKIS in relation to two process plants in Egypt for over hundreds of millions of Euros, which incurred problems, including delays.

Actis
We have acted for Actis for a significant period in Africa assisting on Real Estate and Construction related matters.

Lango Real Estate
We advised Lango (was GIAP), the pan-African real estate investment business, on its first two acquisitions, in Ghana and Zambia. This is part of Lango’s strategy to aggregate a quality portfolio of prime income-producing commercial real estate assets in select cities across Africa.

CONFIDENTIAL CLIENT
Pan-African private equity fund group
Advising on various transactions: East Africa (real estate/agriculture); and West Africa (real estate/hospitality/timber). Advising on a wide ranges of matters drawing on debt, construction, corporate and commercial expertise of the Africa team.
CONFIDENTIAL CLIENT

Southern Africa focussed fund/asset manager
Advising on real estate matters for various investments in southern Africa, including on lease and related matters in Rwanda on commercial real estate development in Kigali.

African Capital Alliance
We have advised African Capital Alliance on a range of real estate and related matters.
**Intellectual Property and Technology**

Virtually every business worldwide has intellectual property that may be of vital importance to its continued success.

Our role is to enable you to make the most of your intellectual property assets through protection, enforcement, commercialisation and audits. We will work with you to establish your needs and objectives for IP protection, and will identify the most suitable form, geographical extent, and availability of protection and manage the relevant process.

We have a substantial team of lawyers specialising in all aspects of intellectual property law who provide clear and commercially focused advice based on a combination of local knowledge and a global outlook.

Through our world-wide networks, we work with clients in most sectors of industry and commerce, including technology, general manufacturing, chemicals, life sciences and healthcare, leisure (including sports), media, fashion and design, publishing and education, as well as for clients in the charitable, not-for-profit and governmental sectors. They range from some of the largest and best known businesses in the world to start-ups, from fast growing high-tech companies to more traditional businesses.

Amongst the services we provide to them are those relating to:

- Brand & design (protection and enforcement)
- Commercialisation of intellectual property
- Patents & technology (protection and enforcement)
- Commercial and technology contracts

Our substantial international practice means we often work with leading intellectual property specialists around the world across all our areas of specialism, which include patents, trademarks, designs, copyright and confidential information.

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**CK3 LLC trading as Bulldog Gin**

BULLDOG Gin required us to process the cancellation of a registration of the trade mark “BULLDOG” in relation to alcoholic drinks in South Africa, which Bulldog Energy Drink had acquired. The cancellation was successful.

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**GoAfrica**

We have advised GoAfrica on intellectual property, contracts for the development of the company’s website platform, payment services and intellectual property strategy.

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"Highly regarded for trade mark prosecution and IP-led transactions such as licence agreements and joint venture formations. Also assists with the treatment of IP assets in M&A deals."

Chambers UK, 2021, Intellectual Property
GHL Bank
We have advised Ghana Home Loans (now GHL Bank) on a number of technology agreements recently, relating to the implementation of core systems for the bank’s business.
Energy and Natural Resources

As demand for energy and natural resources rises around the world the companies and investors that seek to meet this demand face ever-changing regulations on their operations.

Changes in consumer sentiment, capital markets appetite for new projects and the cyclical nature of the sector all pose challenges for companies engaged in energy production and resource extraction.

We will focus on prioritising and understanding your needs, seeking to make simple the complex and highly regulated nature of the sector. Our diverse client base includes exploration companies for the oil, gas and minerals industries, mining companies as well as cleantech and renewable energy businesses, both onshore and offshore.

We will cut through the legal jargon to help you make the key decisions and achieve your business objectives. Whether your project needs M&A, capital raising, project finance, tax, infrastructure, operational or dispute resolution advice, we are confident that our personalised approach will support you.

We have extensive international experience in the mining sector and are particularly well known for our work in emerging markets; our work covers Africa, Australasia, Indonesia, the Middle East, and Central and South America.

In the past year we have advised some of the largest companies in the mining sector including Randgold and Centamin as well as working with some of the leading banks in the sector, including Barclays and Canaccord.

Ncondezi Coal Company Limited
Ncondezi Coal Company Limited, a power development company with an integrated thermal coal power plant and mine project in Mozambique, required our advice on its admission to AIM and a related US$52m placing and a subsequent US$36.5m secondary fundraising.

Al Salam Opportunities Limited
We advised Al Salam Opportunities Limited on the disposal of a significant shareholding in Petra Diamonds Limited, the Main Market listed diamond company, by way of an accelerated book build.

Stratmin Global Resources Plc
We advised on Stratmin Global Resources’ reverse takeover of Graphmada Equity Pte (which owns a graphite producer in Madagascar), placing of £1.5m convertible loan notes and re-admission to AIM (marked cap. approx. £30m).
Vast Resources plc
Vast Resources plc required our advice on a joint venture agreement with Grayfox Investments (Pvt) Ltd in respect of the Pickstone-Peerless and Giant Mines entered by the investment company’s subsidiary Canape Investments (Pvt) Ltd. We advised on the UK aspects of the transaction.
Dispute Resolution

At this time, more than ever, being able to resolve disputes and regulatory issues as efficiently and effectively as possible is paramount.

All types of organisations across Africa, as well as across the globe, are facing major challenges to their business as a result of the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact it has had on economic development and international trade.

With our 200+ strong team based in our offices and an established network of firms we work with across the rest of the world, we advise you on complex cross-border and high-value dispute resolution and regulatory matters.

Working side by side with a diverse range of clients, extending from governments and regulatory bodies to multinational businesses and some of the world’s wealthiest and most complex and dynamic families, our team of experts delivers commercial, pragmatic and strategic advice tailored to your needs and objectives.

Our Dispute Resolution practice covers a uniquely broad range of services from resolving family and property disputes to litigating on behalf of governments and major global companies.

We understand that the cost of dispute resolution can be a significant barrier to dealing with disputes, especially during financially straightened times. Feesible, our disputes funding product, provides you with a variety of ways that funding for a claim can be structured and risk can be managed between us.

No matter the climate, we know how important it is at the outset of a matter for you to identify the key documents and evaluate the merits of your case to develop a successful strategy. Our cloud-based service Discovery on Demand is designed to do just that. It can facilitate early document and case assessment and close collaboration between us, wherever you and your team are.

What constitutes a ‘win’ can vary from case to case but whatever a ‘win’ means to you, we are passionate and tenacious in helping you to achieve your objectives.

CONFIDENTIAL CLIENT

Our dispute resolution team acted for a former employee of a subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell, which, together with ENI, was alleged to have engaged in international bribery and corruption in respect of a 2011 settlement of various disputes concerning the rights to a deepwater oil block off the coast of Nigeria. Such disputes involved the Federal Government of Nigeria and Malabu, a Nigerian oil and gas company, associated with Dan Etete (a convicted money launderer and former Nigerian Minister of Petroleum). Our client was acquitted in Italian criminal proceedings in a verdict what the Economist has referred to as “probably the most important corruption-related verdict in the history of the oil industry”.

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CONFIDENTIAL CLIENT
We advised a leading drilling solutions company on the contractual impact of the Ebola breakout in Guinea and the costs they were entitled to as a consequence. We continue to advise in respect of further unpaid fees due to it arising out of its contractual engagement, payment of which is being delayed due to an underlying but understood to be unrelated dispute between the client and the main contractor, to which the company is not a party.

ASA Resource Group PLC
We advised Asa Resource Group PLC, a pan-African resources company which is AIM listed, on its response to a petition issued against the Company and two of its directors. The petition arose firstly out of an EGM of the Company and secondly, the performance of certain provisions of an agreement between the Company and a number of its shareholders. The dispute was ultimately settled on confidential and favourable terms.
Our international private client expertise

The world is getting smaller as families become increasingly international, with assets in multiple jurisdictions. Such families and individuals require specialist advice on the structuring of their affairs.

The International Private Client team at Charles Russell Speechlys’ specialise in advising internationally mobile high net worth and ultra-high net worth clients. We have particular expertise in advising clients who have connections to Africa, the US, Middle East and Far East.

They often face daily risks of capital losses and capital demands but the current environment globally presents a new wave of challenges, from citizenship issues, to decisions around physical location and what constitutes a safe residence in the time of a global crisis. This is not only challenging for the family, but also for family offices who advise them, and those responsible for supporting family decisions.

For many families, the current crisis has forced them to think about incapacity and to put in place plans for the future, which instil behaviours in the family to protect their security, privacy, and investment decisions. Whilst families are connected through technology and shared knowledge, systems failures and corruption has led families to consider a simple written document to steer families through future critical conditions.

We are here to help families across the continent prioritise the steps they wish to take, and to deal with the complex concepts of citizenship, residence, and domicile, and tax issues between numerous jurisdictions and Africa.

Through this, we have experience with the following scenarios which are often encountered by those doing business and raising families in Africa:

- Drafting wealth structures that allow for ownership of operating companies, as well as taking into account the benefits of Mauritius, with its extensive double tax treaty network, giving tax efficient pan-African investment.
- Structuring the family wealth to give a level of control while mitigating against political instability by using multiple jurisdictional private trust companies.
- Dealing with tax and immigration planning for family members born outside Africa, most commonly in the US.
- Dealing with education matters, where children are educated aboard, commonly in the UK and the necessary visa arrangements for this.
- Dealing with international families working in Africa, for example India, providing a truly international wealth plan.

By way of example, we have supported the following clients:

- An UHNW economist, entrepreneur and philanthropist with interests in financial services, energy, real estate, agri and healthcare businesses. His philanthropic interests include a programme to encourage start up
entrepreneurs to contribute to the social and economic development of 
Africa, as well as a number of leadership and advisory roles on economic 
development and think tank boards.

• An UHNW entrepreneur with business assets in financial services. His children 
are at school in the UK, and we have advised in relation to visa requirements for 
his wife, property acquisition and UK tax. His philanthropic and public work 
includes an active role health related organisations.

• An UHNW family with UK property interests requiring complex restructuring.
Team biographies

Adrian Mayer
Partner
T: +44 (0)1242 246339 | adrian.mayer@crsblaw.com

Adrian is a corporate transactional lawyer and specialises in advising on private equity investments and corporate finance work. He advises a broad range of corporate and M&A transactions including acquisitions, divestitures, re-capitalisations, joint ventures and strategic alliances, venture capital and private equity transactions (including management buyouts), acting for investors, corporates and management teams. His work is both domestic and international.

Adrian advises a range of financial institutions including international private equity fund manager and banks, and also family owned businesses, large and medium sized corporates (both public and private) and individuals. He has a proven track record of working with multi-national clients undertaking complex cross-border transactions and acting on numerous projects in multiple jurisdictions.

Adrian is particularly active in Africa and is very experienced in advising clients on transactions in that region across a number of industry groups and sectors, including real estate and construction, agribusiness, financial services, energy and natural resources and retail and leisure. He is an active participant in a number of African focussed bodies and (pre-Covid) a frequent traveller to the region. Adrian is an Alumni of London Business School, having completed its Corporate Finance Programme.

Yacine Diallo
Partner
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Yacine’s practice focuses on international tax structuring, including M&A, private equity, real estate, JVs and energy projects. Yacine provides direct and indirect tax assistance for private equity houses and real estate funds on their fund-raising structures, cross-border holding and financing strategies.

He is also advising family holding vehicles (family offices) and private clients, such as entrepreneurs or top executives on wealth management structures.

Yacine has a wealth of experience in assisting clients on Africa-related transactions (in all regions of the Continent) and sovereign investment entities and family holdings from the Gulf region (GCC).
Keir Gordon  
Partner

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Keir advises clients on a wide variety of corporate finance issues such as mergers and acquisitions, investment funds and investment finance related matters. He regularly advises on cross border mergers and acquisitions real estate transactions and financing in sport. He has worked on football club financing for over 15 years, dealing with takeovers, debt and equity funding, player and stadium acquisitions, sponsorship and naming rights. Keir is identified in the legal directories as a leading expert in Sport and mid-market mergers and acquisitions. He has worked in London, Hong Kong and Australia.

Richard Kiddell  
Partner

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Richard has more than 20 years of experience of handling complex, high-value international disputes, involving parties and laws from multiple jurisdictions in the international arbitration and investment treaty arenas.

Richard has advised clients in a number of complex, high-value arbitrations and has considerable experience of the major institutional rules such as ICC, LCIA, DIFC-LCIA/DIAC and SIAC. Richard also has significant recent experience of investment treaty matters, including at the annulment stage.

Richard has acted for commercial parties, high net worth individuals and state-owned entities across a myriad of sectors including Aerospace, Defence and Government, Banking and Finance, Energy and Natural Resources, Technology, Media and Telecommunications, and Transportation and Infrastructure.

He regularly speaks on arbitration topics and has done so around the globe, including in Japan, Uganda, India, the USA and the Middle East.

Andrew Collins  
Partner

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Andrew specialises in corporate advice and transactional work for a wide variety of public and private companies, including family businesses.

In the listed company sector, Andrew has floated companies on the Main Market and on AIM in London, as well as a number of dual listings, including businesses in overseas jurisdictions such as Malaysia, China, Israel, Tajikistan and the US.

As well as acting for corporates, Andrew also acts for the sponsors and brokers, and has extensive experience of takeovers, placings and other fundraises, and corporate governance matters.

In Africa, Andrew has worked in Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, Cote D’Ivoire and South Africa, including in oil and gas and natural resources, real estate, farming and fisheries.
Edward Robinson
Senior Associate
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Edward has experience of a wide range of Corporate and Commercial transactions including mergers and acquisitions, private equity and corporate finance.
He has worked with clients from a variety of sectors, including real estate, technology and healthcare. Clients include listed plc's with international interests through to fast-growing owner-managed SMEs. Edward has a particular specialism of corporate transactions in sub-Saharan Africa, including recent deals in Nigeria, Ghana, Mozambique, Côte d’Ivoire and Zambia.

Sandrine de Sousa
Partner
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Sandrine specialises in mergers & acquisitions and private equity (notably in real estate and industrial sectors). She advises French and foreign clients, industrial groups, private equity funds, real estate investment funds.
Sandrine has a renowned expertise in structured financing (corporate finance, acquisition finance and project finance) with a particular focus in the energy sector.

Tobias Niehl
Partner
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Tobias advises investment funds and their managers on regulatory matters related to them. This includes advice on setting up or restructuring investment funds, which can be regulated (e.g. UCITS) or unregulated.
Tobias has more than 20 years of experience in this area. He spent almost 10 years heading the legal teams of two Luxembourg fund managers. He is a member of several working groups of the Luxembourg investment fund association (ALFI), inter alia of the working group “AIFMD review and developments”.

Victoria Younghusband
Partner
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Victoria is a corporate lawyer who has specialised in advising investment funds and their managers and other advisers on all aspects from set-up, fund raising, governance, acquisitions, disposals and mergers to restructuring and winding-up.
The funds may be open-ended or closed-ended, onshore or offshore, authorised or unregulated and in a number of different legal structures. Much of her work is
cross-border with the managers, funds or underlying assets being based worldwide, including in particular the USA, continental Europe, Asia-Pacific and Africa. In the quoted funds arena, she acts for sponsors on occasion, as well as for the funds themselves, or their managers. She has been an expert witness in a dispute on the terms of an investment management agreement.

She is a member of the Company Law Committee of the City of London Law Society and led their Joint Working Group on Market Abuse. She is also a member of the technical committee of the Association of Investment Companies (AIC) and a member of various working groups of the Alternative Investment Management Association (AIMA). She is ranked as a leading individual for Investment Funds in Chambers and Legal 500, and recognised as an expert in Who’s Who Legal: Private Funds and is highly regarded for investment funds in IFLR1000. She is also a member of the 100 Women in Finance London Legal and Compliance Peer Advisory Group.

Victoria is admitted to practise in England and Wales and in Hong Kong (where she lived and worked for four years).

Steven Carey
Partner
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Steven is the global Head of the Construction and Engineering group, based in our London office.

Steven is a specialist construction and engineering lawyer. Steven obtained a Civil and Structural Engineering degree and then worked as an engineer for a major contractor before switching to law. He advises employers, major contractors, engineers, sub-contractors and suppliers on a wide range of construction matters, both domestically and internationally. He has a wide experience of working on all the various forms of Construction and Engineering contracts, as well as numerous bespoke forms. He is just as comfortable advising on procurement strategy and negotiating contracts as resolving disputes whether it be via mediation, expert determination, adjudication, arbitration or litigation.

He sits as an Adjudicator on the TeCSA panel. He writes regularly for trade press such as Building and Construction News and is one of a panel of judges for the Construction News “Specialist Contractor of the year” awards. Steven is named in Legal Experts and was recently recommended as a Thought Leader by Who’s Who Legal for construction and is a frequent speaker on construction issues. He is currently ranked in both Construction directories (Legal 500 and Chambers).

With his engineering background, Steven is able to liaise effectively and efficiently with both factual and expert witnesses on what can be technically complex cases.
Francis Ho  
Partner  
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Francis has substantial experience on ground-breaking schemes both in the UK and internationally (particularly Europe and MENA) and regularly advise on datacentres, PRS, student accommodation, luxury and boutique hotels, sports stadia, universities, skyscrapers, power projects and other infrastructure using a wide range of procurement strategies. He also advises on distressed construction projects and on remediation works, including fire safety matters.

He has particular expertise in Building Information Modelling, sustainable development and renewable energy and sits on the Construction Industry Council’s Green Construction Panel. He chairs the Chartered Institute of Building’s Contract & Procurement Special Interest Group and is also Vice-Chair of the City of London Law Society’s Construction Committee.

He co-authored the Chartered Institute of Building’s Complex Projects Contract 2013 and Time and Cost Management Contract 2015 contract suites. He is the editor of Sweet & Maxwell’s Construction and Engineering Precedents, one of the leading collections of precedents for the engineering and construction industry. He is ranked in the leading legal directories and a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Building. He is qualified in England and Wales and Ireland.

Matthew Hobbs  
Senior Associate  
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Matthew is a corporate lawyer who advises on a wide range of matters including mergers and acquisitions, private equity investments and exits, company reorganisations, joint ventures and corporate finance transactions. He has advised a broad range of clients including private equity funds, management teams, impact investors, start-ups and family businesses.

Emmanuel Wiafe  
Associate  
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Manny advises lenders and borrowers on various financing arrangements, including property investment and development finance, project finance, sports finance and receivables financing. His work is generally UK based however he has experience working with clients in Africa and the Middle East.

Manny’s specialist areas include:

Real Estate Finance: Development Finance and Investment Finance across a range of asset classes: residential investment, commercial real estate, student accommodation / PBSA, retirement living, later living and shopping centres.
Sports Finance: Advising sports investors and football clubs in the Premier League and EFL Championship.

Emerging Markets: Advising clients on transactions across a number of sectors, including agribusiness and energy and natural resources.
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company culture at the school leavers awards

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in 19 work type/geographical categories
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Ranked in **47**
legal and geographical categories of
chambers 2020

**99**
Lawyers are listed as leading individuals

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