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Four Partners with Decades of International Infrastructure Development and Controversy Experience Will Join Crowell & Moring and Firm Plans to Open Doha Office

Team advises clients on the full life cycle of complex infrastructure projects

Washington – September 2, 2020: Robert Hager, Charbel Maakaron, Michael Guiffré, and Meagan Bachman will be joining Crowell & Moring as partners, a move that will expand the firm’s global infrastructure, international dispute resolution and litigation capabilities. As part of their arrival, the firm plans to launch an office in Doha with an additional team of eight lawyers.

The team has a Doha-centered practice and has been representing the Government of the State of Qatar for 15 years on the development of the Hamad International Airport, one of the largest airport and infrastructure projects in the world. In addition, they have represented both national and international clients for decades on diverse matters and projects in Qatar and in other jurisdictions around the globe. The lawyers will join the firm from Squire Patton Boggs. They will be based in the firm’s Washington, D.C. office and will be joined by Joshua Lindsay, a counsel. Maakaron will serve as the managing partner of Crowell & Moring’s Doha office, with a stellar team of lawyers that was recognized as the “Best International Law Firm in Qatar” for the past three years running.

The group has deep transactional, regulatory, and litigation experience, guiding clients through large projects from inception through completion, including the controversies and arbitrations that often result. The lawyers have served as counsel to governments, private companies, developers, lenders, borrowers, and engineering and construction firms on infrastructure, real estate development, construction, privatization, and public-private partnership matters in the Middle East, West Africa, Europe, Asia, and the United States. They have broad industry experience and have advised clients in the aviation, infrastructure, finance, defense, technology, education, tourism/hospitality, healthcare, and energy sectors. The team is particularly recognized for its premier global aviation infrastructure and disputes practice.

“We are very pleased that this well-established and highly-respected group will be joining the firm,” said Philip T. Inglima, chair of Crowell & Moring. “We see Qatar as a strong market for one of our strategic growth priorities, which is the expansion of our global infrastructure practice, building on the strengths of our government contracts, international dispute resolution, project development, and regulatory experience. With increased private and public investment in critical infrastructure projects, the addition of this team will enhance our ability to provide the full spectrum of critical support to clients active in this space.”

The team is led by **Robert Hager**, who served as managing partner of the Squire Patton Boggs Doha office from 2006-2012. He is the founding chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce in Qatar and is ranked in *Chambers*, *Best Lawyers* and *IFLR1000*. He is a skilled and experienced transactional and disputes counsel on infrastructure, aviation, construction, and technology projects, including project finance and mergers and acquisitions. Hager has represented diverse clients worldwide in projects and transactions financed by the World Bank, International Finance Corporation, the Export-Import Bank of the United States, and other international lending institutions. In addition to his extensive international experience, he has worked on a wide range of complex U.S. transactions. He studied Middle East politics at Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service and graduated from Georgetown Law in 1991. He is admitted to the Doha, D.C. and Virginia bars.

“We are delighted that we will be working with Robert, Charbel, Michael, Meagan and Joshua once again,” said Robert Weekes, managing partner of Crowell & Moring’s London office. London is an important venue for the group as the arbitration matter in

relation to the airport development is based in London. “We already have considerable experience practicing alongside these talented lawyers and their clients and we look forward to renewing that teamwork at Crowell & Moring. Their arrival will enhance our IDR and corporate practices around the world and add further strength and depth to our excellent Infrastructure team. The entire London office looks forward to working closely with this impressive team on a range of projects for clients, from complex litigation and arbitration matters to corporate transactions and project finance.”

“Crowell & Moring will provide a superb platform for our practice,” Hager said. “In addition to being able to collaborate with firm attorneys across the U.S. and Europe to support our existing projects, the depth of the firm’s transactional, regulatory, and disputes capabilities will greatly benefit our clients as they pursue future opportunities and investments worldwide, as well as navigate the controversy matters that may develop.”

Charbel Maakaron has served as managing partner of Squire Patton Boggs’ Doha office. He has spent more than a decade in Qatar advising corporate clients on commercial transactions, corporate structuring, finance and securities, commercial litigation, capital markets and regulatory matters. Maakaron also guides government officials on legislative projects and has helped develop laws in Qatar and the Gulf Cooperation Council. He is ranked by *Chambers* in the area of corporate/commercial law and serves as chair of the Arbitration Commission of the International Chamber of Commerce in Qatar. Maakaron started his legal career in his native country of Lebanon after earning a law degree from the University of Bristol in 2003. He is admitted in the Beirut and Doha Bars.

“We are excited to be joining a premiere international law firm that is committed to providing outstanding legal service to our clients in Qatar,” Maakaron said. “While other firms are contracting, Crowell & Moring is in a build-mode which is remarkably impressive. We look forward to expanding our first-class infrastructure and disputes practice, as well as our corporate practice with a firm that plans to grow in Doha.”

Michael Guiffré is a first-chair trial lawyer who has extensive experience in international arbitrations and U.S. litigation in a wide range of disputes involving commercial and government contracts, construction claims, intellectual property rights, business torts, and fraud. At his previous firm, he was chair of the litigation practice in Washington, D.C. He was lead counsel in international and domestic arbitrations and federal and state courts throughout the nation on a wide range of matters, including infrastructure development, commercial and government contracts, construction claims, intellectual property rights, business torts, and fraud. A 1993 graduate of Georgetown Law, he served for six years as an officer and lawyer in the U.S. Army where he managed complex contract litigation and fraud investigations in the Office of the Chief Trial Attorney.

Meagan Bachman has extensive controversy experience. She has served as lead and co-lead counsel on a number of international arbitrations and mediations involving large infrastructure projects. She has represented clients in proceedings conducted under the auspices of the International Chamber of Commerce International Court of Arbitration and the International Centre for Dispute Resolution. Her practice also includes counseling clients on contract disputes and other complex commercial issues relating to major construction and infrastructure projects, including disputes avoidance and early resolution of disputes. She graduated Order of the Coif from George Washington University Law School in 2002.

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