

WFW CO-HOST DISCUSSION ON INVESTMENT IN EAST AFRICA

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Watson Farley & Williams (“WFW”) was delighted to recently co-host a seminar and networking lunch exploring investment opportunities in East Africa. The event, which was organised in conjunction with the London Chamber of Commerce’s Asian Business Association and GBS Africa, considered the geo-political and economic situation in the region, and was attended by a wide range of guests, including the Ambassadors for the Republic of Uganda, HE Julius Peter Moto, the Republic of Rwanda, HE Yamina Karitanyi, the Republic of Sudan, HE Mohammed Abdalla Ali Eltom, and the Acting High Commissioner to the UK of the Republic of Kenya, Mrs Grace Cerere.

The debate commenced with an introduction by Tony Matharu, Managing Director of Grange Hotels and Chairman of the Asian Business Association Committee, which focussed on identifying the tangible opportunities and challenges to investing in East Africa. WFW’s Heike Trischmann then chaired a panel which featured Agnes Gitau of GBS Africa, Matt Robinson of Moody’s Investors Service and Keni Kariuki of the School for Oriental and African Studies.

Discussion ranged from the current political environment and potential for uncertainty and unpredictability, through to the ways in which different countries are classified by the ratings agencies, and the challenges in terms of agriculture and food security. The event enabled the states and potential investors to start a conversation and the overwhelming message was that while there are still some complexities in investing in East Africa, the position is one which is improving and the region is certainly open for business. The event was followed by networking over a buffet lunch.

WFW partner [Dev Desai](#), who sponsored the event, said “this was a really great initiative and we were pleased to be able to get involved. The firm has a long history in Africa, advising lenders, governments, investors, developers and trade players in a wide variety of transactions and disputes, and this event was an ideal opportunity to assist such market participants in building their knowledge base and developing relationships”.

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