Herbert Smith Freehills Announces 30% Global Target For Greater Gender Balance

Thursday 13 March, 2014

Herbert Smith Freehills has announced a 30% gender target for the proportion of women in its global partnership, making it one of the only global firms to publically commit to international gender targets within a set timeframe.

It is set in two stages:

May 2017 - at least 25% of the partnership will be women
May 2019 - at least 30% of the partnership will be women

The objective is to achieve gender balance by widening the 'talent pool' from which partners at the firm are promoted. The targets are an important step in helping to create a level playing field for both men and women who aspire to become partners.

The targets were set in support of the firm's wider gender initiatives and are strengthened by current global programmes including:

Targeted career development, sponsorship, mentoring and coaching
Unconscious bias training for partners and inclusive leadership development for partners and senior leaders
Monitoring gender indicators
Active diversity and inclusion committees across the firm including women's networks
Being a member of the 30% Club in London and Hong Kong, which is committed to increasing gender diversity at the senior levels of organisations

Joint CEO David Willis said: "These targets have tangible benefits for the whole business - as well as promoting the best talent, they will help us meet the needs of our clients and bring diverse perspectives to our business and the business of clients.

"In order to create a fully diverse and inclusive culture, we need to challenge ourselves to make measurable progress; just as we measure progress in any part of our business."

Joint CEO Gavin Bell said: "Our clear and realistic targets demonstrate our commitment to strengthening diversity within the firm by ensuring we are promoting the very best talent amongst our lawyers. In particular, we should ensure there are no barriers to women joining the partnership."

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About Herbert Smith Freehills:

Operating from over 20 offices across Asia Pacific, EMEA and North America, Herbert Smith Freehills is at the heart of the new global business landscape providing premium quality, full-service legal advice. We provide many of the world's most important organisations with access to market-leading dispute resolution, projects and transactional legal advice, combined with expertise in a number of global industry sectors, including energy, natural resources, infrastructure and financial services.
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