

Greenbaum Rowe Smith & Davis LLP have announced the addition of an International Human Rights Compliance Group to the White Collar Defense and Corporate Compliance Practice Area

August 17, 2010

Raymond M. Brown, Chair of the White Collar Defense & Corporate Compliance Group at Greenbaum, Rowe, Smith & Davis LLP in Woodbridge, New Jersey announced the addition of the International Human Rights Compliance component of the practice group. This addition springs from the increased need for multinational companies to assess market entry or ongoing business operations through a human rights impact assessment as a matter of corporate due diligence. Such assessments have largely been done by companies in the mining or oil exploration (extractive) industries when they were entering a host country that was economically underdeveloped or conflict ridden and, as a result, had few human rights safeguards. The recent human rights exposures of British Petroleum's Gulf spill and Google's censorship issues in China have changed the due diligence calculus: a developed country like the United States can be a victim of human rights abuses, and abuses can occur in any industry, like search engine technology.

Companies in all industries face far more subtle, but serious intersections with human rights issues, like censorship and local government laws and customs. Firms coming into the US or another economically developed country to do business, need to employ a human rights impact assessment (HRIA). For example, the connections of even one multinational company executive with a questionable or sanctioned government or practice may be perceived as transgressing human rights standards and may stop a deal or a market entry." In Ray's recent article, *BP Executives' Human Rights Miscalculation: Have They Bet the Company* published by DiversityInc, he suggests reasons why BP failed to do an HRIA, one being that the US, with its developed economy and regulatory safeguards, appeared an unlikely human rights victim.

The International Human Rights Compliance Group counsels multinationals, both foreign and domestic, in a number of areas: assessments, governance, transactions and dispute resolution or litigation. The corporate and litigation attorneys in this Group have the capability to draw from any of the firm's comprehensive menu of legal practice areas to meet a client's requirements for efficiency and cost management. It can assist clients in these areas:

- Perform risk assessments, audits, internal investigations;
- Implementation of prevention programs, including creating codes of conduct, internal policies, training and complaint procedures;

Press Releases (Cont.)

- Assist clients with public responses and inquiries from media, government personnel and nongovernmental organizations;
- Drafting of memoranda and agreements with third parties and government agencies;
- Advise clients on due diligence and risk mitigation;
- Represent parties on human rights risks in M&A and other transactions;
- Defend clients in disputes and litigation in state and federal courts, before administrative agencies and the UN;
- Identify and supervise counsel in foreign jurisdictions;
- Educate clients about the extent to which they may have legal “exposure” based on the conduct of companies with which they “partner”.

About Greenbaum, Rowe, Smith, & Davis LLP

In 2010 Greenbaum, Rowe, Smith & Davis LLP celebrates its 96th year of building business in New Jersey. The New Jersey Law firm has over 100 attorneys in four main practice departments: Litigation; Real Estate; Corporate; and Tax, Trusts and Estates. The firm has offices located in Woodbridge and Roseland, New Jersey. For more information visit the firm's web site at www.greenbaumlaw.com.