

# WONGPARTNERSHIP

MEDIA ADVISORY

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## WONGPARTNERSHIP CONTINUES TO EXPAND WITH INTERNATIONALISATION EFFORTS BY OPENING NEW OFFICE IN ABU DHABI

### - Firm makes significant commitment to the GCC region -

14 May 2008 – WongPartnership LLP (the “Firm”), one of the leading law firms in Singapore, today announced that it has obtained its licence to open a new overseas office in Abu Dhabi. With the continued buzz of business activity in the GCC region, which has announced projects worth over US\$2 trillion, especially in Abu Dhabi, the richest city in the world, the Firm decided to set up the Abu Dhabi office as the centre of its Middle East operations. The Abu Dhabi office will be the Firm’s third overseas office after its Doha office, opened in May 2007 and Shanghai office, established in 2004.

WongPartnership was first established in 1992 and has rapidly expanded to become one of the largest law firms in Singapore - with a dramatic increase from 11 lawyers to over 200 lawyers within a short span of 16 years. The Firm’s continued process of internationalisation is a natural step given that much of its work involves a cross-border element and close to 30% of its lawyers are non-Singaporeans and include lawyers from the PRC, Malaysia, India, Brunei, Japan, Vietnam, Indonesia and Lebanon. In the latest Thomson Financial M&A league tables for legal advisors based on work done in the first quarter of 2008, WongPartnership took the top spot in the league table rankings for the *Asia-Pacific region (excluding Japan)* with 18 announced deals worth over US\$19 billion, and was the only Singapore law firm ranked in the *Worldwide* league tables. Taking the lead from the Singapore Government’s push for companies to look towards the Middle East region, WongPartnership has ventured beyond Singapore’s shores to firmly establish its footprint overseas.

Explaining WongPartnership’s strategy for its Middle East Practice, Managing Partner Dilhan Pillay Sandrasegara said, “While the Singapore market is undoubtedly still a very important one for us, the legal landscape has changed significantly and we are no longer confined by national boundaries and must expand overseas to serve our clients’ needs even better and also to tap into a pool of clients and potential clients in the Middle East for their outbound business objectives in the key markets in which we operate.” Paul Sandosham, Head of the Middle East Practice added, “The Firm recognised the tremendous growth in the Middle East region fuelled by the increasing oil prices and the desire of the United Arab Emirates to develop and compete on the global front. WongPartnership needs to be on the ground to strengthen our ability to assist our clients from Singapore, Malaysia, China and India, as they

grow their business in the bustling Middle East region – a region with vast untapped opportunities.”

Dilhan elaborated on the Firm’s Middle East team “We aim to provide our legal services to Middle Eastern companies looking to make investments in Southeast Asia, China and India, and to our clients in their investments in the Middle East. As a sign of our commitment to the region, we have transferred one of our more senior M&A partners, Ng Eng Leng, to the Abu Dhabi office to spearhead the development of our M&A and transactional platform in the Middle East, and brought on board an experienced commercial and real estate lawyer, Ziad Touma who is fluent in Arabic, French and English and has spent many years working in the Middle East, most recently at the leading UAE firm of Habib Al Mulla. Whether in the Middle East or from our Singapore and China offices, we are ably positioned to assist our clients worldwide across the fields of capital markets, funds formation, M&A, real estate financing transactions and infrastructure, projects & construction work.”

Pooling together their experience and breadth of legal skills, the core team of Partners involved in the Middle East Practice comprises Ng Eng Leng, Ziad Touma and Carol Anne Tan in the areas of M&A, real estate, corporate and commercial transactions and Tan Chee Meng, Senior Counsel and Paul Sandosham in the area of infrastructure, projects and construction. The team is augmented by the involvement of the Firm’s Founder, Wong Meng Meng, Senior Counsel who has over 35 years of experience and whose principal focus is the development of the Firm’s Middle East platform with the core team. Drawing from the expertise of over 200 lawyers based in Singapore, China and the Middle East, the core team is well placed to serve clients across all fields of law and spanning a broad range of industries.

**Issued for and on behalf of WongPartnership LLP**

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