

Sheppard Mullin Launches Beijing Office

China Veteran James Zimmerman Joins Firm To Lead New Office; Client Needs Drive Sheppard Mullin's Second China Location

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Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP today announced the opening of the firm's Beijing office, marking a natural expansion of its Asia practice. The new office, Sheppard Mullin's second in China, is in Beijing's Chaoyang District, in the heart of the nation's capital.

James M. Zimmerman has joined Sheppard Mullin in Beijing as a member of the firm's Corporate practice group. Zimmerman will lead the new office. He most recently was a partner at Squire Sanders & Dempsey in Beijing, where he was the chief representative. Joining Zimmerman in Sheppard Mullin's Beijing office is special counsel Sharon Xu. Xu is also a member of the Corporate practice group and most recently practiced at Squire Sanders.

The new office in Beijing marks the next step in Sheppard Mullin's strategic growth plan for Asia, which saw the opening of its office in Shanghai in 2007. As with Shanghai, the decision to open in Beijing was driven by the needs of existing clients and the importance of being near the country's seat of government. The firm's initial focus in Beijing is to work with clients on outbound M&A and inbound and outbound investment opportunities.

"Many of our clients have operations in China and are pursuing aggressive growth plans there. It is natural for us to establish a larger footprint in China to provide the support and guidance that our clients require in both Beijing and Shanghai," said Guy Halgren, chairman of Sheppard Mullin. "As China's administrative, policy and regulatory hub, Beijing is an important center. Being in the Chinese capital will give us easier access to government regulators."

"Jim has an impressive China-based commercial background -- primarily focused on foreign direct investment, representing multi-national corporations in their China transactions. His expertise is an excellent fit with our China practice, as well as the firm's corporate practice," said Jamie Mercer, co-chair of the firm's Corporate practice group. "We are excited to have Jim join the firm and lead our new Beijing office. He is a recognized name in China, entrenched in the Beijing legal and business communities, and represents a number of Fortune 500 companies."

"I am very excited about joining Sheppard Mullin, a top-notch full service global firm with an impressive record of growth and expansion in recent years," Zimmerman commented. "I look forward to growing the new office in Beijing and working closely with my new partners firmwide."

Zimmerman has been involved with trade-related matters for over 20 years and represents U.S. companies in a broad range of industries with respect to their joint venture investments, manufacturing operations, mergers and acquisitions activities, regulatory compliance, customs and trade matters, labor and employment, intellectual property rights enforcement and dispute resolution matters. He helps businesses overcome the complexities of doing business in China, which often involves obtaining government approvals or seeking government support to enhance or modify current legal or regulatory provisions and practice.

Zimmerman is the former chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce China, which represents more than 2,800 US companies and individuals with trade and investments in China, and was elected and served as the organization's chairman for two terms (2007, 2008) and vice chairman for two terms (2005, 2006). He is the author of several books, chapters, and articles concerning trade and China related issues, including the well-recognized *China Law Deskbook* (1999, 2005, 2010), a publication of the American Bar Association.

Zimmerman received his J.D. from the University of San Diego in 1987, his M.B.A. and his B.A. from University of California, Irvine in 1984 and 1982 respectively.

Xu's practice focuses on corporate and tax matters, customs and foreign exchange issues. Her experience includes advising international clients on a variety of corporate, commercial and tax matters related to foreign direct investment, corporate restructuring, cross-border transactions and foreign contract projects.

In addition to Zimmerman and Xu, partner Jenny Liu and associate Carrie Bai have relocated from Sheppard Mullin's Shanghai office to Beijing.

A member of the firm's Corporate practice group, Liu specializes in private equity, venture capital, mergers & acquisitions, and cross-border transactions and has represented clients on more than 50 investment transactions in China ranging from early stage financing to pre-IPO investments. Liu also represents Chinese emerging growth companies on a variety of issues, including restructuring, drafting and negotiating licensing agreements, addressing employment law issues, and establishing public company reporting to the United States Securities and Exchange Commission. She counsels companies on the adoption of various incentive plans including stock option plans for Chinese employees and assisting with legal compliance. Liu received her J.D. from the University of California, Hastings College of Law in 2000, and her M.S. and her B.S., *magna cum laude*, from Golden State University in 1997 and 1995 respectively. Bai represents Chinese emerging growth companies in a variety of issues including restructuring, financing, and establishing public company reporting to the United States Securities Exchange Commission.

Sheppard Mullin has 15 attorneys based in its China offices. The firm's Corporate practice group includes more than 100 attorneys firmwide.