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We are proud to announce that GRATA International has been ranked as an Outstanding Law Firm by Asia Law Profiles 2018 in the following practices: **Banking and Finance, Construction and Real Estate, Corporate/M&A, Dispute Resolution and Litigation, and Energy and Natural Resources.** The following practice areas were also recognised by the directory: **Capital Markets, Competition and Antitrust, Financial Services Regulatory, Insurance, Intellectual Property, IT, Teleco and Media, Labour and Employment, Projects and Infrastructure, Restructuring and Insolvency, and Taxation.**

Continuing to grow and gain experience, GRATA International has well consolidated its positions in the Kazakhstan legal services market.

For several years, the firm's lawyers have been widely recognised for leading roles in major transactions at the national level. **Shaimerden Chikanayev, Yerzhan Yessimkhanov and Bakhyt Tukulov** have each achieved a Leading Lawyer ranking in Asialaw's Leading Lawyers 2018 list published [here](#).

Banking & Finance

GRATA International has a track record of advising international banks and companies on project finance and financial transactions. The firm has a close working relationship and effective communication with the financial regulators in Central Asia. **Shaimerden Chikanayev** oversees the banking and finance practice and is experienced in project finance in the energy and mining industries.

Competition & Antitrust

GRATA International is experienced in advising corporates and government authorities on antitrust law. **Bolat Miyatov** advised Petro Welt Technologies on obtaining merger clearance in Kazakhstan. **Saule Akhmetova** advised an international wholesale company on potential legal risks in anti-monopoly regulations. Akhmetova also advised Monster Energy on distribution contracts to be recognised as anti-competitive.

Construction & Real Estate

GRATA International provides a broad spectrum of service on real estate transactions and regulations. The firm also assists clients in conducting due diligence of targets seeking title clearance. **Yerzhan Yessimkhanov** advised Mercury Real Estate Group on its acquisition of several business centres, offices and other real estate facilities. Yessimkhanov also advised Benetton Real Estate International on the sale of four commercial facilities in Kazakhstan to a local buyer. In November 2016, a domestic developer entrusted the firm to advise on the construction, management agreements and tax advice of a luxury residential facility.

Corporate/M&A

“GRATA International is a top merger and acquisition (M&A) law firm in the Kazakh market,” says a satisfied client, “All lawyers are very reliable and hardworking, always willing to go the last mile to achieve the best possible outcome.” In September 2016, **Bolat Miyatov** advised China Gezhouba Group Cement on the establishment of a KZT30 billion (\$90 million) joint-venture in Kazakhstan for a strategic governmental project to construct a modern cement factory. Miyatov also advised an international cosmetics producer on an intra-group transaction. Another highlight shows the firm acting as the legal counsel for Uber on its business launch in Kazakhstan.

Dispute Resolution & Litigation

GRATA International has a very good standing in the country for its excellent dispute resolution advisory and representation. “The lawyers I have worked with are very proactive, professional and thorough,” says a client. **Bakhyt Tukulov** advised a technology company on a transport dispute involving more than 13 parties with a liability of over \$5 million. Tukulov also assisted the same client in a \$30 million project dispute. The firm is representing an international industrial service company, a creditor, in a court-ordered administration on bankruptcy and rehabilitation before the District, Appellate and Cassation Courts. The firm also represented a packaging company in a series of insolvency and fraud litigation.

Intellectual Property

At GRATA International, **Saule Akhmetova** advised a leading food manufacturer on a trade mark litigation to ensure the exclusive rights to the mark before a civil court. Akhmetova and **Bakhyt Tukulov** advised a Spanish clothing company on administrative proceedings, confiscation and destruction of counterfeit goods. In a recent highlight, **Berekmoinov** advised an international restaurant chain on drafting and registering its trade mark license agreement.

IT, Telco & Media

GRATA International has a strong focus on advising international clients from the telecommunication sector on their operations in Kazakhstan. “We have worked with the same team for over three years. They are responsive, understand the legal issues and have a solid commercial awareness of doing business in Kazakhstan,” says a client. **Yerzhan Yessimkhanov, Maxim Burak and Assel Ilyasova** advised Uber on its legal framework, negotiations with state authorities and tax issues for its market entry. Yessimkhanov also advised Huawei on the construction of telecommunication networks in Kazakhstan. China Telecom has entrusted the firm for years to provide regulatory, contractual and tax advice.

Labour & Employment

GRATA International has one of the “most competitive” labour practice teams and advises on a full range of labour issues. A client recommends the firm for the team’s “excellent judgment and ability to advise on complex situations”, “high ethical standards” and “outstanding execution capabilities”. **Saule Akhmetova** advised a global healthcare company on business restructuring and employee transfers. **Bolat Miyatov** advised a chemical company on amending internal policies, procedures, handbooks and labour agreements so they are in line with Kazakh labour legislation. The firm also advised an international oil and gas company on termination of employees.

Projects & Infrastructure

GRATA International is a consistent performer in the market and regularly advises investors and construction companies on project finance and regulatory matters. **Yerzhan Yessimkhanov and Bakhyt Tukulov** advised Altynalmas Engineering on drafting an engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) contract based on the International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC) Silver Book which is adapted to Kazakh practice and regulatory requirements. The firm also advised KazStroyService on numerous judicial proceedings with claims totalling \$1.5 million against a local subcontractor over a contractual dispute.

Taxation

Assel Ilyasova and Baizhan Bekzhanov at GRATA International advised CNLC International Kazakhstan on a tax dispute over tax audit results and associated tax penalty. The team successfully cancelled the corporate income tax and penalty. The team also advised Sinopec Engineering Group on a dispute with the Kazakh customs authorities on an appeal of customs audit results. Ilyasova and **Marina Kahiani** advised Palma Finance on tax support of transfer aircraft to the Kazakh air company under a leasing agreement.

Asialaw Profiles 2018 is a 22nd annual edition of a publication which reports on the most important matters, transactions and disputes in the region and provides a succinct and authoritative guide to the leading law firms and some of their key individuals. The research conducted by Asialaw Profiles is an important source of information for clients who are looking for legal advice.

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