

Sheppard Mullin Adds Ex-Samsung Chemical GC To Corporate Group

By Tom Zanki

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Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP said on Monday that it recruited a former Samsung Chemical Group general counsel who is deeply acquainted with energy companies and experienced in advising corporate boards and shareholders on mergers, acquisitions, public offerings and private placements to work as a partner in the corporate group in Washington, D.C., and Seoul, South Korea.

Hwan Kim arrives at Sheppard Mullin with clients including Korean multinational companies that conduct business in the United States and the Middle East, with particular experience advising construction companies, developers, utilities, private equity firms and energy equipment manufacturers. He also advises companies in their multibillion-dollar construction litigations in the energy industry.



Hwan Kim

Kim, fluent in Korean, has served as assistant general counsel for Samsung Group in charge of international legal affairs, general counsel for Samsung Chemical Group and the chief legal counsel for the Samsung Olympic Task Force Team. He noted that Sheppard Mullin has also represented Samsung, a key commonality that made joining the firm a strong fit.

Kim told Law360 that the firm's commitment to international growth, especially in Asia, Europe and the Middle East, combined with its collegial culture, attracted him. He joins a firm with more than 60 attorneys in Washington, D.C., among 150 corporate attorneys globally.

"It's a group of hardworking attorneys and is still run like a partnership instead of a corporation." Kim said on Tuesday. "Given the firm's robustness, it was very compelling for me. You want to be able to work with people you like, you want the firm to be profitable and you want to be able to grow clients together. Those are the three most important things."

Kim has recently represented Samsung Engineering Co. Ltd. in construction disputes in the Middle East and the Americas, Samsung SRA Asset Management Co. Ltd. in the acquisition of real estate interests in the U.S. and advised Samsung Asset Management Co. Ltd. in raising financing from sovereign funds.

"[Kim's] deep roots in Samsung and the Korean and international business communities dovetail well with our long-standing client Samsung and our Seoul office," Sheppard Mullin Chairman Guy N. Halgren said in a statement. "Hwan brings a mix of strong knowledge and valuable expertise in the energy and construction sectors, which complement and supplement our current international and domestic capabilities across our firm's footprint and in Washington, D.C."

Kim has negotiated and drafted agreements relating to the formation of corporate governance for energy companies; merger and acquisition of energy companies and divestiture of their assets; global procurement agreements for energy equipment and systems; engineering, procurement and construction contracts; and operations and maintenance agreements for energy projects.

Representing multinational clients amid a rapidly changing economic environment figures to be a challenge that Kim expects to keep him busy.

"As clients adjust to a changing global marketplace, we have to adjust as well," Kim said. "That's proving to be quite a challenge. The market has become very complex for clients. To represent them, you have to be where they are and understand how they are evolving."

Kim is admitted to practice in the District of Columbia and Pennsylvania and earned his law degree from Georgetown University Law Center.

Kim's arrival follows Sheppard Mullin's **recruitment in April** of Greenberg Traurig LLP corporate partner Mike McKinnon, experienced in securities law and mergers and acquisitions in the health care and life sciences industries, for its Orange County, California, office.

McKinnon joined the firm following Sheppard Mullin's recruitment of Strategic Counsel Corp. managing partner Adam Ettinger as a corporate partner in its Century City, California, office and the March hiring of New York corporate partner Andy Felner, who arrived from financial adviser firm FDX Capital/FDX Offshore LLC, where he was co-founder and managing partner.

--Additional reporting by Kat Greene. Editing by Stephen Berg.