

White Collar & Corporate Investigations

Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan (QE) is the largest law firm in the world devoted solely to dispute resolution. We tackle our clients' matters so that, if need be, they are best placed to win in a trial or arbitration. This approach gives us a unique perspective in the area of white collar & corporate investigations, where we have built a stand-out global practice. As a result, we have been heavily involved in all of the recent and current white collar matters of note.

The QE Swiss office, led by Managing Partner Thomas Werlen, is the core of the firm's white collar & corporate investigations practice in Continental Europe.

The QE team in Switzerland has particular expertise and experience in cross-border criminal and regulatory investigations involving Swiss, European, U.S. and Asian regulators, where we consistently obtain favorable results for our clients in some of the biggest white collar & corporate investigation matters not only in Switzerland but worldwide.

NOTABLE REPRESENTATIONS

- a) We have been representing a UHNWI in connection with the global investigation into the collapse of the USD 14bn private equity firm The Abraaj Group.
- b) We were acting as lead-counsel to FIFA in what the New York Times described as "one of the most complicated international white collar cases in recent memory." We represented FIFA vis-à-vis the US and the Swiss authorities in the global criminal investigations involving allegations of corruption for the purpose to obtain sponsorship and broadcasting contracts and relating to the allocation of the FIFA World Cup.
- c) In the FIFA context, we also represented two major European banks in connection with allegations that the banks knew or should have known that accounts at the banks were used to pay bribes, and South American Football Confederation CONMEBOL in connection with allegations that high-level soccer officials abused their positions to solicit bribes from sports marketing companies.
- d) We represented several Swiss state and private banks in connection with the US-Swiss Tax Program. We obtained key settlements for the banks, including the first overall, benchmark settlement by a "Category 2" bank.
- e) We represented several major European banks in the "Panama Papers" investigation focused on whether accounts at the bank that were held under the names of companies created by the Panamanian law firm, Mossack Fonseca, were used to evade taxes, conduct business with sanctioned individuals or companies, or otherwise engage in criminal activity.
- f) We have been acting for several high-profile clients, including a Swiss financial institution and a Swiss-based commodities trading company, in connection with bribery probes related to the Venezuelan state-owned oil and gas company PDVSA that are being conducted by

- authorities around the globe, in particular federal prosecutors in the US and in Switzerland, into the use of state funds in Venezuela.
- g) We have been representing a Swiss commodities trading company in connection with civil and criminal investigations and litigation involving the Petrobras bribery scandal in Brazil in the Operation Carwash (Lava Jato), the largest corruption investigation in Latin American history, involving allegations of over USD 2.5 billion in bribes and kickbacks.
 - h) We have been acting for a Swiss-based international private bank in connection with the global criminal investigations involving 1MDB, Malaysia's sovereign wealth fund in one of the most complex, high-visibility money laundering investigations to date.
 - i) In the 1MDB context we have also been acting for the Abu Dhabi sovereign wealth fund in connection with investigations by the US and Swiss authorities regarding laundered assets. For the same client, we have been pursuing substantial civil claims against a major global financial institution involved in the setup of the 1MDB money laundering scheme.

RANKINGS AND AWARDS

The QE Swiss office has been mentioned in the key business and news media in Switzerland as among the premier firms in Switzerland, and has been described as one of the most innovative and most aggressive firms in its field.

Among others, the QE Swiss office was named as a top law firm in Switzerland and ranked in Tier 1 with “5 Stars” in White Collar & Corporate Investigations by Bilanz (2019). In addition, Bilanz recommended the QE Swiss office in particular in the area of commodities trading.

Quinn Emanuel’s Swiss office has been ranked by Global Investigations Review (“GIR”) in its review of the law and practice of international investigations in Switzerland in 2019. GIR notes that Quinn Emanuel “*has had a hand in almost every major recent white-collar and corporate investigation in the country*” and despite being a relative newcomer, “*has secured many high-profile engagements for the firm thus far.*”

Globally, QE’s white collar & investigations practice has been consistently ranked among the very best.