

# Greenberg poaches Hogan Lovells finance partner

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Greenberg Traurig LLP's New York office has hired a Chilean native as partner for its Latin American practice from Hogan Lovells LLP.



Oscar Stephens, 41, joined Greenberg on 5 August. His practice covers banking and finance and capital markets law. He will work closely with the firm's Miami and Mexico City offices.

Stephens has led landmark transactions. Most recently, he helped Nicaraguan bank Lafise Bancentro obtain a loan using a deferred payment agreement – the first of its kind in Nicaragua's banking sector. His impressive track record extends to advice in Ecuadorian sovereign bond issuances and Salvadorian bridge loans.

Marc Rossell, co-chair of Greenberg's Latin American practice, describes Stephens as an experienced lawyer with "a passion for client services." "Having had the opportunity to work with Oscar many times over the years, I am proud that he is now part of our team," he says.

Stephens is looking forward to the next chapter of his career. "I am really excited to be able to share the firm's resources and expertise with my clients," he says. "It will also be great to work with Marc who is a long-time colleague," he adds.

A Hogan Lovells spokesperson says the firm wishes Stephens all the best. It did not respond to *Latin Lawyer's* question over whether it would be hiring a replacement.

Known for its strong project finance and infrastructure, banking and finance, and energy work, Hogan Lovells' Latin American practice spans its Houston, Madrid, Miami, New York and Washington, DC, offices, as well as its regional offices in Brazil and Mexico. New York partners Emil Arca, Ricardo Martinez and Ronald Silverman continue to steer the group's banking and finance team following Stephens' departure.

At Greenberg, Stephens believes his greatest challenge in the coming years will involve political and economic developments, both locally and internationally, and their impact on Latin American investment. "There is a delicate balance between how much risk investors are willing to take and how expensive certain projects will become," he explains, adding that infrastructure and energy demand in the region is growing substantially. He hopes this will encourage governments to seek more private investment and funding.

New financial instruments and business models may encourage investors and governments to take the plunge. "My hope is that the business community will continue to develop new products, assisted by creative structures, that will mitigate those risks and still make things attractive for further growth in Latin America," he says.

The hire is Greenberg's first senior Latin American-focused hire following a series of defections. Morrison & Foerster poached four partners from the firm to open a Latin American-focused office in Miami earlier this year. That came shortly after Greenberg's Latin American group co-founder left to work in-house at Japanese multinational Softbank. The firm has since appointed its Mexico City managing partner and a New York-based senior banking partner as the group's new co-chairs.

Of the 2,100 attorneys at Greenberg, more than 80 work in the Latin America practice.