

White & Case takes over as Jessup moot sponsor

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White & Case has succeeded Shearman & Sterling as the sponsor of the international rounds of the Jessup moot.

The competition will now be known as the White & Case Jessup Cup. White & Case was already the sponsor of nine national rounds of the competition - in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Georgia, Poland, Russia, South Africa and the UK - and a US regional version of the competition in Washington, DC.

Yas Banifatemi, head of the public international law practice at Shearman & Sterling in Paris, confirmed that, after six years as exclusive sponsor of the international rounds, Shearman & Sterling has elected not to renew its contract. Banifatemi says the firm will continue to sponsor the moot's French and North Eastern US rounds, as it has done for some years.

"White & Case has done a very good job at promoting the competition in a number of countries, in particular in Russia and China, and I am confident that it will do the same for the international rounds," Banifatemi says.

Around 2,000 law students from more than 80 countries participate in the moot each year - first in the national then the international rounds. All participants must submit written memorials, followed by oral arguments before a mock tribunal.

This year's international rounds will take place from 21 to 27 March in Washington, DC. The moot problem pitches the fictional Republic of Aspatria against the Kingdom of Rydal in a hypothetical dispute over the Windscale Islands at the International Court of Justice. The case will raise questions over a state's right to self-determination, and the lawfulness of measures taken to protect its economic resources.

Head of the international arbitration group Paul Friedland, and partners Carolyn Lamm and Abby Cohen Smutny are expected to sit as judges in the international rounds. Friedland says that being involved in the Jessup moot is a "matter of great importance" for the group. Patricia Nacimiento of White & Case's Frankfurt office is judging the German rounds.

Ank Santens, a partner in White & Case's international arbitration group based in New York, says that she will hold a practice round in the office next week with a group of students from

the University of Düsseldorf. Santens says the competition allows students to see both how satisfying and demanding a career in international law can be.

White & Case chairman Hugh Verrier, who was head of the Moscow office when it helped launch the competition's first Russian round in 2002, says the firm is pleased to give its support to thousands of law students. The Jessup Cup continues to be a vital training ground for international lawyers, he says.

White & Case has underwritten 25 teams' participation in the Jessup Cup since 2007, when it entered a partnership agreement with the International Law Students Association (ILSA), which organises the competition. The teams that will receive support in 2010 will be announced in early March.

The White & Case website offers a free, downloadable guide to help students prepare for the competition, which includes video clips on oral advocacy skills.