



# Sharkawy & Sarhan Law firm Employment



El-Rifai Mosque - Cairo - Egypt

# OUR ESSENCE

In 2006, Jim Wright, Ahmed El Sharkawy and Karim Sarhan established Sharkawy & Sarhan. Their extensive experience and different backgrounds combined to create a firm set up to provide high quality business law services. The firm extended rapidly to become one of the leading firms in Egypt.

Sharkawy & Sarhan have acted on some of the largest and most complex transactions in the Egyptian market. As an independent law firm, we work together with the leading international law firms, which do not have presence in Egypt, to represent clients in cross-border transactions and matters. We are the best friend firm for most of the Magic Circle and Silver Circle firms.

Through our excellent working relationships with leading international law firms, we provide seamlessly an integrated legal service to international clients. This is facilitated by the fact that all of the senior lawyers of the firm have been seconded to work with Magic Circle firms through the secondment program at Sharkawy & Sarhan.

We act as Egyptian legal counsel to major companies including; Nestle, Orange, GE, RWE, BG, Shell, DP World, Google, Barclays, WPP, Amazon, EFG-Hermes, Majid Al Futtaim Properties, Huntsman and DuPont .

We are one of few law firms on the IFC panel for Egypt.



*Jim Wright and Karim Sarhan after receiving the IFLR award in 2010*

## We offer the following:

- A principled approach to the practice of law, including a commitment to integrity and confidentiality, and a scrupulousness regarding conflicts of interest to be expected of a leading trans-border firm.
- Detailed knowledge of Egyptian law and its practical application in a business context. Our lawyers are always up-to-date on the latest developments in their areas of law.
- A wealth of experience working with major global companies on complex transactions.
- A proactive, pragmatic approach and a “hands-on” mentality to identify issues and solve problems.
- A high degree of responsiveness from senior lawyers, in the time periods required to the particular needs of the client.
- A continuous training program for all staff, designed to ensure that our people have the most recent legal knowledge and skills required to deliver a high quality service.



## What people say about us

*"The firm has maintained a solid team over the past year and maintains a reputation as a quality outfit particularly in banking and finance and in banking sector M&A." (IFLR1000, 2015 edition)*

*"According to one recent client on a high value financing: "Sharkawy & Sarhan (S&S) provided advice on all Egyptian law matters. They have been, and continue to be, efficient and helpful, with clear advice. [What is] particularly useful is their responsiveness. One rarely waits more than a couple of hours for an answer and replies usually come much more quickly than that. S&S are my first-choice law firm in Egypt". (IFLR1000, 2015 edition)*

*"They are well attuned to the needs and expectations of foreign clients." (Client to Chambers & Partners Global, 2014)*

*"It's good to have them on board – they are very switched-on and good at picking up on the issues quickly." (Client to Chambers & Partners Global, 2014)*

*"Sharkawy & Sarhan has been on the ascendency in the market of the past years and despite the unpredictable conditions has maintained a strong reputation" (IFLR1000, 2014 edition)*

*"Very responsive indeed...including on Fridays which is the start of the weekend in Egypt. [The] team is dedicated and with enough depth to cover intensive demands from clients". (A client for corporate and capital markets advice to IFLR1000, 2014 edition)*

*"The firm has been focusing on the big-ticket transactions as a matter of strategy..." (IFLR1000, 2014 edition)*

*"The firm is active in the debt markets and claims some of the biggest M&A transactions of the year." (IFLR1000, 2014 edition)*

*"Clients are happy with the firm's work. According to one, it was "very good" for due diligence and structuring. "We had a demanding client with very complex and technical questions and they were always spot on, very clear". Another client adds that the firm is "very good at coming up with ideas on how to get what we wanted." (A client to IFLR, 2013 edition)*

*"They are developing a good practice for the future." (One peer to IFLR, 2013 edition)*

*"Sharkawy & Sarhan has maintained its reputation and the general consensus is that it is continuing to entrench itself at the top end of the market." (IFLR, 2013 edition)*

*"It is a fantastic young team." (a client in IFLR1000, 2012 edition)*

*“Sharkawy & Sarhan remains one with a prominent presence and is respected by its competitors as a solid practice with quality lawyers.” (International Financial Law Review IFLR1000, 2011 edition)*

*“Sharkawy & Sarhan maintains the reputation honed since its founding in 2006 for consummate ability on high-value finance deals. In 2009, the firm acted in the closing of a \$360m facility for cement business Lafarge Egypt, advising the initial mandated lead arrangers and lenders on the transaction.” (Legal 500 2009)*

*“A strong market contender. Its involvement in a number of significant bank finance deals, along with positive feedback from clients and competitors, earns the firm a promotion in this category. Partners Karim Sarhan and Ahmed El Sharkawy are named as rising stars by competitors, one of whom describes them as ‘very solid’.” (International Financial Law Review IFLR 2008)*

*“The firm has advised on a slew of cutting edge finance deals, including Egypt’s largest private equity and sharia compliant. With a focus on projects and finance, Sharkawy & Sarhan is noted for the quality of its general corporate work, being the trusted referral partner of many London City law firms, including Allen & Overy LLP and Clifford Chance.” (Legal 500 2008)*

*“Quality advisers in Cairo who are passionate about the law and the culture they do business in, which has made many of my issues in Egypt easier to deal with than would otherwise have been the case.” (Greg Sweeting, former MENA head legal counsel for Showtime, and an established client of Sharkawy & Sarhan)*

# Our Experience

## Employment

Our firm has an in-depth knowledge of the Egyptian labour law and significant experience in the field of employment. We advise numerous multinational companies in relation to their day-to-day employment issues in addition to employment aspects of major acquisitions, spin offs or transfer of business (asset deals). Our practice includes the following:

Providing legal advice on employment issues relating to the transfer of business; negotiating the transfer and/or the layoffs resulting from the transfer; as well as drafting the necessary documentation, settlements, waivers and so forth for various clients including FMC (an oil services company), Motorola (a communication company), Convatec (a medical services company), WPP Millward Brown.

Advising (with Freshfields) Bristol Myers Squibb on the employment aspects of its \$4.1 billion sale to AstraZeneca of its share in the two companies' diabetes joint venture.

Advising and representing Nestle on 30+ employment litigations resulting from the sale of its yoghurt business.

Advising and representing multinational companies in their collective negotiations with their employees. The subjects of negotiations varied from work conditions to guarantees in relation to acquisitions or de-mergers. In this respect, we represented Shell in the collective dispute before the Ministry of Manpower & Immigration resulting from the de-merger of its oil distribution business. We also conducted, advised and represented a multinational company in internal investigations and in litigation relating to employees' illegal and violent strike.

Advising and representing employers in the negotiations and the documentation of the termination of white-collar and blue-collar employment contracts, including with senior management, with packages ranging between EGP 20,000 and EGP 3.1 million. In addition, we represent clients in any litigation that may result from the termination of employment contracts. In this respect, we represented Google, FMC, Convatec, Motorola, Mapfre

Asistencia, Orange, Norgine, Amazon, Travelport, Amgen, ITECO Oilfield Supply (petroleum services), Smith Medical, Severn Trent Services, and Becton Dickinson.

Advising and conducting investigations of alleged misconduct by employees of several multinational companies.

Drafting and reviewing employees' handbooks and codes of conducts for several multinational companies, such as KUFPEC, CSC, Deutsche Bank, and Orange. Our work also includes reviewing health & safety policies for clients, including Fischer & Paykel, as well as anti-trust and bribery compliance codes, for clients such as Norgine. We also routinely advise clients on the legality of internal regulations and codes they apply as well as on the introduction of new regulations. We recently advised clients, such as Microsoft, Air Liquide, and JP Morgan on adoption of new policies such as those relating to subjecting the employees to physical search; conducting credit and criminal checks over employees; requesting medical check-ups and receive results without consent of employee; running drug testing on employees, and preventing smoking in all workspaces.

Advising a large number of multinational companies on several issues pertaining to the general provisions of the labour law. These include injury of employees during work, employees' benefits, annual leaves, minimum salary per law, outsourcing of employees, pensions fund established for employees, work permits for foreigners, safety requirements, and plenty of other diverse, complex, routine as well as novel problems in the context of employment law. Some of our clients to whom we habitually give general employment advice are Accenture, Travelport, Nestle, and RWE.

Assisting key business and HR personnel for various multinational clients in grasping employment legal issues. In this respect, we drafted several general overviews of the labour law to various clients, including EFG Hermes and Beach Petroleum. We also performed for Nestle Water a compliance due diligence on all aspects of their business in Egypt, including real estate, licensing, environmental, employment and corporate aspects.

#### **Publications & Speaking Engagements:**

Creating and leading a number of workshops on Human Resources and the "Lifecycle of Egyptian Employee", including to the management and HR staff of Titan, Nestle, Kohler, and Azadea.

Authoring the Egypt section in Clyde & Co's Employment Guide for the Middle East/ North Africa, "Employment Law at a Glance", an international guide to employment law across many jurisdictions. [link](#)

Sharkawy & Sarhan is a contributing member in L&E global, an international employment law alliance, and ----Clyde & Co