

BREAKING: Greenberg launches São Paulo office

Lily Squires

11 September 2024



Yosbel Ibarra, Antonio Peña and Arnaldo Rego

Greenberg Traurig LLP announced this morning that it is the most recent international law firm to open a foreign law consultancy in Brazil, with a trio of Latin America-focused shareholders set to spend time in the São Paulo office.

The firm's Latin America practice group co-head Antonio Peña and shareholders Yosbel Ibarra and Arnaldo Rego will split their time between the São Paulo and Miami offices.

Speaking to Latin Lawyer about the new office, Ibarra says the announcement is the “worst kept secret” in the Latin American legal industry, as the firm's intentions to set up shop in Brazil have been clear for a while.

Ibarra explains that the Brazilian office is “not a new venture” for Greenberg, but has been in the works since 2019.

Describing the step as a “natural progression of the work that our Latin America practice has been doing for decades,” Ibarra adds that client demand was the key driver behind the expansion. “The impetus behind the new office is that our clients in Latin America have been asking us to spend more time in the region,” he says.

According to Ibarra, the need and demand for US law-related advice in Latin America is on the rise, quoting an ongoing M&A matter in Brazil that has required ‘boots on the ground’ to get the deal across the line.

Peña comments that the firm has been doing business in Brazil for decades and believes that “there is an opportunity in the market for Greenberg: we speak the languages, we know Brazil and an office there gives greater flexibility to clients.”

“Brazil is at the core of our strategic growth plans,” confirms Peña.

There will be no partner permanently stationed in São Paulo for now. The firm expects that a partner will make a permanent move to the Brazilian city eventually but for now, the office will serve as a “home base” for lawyers working on matters in Brazil and wider Latin America, says Ibarra.

The trio of shareholders are all key members of the Latin America practice group. Peña was [appointed](#) co-head of the regional team back in 2022 and focuses his practice on M&A matters. Peña co-heads the regional group alongside New York-based shareholder Marc Rossell and Mexico City's José Raz Guzmán.

Ibarra is co-managing shareholder of the Miami office and previously served as co-chair of the Latin America practice group. He works on a variety of corporate transactions.

Rego [joined](#) the firm in 2019 as of counsel following a stint as an associate at US firm Carlton Fields. He was [promoted](#) to shareholder in 2023 and is also M&A-focused.

Although the trio concentrate their individual practices on transactional law, the São Paulo office will provide a wide scope of legal services. Ibarra highlights that with Greenberg's international network of offices, Brazilian clients can connect with lawyers in the firm's 47 other locations globally.

Other international law firms have opened foreign law consultancies in Brazil recently. DLA Piper LLP only launched an outpost there in May, [positioning](#) partner Bruno Soares in São Paulo in the hopes of getting closer to clients.

It is common for international firms to have an outpost in São Paulo, although they cannot practise local law due to restrictions put in place by the Brazilian bar association, OAB. For example, seven of the nine international [Elite](#) firms in *Latin Lawyer* 250 have offices in the Brazilian city: Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP, Clifford Chance LLP, Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP, Milbank, Simpson Thacher & Barlett LLP, Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP and White & Case LLP.

Greenberg's [Highly Recommended](#) Latin America practice is chaired by partners in Miami, New York and Mexico City. The firm's local office in Mexico also comes [Highly Recommended](#).

Lily Squires

Senior News Reporter

Latin Lawyer

Lily.Squires@latinlawyer.com

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