



## Ben Gillespie

Partner

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Ben Gillespie is a corporate M&A lawyer with over 20 years' experience in supporting clients on their cross-border transactions, including share and business acquisitions, divestments through auction sales and private treaty, strategic equity investments, joint ventures and group re-organisations. Ben divides his time between London and Dubai.

## LANGUAGES SPOKEN

- English

## EXPERIENCE

- Advised Australian online travel business Webjet Limited on its USD173 million purchase of UAE based Destinations of the World from Abu Dhabi based private equity fund Gulf Capital. The multi-jurisdictional deal involved DLA Piper offices across Asia Pacific, Europe and the Middle East.
- Advised Senaat, an Abu Dhabi state-owned industrial company, and Tubacex, a Spanish manufacturer of stainless steel and other products, on the acquisition of Dubai based Nobu Group, a leading provider of precision component repair and manufacturing services to oilfield services companies in the region. Target has operations in the UAE, Norway and Saudi Arabia.
- Advised Kerzner International, a leading international developer and operator of ultra-luxury resorts and residences (Atlantis and One&Only) on its joint venture with private equity firm, Dolphin Capital Investors, for the development and management of a luxury tourism project on the Greek island of Kea.
- Advised the Ministry of Finance of a country in Asia on a new Companies Law with a view to improving corporate governance and its World Bank doing business ranking. As a result of DLA Piper's work the World Bank ranking of this country for the Protection of Minority Investors improved by more than 150 places (out of a total of 190 places) leading to this country, in conjunction with other business reforms, being one of the top global improvers in the World Bank's most recent "Doing Business Report".

## RELATED SERVICES

- Corporate
- Finance
- Mergers and Acquisitions

## RELATED SECTORS

- Energy and Natural Resources
- Consumer Goods, Food and Retail

## LANGUAGES SPOKEN

English

## CREDENTIALS

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### Professional Qualifications

- Solicitor of the Senior Courts of England and Wales

### Prior Experience

- 2016-2019 - DLA Piper's Head of Corporate for the Middle East
- 2006-2019 - Based in Dubai
- 2009 - Corporate partner
- 1999-2006 - Associate / senior associate at Wragge & Co, UK
- 2001 - Four-month secondment to the M&A team at British Telecommunications in London
- 1996-1999 - Trainee and newly qualified solicitor at DLA Piper, UK

### Education

- College of Law, UK, Legal Practice Course and CPE, 1993-1995
- St Mary's University College, UK, History and Mathematics BA (Hons), 1990-1993

## INSIGHTS

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### Publications

#### Increased levels of Foreign Direct Investment in the UAE

07 NOV 2018

The UAE government has passed Federal Law No. 19 of 2018 on Foreign Direct Investment heralding in the potential for greater foreign ownership in mainland based companies in the UAE.

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#### UAE announces major changes to company ownership and visa rules

21 MAY 2018

Yesterday (20 May 2018) during a Cabinet meeting chaired by His Highness Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, UAE Government resolved to permit international foreign investors to own 100 percent of their businesses in the UAE and initiated far-reaching modifications to the current UAE visa rule.

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#### VAT relief on business transfers in the UAE

17 JAN 2018

The implementation of 5% VAT in the UAE from 1 January 2018 adds a number of new considerations for parties looking to carry out M&A transactions by way of business and asset transfers (rather than share acquisitions).

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### Events

- Guest speaker, Training session for UAE in-house counsel on "International Joint Ventures" Law 2020 (Michael Twomey), 25 March 2015

## NEWS

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### **DLA Piper advises Webjet on purchase of Middle East headquartered Destinations of the World**

7 November

DLA Piper has advised Australian online travel business Webjet Limited on its US\$ 173 million purchase of UAE based Destinations of the World and related fully underwritten entitlement offer. Destinations of the World was sold by Abu Dhabi based private equity fund Gulf Capital.

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### **DLA Piper advise Kerzner International on its joint venture with Dolphin Capital Partners for the development and management of a luxury tourism project in Greece**

14 Nov 2017

DLA Piper has advised leading international developer and operator of ultra-luxury resorts and residences, Kerzner International Holdings Limited ("Kerzner") on its joint venture with private equity firm, Dolphin Capital Partners and Dolphin Capital Investors for the development and management of the One&Only Kéa Island, Greece, a luxury tourism project on the Cycladic island of Kea.

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