



### [Kathleen Smith Ruhland](#)

**Partner**

**MANAGING PARTNER, MINNEAPOLIS OFFICE  
CO-CHAIR, CONSUMER GOODS SUB-SECTOR**

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#### **Minneapolis**

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Kathy Ruhland advises clients on cross-border transactions, including global M&A, restructuring and joint ventures, in established and emerging markets throughout the world.

Recognized by third parties for providing superior client service, Kathy advises a number of world-leading corporations. Her recent work includes transactions in the Middle East and Europe, as well as India, Hong Kong and China.

Kathy holds the following firm Leadership positions:

- Steering Committee, Global Alignment and Integration
- Co-Chair, Consumer Goods sub-sector
- Co-Chair, Global Leadership Alliance for Woman (LAW)
- Member of DLA Piper's governing Policy Committee

Kathy advises privately and publicly held companies in the following areas:

### [Mergers, acquisitions and divestitures](#)

Advises companies in various industries in global M&A transactions which often involve multiple jurisdictions. Effective in directing large teams of lawyers and accountants to assist clients in structuring, negotiating, implementing and closing global transactions.

### [Joint ventures and strategic alliances](#)

Advises companies in negotiating, structuring, operating and exiting international equity joint venture arrangements, licensing, distribution and manufacturing agreements, collaborative marketing arrangements and other strategic alliances.

### [Pre-and Post-acquisition integration and restructurings](#)

#### [RELATED SERVICES](#)

- Corporate
- Finance

Advises companies on global post-acquisition integration and restructurings including significant experience in global supply chain structures, complex reorganizations involving multiple jurisdictions and other group restructurings.

## Foreign direct investment

Advises companies regarding the international legal and tax aspects of the establishment of branch and subsidiary operations, setting up manufacturing operations, and advising clients regarding local investment incentives.

## International compliance

Advises US multinationals on compliance issues under US laws affecting cross-border transactions including the Office of Foreign Control Sanctions Programs, anti-boycott legislation and the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA).

## Global tax planning

Advises companies on international tax matters in connection with international transactions, reorganizations and other international tax planning matters.

## EXPERIENCE

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Kathy has represented the following companies in acquisitions, divestitures or other corporate transactions:

- Deere & Company's joint venture with Hagie Manufacturing, a manufacturer of high-clearance sprayers
- General Mills' divestment of its Green Giant business
- Deere & Company's formation of joint venture with DN2K for technology development in the agriculture industry
- Deere & Company's divestment of its crop insurance business
- Deere & Company's divestment of its water irrigation business (involving 18 countries worldwide)
- Fortune 50 company's strategic investment in Hong Kong company
- Ecolab Inc. in its acquisition of a global water treatment business from Akzo Nobel
- Musco Lighting LLC's joint venture with Ferrostaal Industrial Projects (Musco Ferrostaal GmbH) to design, supply and install lighting systems for industrial plants and sports grounds in continental Europe
- H.B. Fuller in its acquisition of global industrial adhesives business of Forbo group (US\$394 million)
- Graco Inc. in acquisition of the global finishing business of Illinois Tool Works Inc. (US\$650 million)
- Target Corporation in expansion into Canada
- Hutchinson Technology Inc. in set-up of Thailand manufacturing operations
- Tornier B.V. in acquisition of C2M Medical, Inc.
- Goldner Hawn Johnson & Morrison Inc. in sale of Vitality Foodservice Holding Corp. to Nestle USA
- Private global commercial equipment supplier in Middle East joint venture
- Pentair Inc. in global joint venture with GE for residential water filtration business
- General Mills in global joint venture with Nestle S.A. for cereal business
- General Mills in joint venture with PepsiCo for European snack business and subsequent disposal to PepsiCo (US\$750 million)
- General Mills in acquisition of The Pillsbury Company (US\$10.5 billion)

Kathy has represented large multinational companies in the following global corporate reorganizations:

- Ecolab Inc. and Champion Technologies Inc.'s post-acquisition integration of operations in North America, Latin America and Europe (involving 30 countries worldwide)
- Ecolab Inc. and Nalco Holding Company's post-acquisition integration of operations (involving 99 countries worldwide)
- HB Fuller Company in the global integration of its acquisition of Forbo's industrial adhesives business

- Chrysler Group LLC in European reorganization
- H&R Block in its investment in Ireland
- Pentair plc in its global integration and reorganization of its valves and control business acquired from Tyco International
- Fortune 50 company in US reorganization of domestic supply chain structure
- Private global commercial equipment manufacturer in global reorganization
- Fortune 50 company's reorganization of Asian sourcing operations, including formation of a China business trust structure
- NYSE-listed company's US supply chain operations for global manufacturer and distributor of commercial products
- Fortune 100 company in European reorganization including formation of European headquarters and supply chain structure

## CREDENTIALS

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### Admissions

- Minnesota

### Prior Experience

Before joining DLA Piper, Kathy was co-chair of the international practice at one of the 75 largest law firms headquartered in the US. Previously, she served as in-house counsel for General Mills.

### Recognitions

Kathy is one of 319 lawyers nationwide named to the BTI Client Service All-Star Team for Law Firms 2017 (based on survey of Fortune 1000 in-house counsel). She was named *The Best Lawyers in America* 2020 for her work in International Mergers & Acquisitions. She was also named to the All-Star Team in 2009.

### Education

- J.D., William Mitchell College of Law  
*magna cum laude*
- B.A., University of St. Thomas  
*cum laude*

### Civic and Charitable

- Children's Law Center of Minnesota, Board of Directors

## ADDITIONAL ACCREDITATIONS

Kathy is a certified public accountant (inactive) with Big Four firm experience.

## INSIGHTS

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### Events

- Panelist, "Leadership Perspective on Business and Legal Issues Tied to International Growth," The 40th Annual International Business Law Institute (2016)
- Panelist, "Global M&A, Hot Issues, Practical Advice and Lessons Learned in Cross-Border Transactions," Chicago Chapter, Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC)
- Panelist, "Integration: Strategies to Maximize the Value of Your Investment," 2011 M&A Conference

- Panelist, "International M&A Transactions," Business Law Institute (2011)
- Panelist, "Doing Business in Frontier Emerging Markets, Southeast Asia," International Business Law Institute (2011)
- Moderator, "CEO Panel Discussion" with Ken Powell of General Mills and Hubert Joly of Carlson, Doing Business with France: 2011 Business Symposium, Minnesota International Center (2011)
- "International Markets: Globalization of the Production Food System," Food, Agriculture & Biofuels 2010 National Conference, Minneapolis (2010)
- Opening session moderator, "Creating World-Class Companies in Emerging Markets," Faegre & Benson International Business Briefing (2010)

## NEWS

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### **Peter Ekberg joins DLA Piper's Corporate practice in Minneapolis**

11 September 2019

DLA Piper announced today that Peter Ekberg has joined the firm's Corporate practice as a partner in Minneapolis.

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## PRO BONO

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Course Instructor, Special Economic Zones in Africa and globally, University of Pretoria and University of the Western Cape, September 2014.