



Francisco J. Cerezo

Partner
CHAIR, LATIN AMERICA CORPORATE & FINANCE

francisco.cerezo@dlapiper.com

Miami	New York
T: +1 305 423 8551	T: +1 212 335 4857
F: +1 305 675 8241	F: +1 212 335 4501

Francisco Cerezo is the firm's Chair of Latin America Corporate & Finance. He focuses his practice on corporate and international matters, advising US and foreign companies, private equity funds, family groups and sovereigns doing business globally and with a focus in the Americas and the Caribbean.

He has extensive experience in corporate and financial services, cross-border transactions, strategic corporate counseling, mergers and acquisitions, private equity, and public-private partnerships. He regularly counsels global companies and private equity funds doing business in the Americas on matters ranging from complex transactions and market entry issues to compliance and general corporate strategic counsel.

Francisco also serves as principal outside counsel to several significant family groups on matters ranging from corporate governance and succession planning to representing their underlying portfolio companies in billions of dollars of transactions, ranging from banking and energy to telecom and retail.

Chambers Global recognized him for Corporate/M&A work and cited for "his impressive client list including leading Latin American companies in industries as diverse as financial services, telecoms and tourism, and he has enjoyed notable highlights."

The Legal 500 United States recognized him in the area of mergers and acquisitions and referred to him as "an excellent lawyer and strategic thinker. His roots and experience in the region and his capacity to foster relations set him apart from his peers."

Hispanic Business Magazine recognized him as one of the "50 Influentials" which profiles 50 of the most influential Hispanics in the United States across industries.

Latinvex recognized him as one of Latin America's Top 100 lawyers, and he was further recognized by the *Global M&A Network* as one of the Top 50 of Americas M&A Dealmakers in the South America and Latin America Dealmakers categories.

- Corporate
- Private Equity
- Finance

French Spanish

LANGUAGES SPOKEN

- French
- Spanish

EXPERIENCE

SIGNIFICANT REPRESENTATIONS

- Represented the owner of a 30 MW hybrid biofuel-coal power plant in the Caribbean in connection with all aspects of the construction through completion of the plant. DLA Piper's efforts on behalf of the client included all aspects of the administration of the EPC contract, including interactions with the contractor, as well as the contractor's termination, negotiations with subcontractors, and other steps required for completion
- Advise on joint venture arrangements for the joint investment on renewable energy projects in Guatemala and Latin America region
- A Latin American utility in connection with the development of various power generation projects, including wind and solar projects in the Caribbean
- A Vancouver-based integrated forest products company on its acquisition of 70 percent of Swedish-based privately owned sawmill company
- An insurance company in the sale of its Latin American business in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Mexico
- A Costa Rican cable television operator in its sale to a multinational telecommunications company
- The purchaser in the acquisition of one of the Caribbean's largest commercial and retail fuel and lubricants operations
- The purchaser in the acquisition of one of the largest utility companies in the Caribbean
- A private equity fund in its joint venture with a global energy company for the establishment of one of the largest retail fuel operations in the Caribbean
- The selling shareholders of one of the leading mobile operators in El Salvador to a global telecom operator
- The selling shareholders of one of the leading mobile operators in Guatemala to a global telecom operator
- A potential buyer in the bid/sales process of one of the largest mobile operators in the Dominican Republic
- The selling shareholders of one of the leading mobile operators in Colombia to a global telecom operator
- The selling shareholders of one of the leading mobile operators in Costa Rica to a global telecom operator
- A broadband network services company in several private placements of its convertible preferred stock
- A Canadian telecom company in the acquisition of a significant equity stake in a leading Colombian mobile operator
- Advising a leading Central American mobile operator on the implementation of its compliance program, including FCPA and UK Bribery Act
- A private equity fund in its joint venture with a global energy company for the establishment of one of the largest retail fuel operations in the Caribbean
- The selling shareholders in the sale of one of the largest banks in Ecuador
- The purchaser in the acquisition of one of the Caribbean's largest commercial and retail fuel and lubricants operations
- The purchaser in the acquisition of one of the largest utilities in the Caribbean
- The Government of Puerto Rico, including several instrumentalities, on numerous matters ranging from public-private partnerships and finance to economic development and policy matters
- A Japanese multinational in the divestiture of its Latin American assets
- Latin American holding company in the divestiture of several of its resort properties and in the development of other resorts in the Caribbean
- An investment group in the formation and management of a New York headquartered hedge fund with assets under management in excess of US\$1 billion
- A European infrastructure company in a proposed public-private partnership with the Florida Department of Transportation to lease, operate, maintain and receive toll revenues from the 78-mile stretch of I-75
- One of the largest banks in Central America in the sale of 19 percent of its equity to a major US financial institution
- A Spanish media and Internet company in its acquisition of 100 percent of the capital stock of a US consulting company
- A Latin American private equity fund in several acquisitions and strategic investments
- A major Spanish bank in private equity investments throughout Latin America

- A US venture capital firm in numerous private equity investments
- An international travel services company in its acquisition of majority control of one of the largest ecotourism and travel-related services company in Latin America
- A Latin American mobile phone operator in a private equity investment by several international telecom operators
- A large multinational Latin American food group in its acquisition of a candy manufacturer and distributor in the US and in several asset purchases throughout the United States and Latin America
- A European rail company, and its rail services partners in the US and Europe, in compliance with principles of both US and EU law
- A European luxury goods company in a joint venture agreement for the launching of a perfume line
- A venture capital firm in the acquisition of a US toy manufacturer
- Selling shareholders in the sale of a telecommunications company to a private equity fund
- A European industrial and construction products company in its acquisition of a US company
- The seller in the sale of a major subprime mortgage lender to one of the largest banks in the United States
- A broadband network services company in several private placements of its convertible preferred stock
- A significant Latin American publicly traded company in its establishment of a Euro-commercial paper program
- A European financial services institution in the establishment of a Euro certificate of deposit program in the Dominican Republic
- A significant Mexican publicly traded company in its compliance and securities work before the SEC and New York Stock Exchange
- A major investment bank as underwriter's co-counsel in a multibillion-dollar bond issuance by a state agency
- An online brokerage company in its secondary public offering
- A United States underwriter in a public offering of a banking institution in Puerto Rico
- A major investment bank as underwriter's counsel in certificates of participation issuance

CREDENTIALS

Admissions

- Florida
- New York

Recognitions

- *Latin Lawyer 250* – Corporate and M&A (2016-Present)
- *Latinvex* – one of Latin America's Top 100 Lawyers (2015-Present)
- *Top 50* – Americas M&A Dealmaker by the Global M&A Network in the South America and Latin America Dealmakers categories
- *Hispanic Business Magazine* "50 Influentials" which profiles 50 of the most influential Hispanics in the United States across industries
- *Florida Super Lawyers®* (2014-Present) and *Florida Super Lawyers®* – Rising Stars (2009) lists in the areas of international, mergers and acquisitions, and securities and corporate finance
- *IFLR 1000* notable practitioner
- *2020 Daily Business Review – Florida Trailblazer: Innovators & Thought Leaders*
- *Chambers Global*
2021 - Band 5, Latin America-wide Corporate/M&A
The Legal 500 comments, "Impressed sources report that Francisco Cerezo, 'doesn't take any chances with the quality of the work and provides very high-level support. He is always available and excels not only in terms of legal acumen but also in understanding our needs.'"
2016-2020 - Band 5, Latin America-wide Corporate/M&A
2017 - Foreign Expert for Latin America-wide, Corporate/M&A
2018 - 19 - Foreign Expert for Latin America-wide, USA Corporate/M&A
2017 - Band 5, Latin America-wide Corporate M

- *Chambers USA*
2016 - Band 4, Florida Latin America Investment
- *Chambers Latin America*
2016 - 17 - Band 5, Latin America-wide Corporate/M&A

Education

- J.D., Columbia University School of Law
- LL.M., Universidad Complutense de Madrid
- University of Virginia
Graduate Fellow, Latin American Literature
- B.A., Washington University

Memberships

- Council of the Americas
- Consejo Empresarial de América Latina (CEAL)
- American Bar Association
- International Bar Association
- New York State Bar Association
- Florida Bar

Community Involvement

- DLA Piper Global Scholarships Programme, Board Member
- Lawyers for Children America, Inc.
- Columbia University School of Law Alumni Association
- PRxPR, Advisory Board Member

INSIGHTS

Publications

Using representations and warranties insurance in global M&A deals: 8 questions and answers

16 FEB 2016

R&W insurance can offer both buyers and sellers the additional confidence often needed to close the deal. Such insurance may be especially useful in global M&A transactions, particularly in Latin America.

- "PROMESA becomes law: All businesses in Puerto Rico will be affected," July 5, 2016
- "Argentina: Foreign investors and the coming Macri presidency," December 2, 2015

Events

- Guest Lecturer, Spring 2021 – Search Funds and M&A - Entrepreneurship through Acquisition, Columbia University Business School (MBA Program)
- Latin Counsel, July 2020, featured Q&A
- Speaker and honoree, The Instituto Europeo de Inteligencias Eficientes (IEIE) Annual Master Mind Latino conference on Latino Leadership, October 2019
- Visiting Lecturer, Universidad Torcuato di Tella (Buenos Aires, Argentina) - Advanced Post-Graduate Program on Mergers & Acquisitions (2019)
- Panelist, "The Role of Business, Technology and Innovation in Rebuilding Puerto Rico," Nuestro Futuro Symposium, Florida International University, June 2018
- Panel Moderator, "Cornerstone of Puerto Rico's Recovery," P3 Summit, June 2018
- Panelist, United Nations Latino Impact Summit, New York, November 2017
- Speaker, Albizu University and Sistema Universitario Ana G. Méndez: Puerto Rico's Crisis and Puerto Rican Diaspora, June 2016
- Panelist, "Cuba: Technology as an Engine of Economic Development," Hispanic National Bar Association Corporate Counsel Conference, March 2016
- Panelist, "Un Nuevo Mañana, Emerging Issues in US – Cuba Relations," University of Pennsylvania Law School Conference, January 2016
- Panelist, "CUBA: Inversión, Comercio y Garantías Financieras," Microjuris.com y la Federación Interamericana de Abogados Conference, November 2015
- Panelist, "Cross-border deals between Latin American and European companies: the untold stories by both in-house and outside counsel who lived through them...and survived!," International Bar Association Annual Conference, October 2015
- Panelist, "Panel Explores Business Opportunities in Cuba," Latin American Business Council (CEAL) Conference, August 2015
- Panelist, "Premiere Entrepreneur Series, Roundtable Discussion and Networking Breakfast," February 2013
- Panelist, Daily Business Review Roundtable - Business Advisory Board Roundtable, November 2012
- Moderator, "International Forum – Brazil – M&A Report," The M&A Advisor 2012 International Summit, New York, October 2012
- Panelist, Daily Business Review Roundtable on 2012 Real Estate and Economic Outlook, December 2011
- Moderator, International Management Network, Latin American Real Estate Opportunity and Private Fund Investing Forum, US, April 2009
- Speaker, CREW Miami, Spheres of Influence: How Foreign Investors are Impacting South Florida's Economy, US, October 2008
- Panelist, Latin American Corporate Counsel Association Roundtable, Argentina, Latin Lawyer magazine, October 2008
- Panelist, Latin American Corporate Counsel Association Roundtable, Costa Rica, Latin Lawyer magazine, June 2008
- Participant, Latin American Corporate Counsel Association Roundtable, Mexico, Latin Lawyer magazine, February 2008

NEWS

DLA Piper advises Itaú in its acquisition of minority stakes in Uruguayan fintech companies Prex and Paigo

31 March 2022

DLA Piper represented Brazilian bank Itaú in its recent acquisition of minority stakes in Uruguayan fintech companies Prex and Paigo.

Francisco Cerezo named to the *Daily Business Review's* 2020 list of Florida Trailblazers

10 September 2020

DLA Piper is pleased to announce that Francisco Cerezo has been named a 2020 Florida Trailblazer by the *Daily Business Review*.

MEDIA MENTIONS

He has been featured or cited in numerous publications, including the *American Lawyer*, *Latin Lawyer*, *Miami Herald*, *Financier Worldwide* and the *Daily Business Review*. He is also a regular television commentator on matters of international and corporate law, with appearances on *CNN en Español*, *CNN Headline News* and *NBC's Today Show*.

- Profiled, "Francisco Cerezo Named to the Daily Business Review's 2020 List of Florida Trailblazers," *Daily Business Review*, September 10, 2020
- Quoted, "China Seizes Opportunities in Latin America," *American Lawyer*, January 4, 2017
- Profiled, "Hispanic Attorneys in Miami Rise to Prominence in International Practice," *Daily Business Review*, July 2016
- Quoted, "A Closer Look At The Latin America M&A Market," *Law360*, April 25, 2016
- Quoted, "Sound and Fury, Trade Rhetoric From The Political Campaigns Is Causing Heartburn For International Lawyers Who Crave Stability," *Focus Latin America*, June 2016
- Quoted, "The year ahead: A glimpse at the economic outlook for South Florida," *Miami Herald*, January 2015
- Profiled, "Francisco Cerezo: 'vista en su totalidad, América Latina continuará atrayendo inversiones,'" *América Economía*, December 2014
- Quoted, "US M&A In The Emerging Markets," *Financier Worldwide*, December 2013
- Quoted, "Poised for Growth: Identifying M&A Opportunities in Spain," *Merrill DataSite White Paper*, October 2013
- Included and cited, "Best Practices of the Best Dealmakers: Valuable Guidance from 51 of the Most Active Middle Market M&A Practitioners," 2013
- Appeared, "This is Miami: More Than Just a Winter Playground," *NBC's Today Show*, February 2013
- Quoted, "Law Firm Work Abroad Continues to Grow as Services Battle Trade Sectors," *Miami Today*, July 2012
- Quoted, "International Appeal Should Continue to aid Miami's Recovery," *Miami Today*, May 2012
- Profiled, "Top Dealmakers of the Year," *Daily Business Review*, May 2012
- Quoted, "Latin America Impacts and Links Report," *Miami Today*, May 2012
- Quoted, "Daily Business Review Business Advisory Board Special Report on the Recovery of South Florida's Economy," April 2012
- Profiled, "Twelve to Watch in 2012," *Attorney at Law Magazine*, January 2012
- Quoted, "Researching a Foreign Market Can Lead to Key Partnerships," *South Florida Business Journal*, January 2012
- Profiled, "El Equipo Fantastico," *Vida Y Exito*, October 2011
- Quoted, "Miami Law Firms Expanding Global Reach," *The Miami Herald*, September 2011
- Quoted, "TalkingPoint: M&A in Latin America," *Financier Worldwide*, September 2011
- Profiled, "Dealmakers," *Daily Business Review*, August 2011