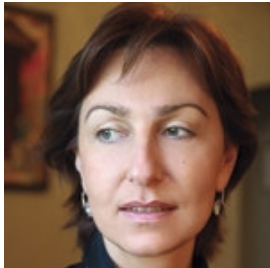


Nine-strong CIS legal network gets off ground

16 November 2009 | By James Swift

A nine-member CIS network that launched at the beginning of November is planning to bring the alliance model into the 21st century, according to its chair.



Irina Paliashvili

The Leading Counsel Network (LCN) is a non-exclusive alliance of firms from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Turkmenistan and Ukraine.

The network's first meeting was held in Russia at the offices of Egorov Puginsky Afanasiev & Partners.

RULG-Ukrainian Legal Group founder Irina Paliashvili was elected LCN's first chair in a one-year rotating presidency aimed at promoting democracy and ensuring that not only firms from the largest economies hold sway.

Oleg de Lousanoff from German firm Hengeler Mueller and Patrick Dziewolski from French firm Bredin Prat attended LCN's first meeting, sharing their experiences of operating a best-friends network.

"We were curious as to how [other best-friends networks] were so successful and how we can distinguish ourselves and progress, for example in IT, which plays such a big role today," said Paliashvili. "Having a unified approach for IT is very important. If you want to be a 21st century network it's important to have the best IT resources and I think we can do that much better together than we can with each firm on its own.

"We learnt from the best friends network that it's [about] providing the best cross-border service for clients. Some networks just send referrals and meet once or twice a year, but not much is done on cross-border terms. We'll be working together on the substance; sending teams, doing secondments and making sure lawyers work together," she added.

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