

Press Release:

Couchmans joined by ex-Head of FIFA Disciplinary and Governance, Paolo Lombardi

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Couchmans LLP, the market-leading specialist sports law practice, is delighted to announce that Paolo Lombardi, ex-Head of FIFA Disciplinary and Governance, has joined the firm as a consultant.

With eight years' experience working at the highest levels of FIFA, Paolo (an Italian lawyer) has an unrivalled knowledge of FIFA regulations and vast experience in dealing with international football disputes and disciplinary-related issues. After taking control of players' agents-related activities at FIFA, gaining significant experience in the transfer of players, disputes arising from transfers and serving as Deputy Head of the FIFA Players' Status department, Paolo became Head of FIFA Disciplinary and Governance, holding responsibility for disciplinary, doping, football governance and ethics-related issues. He was actively involved in drafting FIFA regulations including the Statutes, the Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players, the Players' Agents Regulations, the Disciplinary Code, the Code of Ethics and the Anti-Doping Regulations, and sat in all relevant FIFA Committee meetings. Paolo dealt with all of the significant international football disputes and disciplinary-related cases and represented FIFA at the Court of Arbitration for Sport on numerous occasions.

Paolo joins Couchmans at a time when the firm's Sports Regulatory and Sports Disputes Resolution departments are going from strength to strength. His arrival broadens further the exceptionally wide expertise of the firm in sport and further cements Couchmans' status as the UK's top specialist sports law firm, as ranked by the independent legal directories.

Nic Couchman, Chairman of Couchmans LLP, said, *"In recent years Couchmans has worked on a large number of high profile sports regulatory, dispute resolution and disciplinary matters, across a range of sports internationally. We are delighted to be joined by Paolo Lombardi, whose reputation and experience of FIFA's rules and regulations is second to none. Paolo adds to the firm's deep understanding and knowledge of the sports industry, from which our clients benefit on a daily basis. Paolo joining our team exemplifies the firm's commitment to providing a truly unique level of service and expertise to our clients around the world."*

Paolo Lombardi said, *"I am thrilled to be joining Couchmans. Having worked with the firm on an ad hoc basis over the last few years, I am very aware of the Couchmans' sports industry expertise and I am excited to be joining a law firm with such a pre-eminent reputation. I look forward to contributing to the development of the firm's Sports Regulatory and Sports Disputes Resolution departments, with a particular emphasis on the firm's work in global football matters."*

For further information, please contact:

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Note to Editors

Couchmans LLP is a commercial law firm based in London offering specialist legal advice to the sports, sponsorship and media industries internationally. The leading independent legal directories say the following about the firm:

"The UK's leading sports boutique" (Legal 500)

"If you want someone who knows the sports business inside out, these are the guys to call" (Chambers & Partners)

"Formidably strong line-up ... the firm dominates the commercial side of the sector" (Legal 500)

"A phenomenal sports practice ... there is clear, blue water between Couchmans and rival boutique sports firms ... the firm acts for some of the best known names in the sports industry" (Legal 500)

"The premier sporting boutique ... extremely commercial, increasing the value of every deal with the knowledge it brings" (Chambers & Partners)

"The achievement of this firm is incredible ... the country's number one sports boutique" (Chambers & Partners)

Website: www.couchmansllp.com