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Perkins Coie Partner Discusses Forced Labor at the Vatican

Vatican invites Markus Funk to lead supply chain and trafficking discussion

BY LAW WEEK STAFF
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Perkins Coie partner **T. Markus Funk** visited the Vatican recently to address the members of the Global Sustainability Network Forum on how to combat human trafficking.

Funk was the only private practice lawyer invited to speak as part of the “business panel,” which focused on the recent proliferation of anti-trafficking supply chain compliance requirements aimed at global businesses. He said it was a unique experience to receive an invitation to join world religious, business and government leaders at the Vatican to discuss issues affecting most global businesses.

The forum, held March 18, was hosted at the direction of Pope Francis by the Pontificia Accademia delle Scienze Sociali, which is operated to create a dialog between the pope and leaders in social sciences such as law, economics and political science. The forum was held as a proceeding step to the Dec. 2, 2014, Joint Declaration



MARKUS FUNK WENT TO THE VATICAN TO DISCUSS HUMAN TRAFFICKING WITH WORLD RELIGIOUS, BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENT LEADERS.

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of Religious Leaders and the September 2015 passage of United Nations Goal 8.7 concerning human trafficking, which is focused on the eradication of modern slavery,

human trafficking and child labor.

Funk said the forum was designed as a brainstorming opportunity in the wake of the declaration by the world's religious leaders saying human trafficking violated the religious principles of the religions covering about 90 percent of the global population and related UN action — the result was a declaration of principles. The follow-up will be a meeting in Dubai in December to further develop concrete principles for putting the declaration into practice and to design mechanisms to help transnational businesses grapple with the worldwide push to enact new legislation designed to rid supply chains of human trafficked, child and other forms of coerced labor.

Funk participated on the business

panel along with **Luca di Montezemolo**, chairman of Alitalia, VP of Unicredit, and former chairman of Ferrari, Fiat and Maserati; **Jochen Zeitz**, chairman of sustainability at Harley-Davidson and former CEO of Puma; and **Marcela Manubens**, global VP for social impact at Unilever.

“This is an area that our firm pioneered at a time when none of the top 100 law firms had invested any time counseling their clients on these types of cutting-edge supply chain issues,” Funk said. “To have the pope’s emissaries invite us to address the world business and government communities is a reaffirmation that we in their eyes continue to be leaders in the increasingly important area.” •

