



Rudyard W. Ceres

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Areas of Practice

Corporate Law

Rudyard Ceres is a Partner in the Corporate Practice and International Practice of Smith, Gambrell & Russell, LLP. Mr. Ceres was a Partner at Freeborn & Peters, which combined with SGR in 2023.

Mr. Ceres focuses his practice on domestic and international small and medium-size enterprises and owner/operated businesses. He is a trusted business and legal advisor for his clients across all stages of a business's life cycle from inception, development, capital raising, strategic partnering, and joint venturing all the way to an appropriate exit. Rudyard's dual UK and US qualifications, coupled with his extensive experience over the past twenty-five (25) years, allows him to work closely with private equity, hedge funds, family offices, and high-net-worth clients, to identify, manage and mitigate their legal and business risks globally.

Further, Mr. Ceres has represented foreign governments in attracting foreign direct investments from a business-first lens, with a focus on the Sub-Saharan Africa and Caribbean regions. Accordingly, he is adept at analyzing and assessing macroeconomic and political issues as they might impact his client's business interests in the international trade context. As such, he is adept at handling international trade issues, including import regulations, export controls, economic sanctions, international arbitration, anti-bribery, and regulatory compliance. He has also worked as a liaison for his clients in the United Nations

Before joining Freeborn (now SGR), Mr. Ceres was a Partner at Dunnington Bartholow and Miller LLP, where he led the UK/Commonwealth desk and Africa desk practice areas; and, was responsible for maintaining and expanding the firm's international relationships through the Cicero League of International Lawyers.

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Outside of work, he enjoys traveling with his family and friends; and playing and watching as many sports as his schedule will allow, especially his soccer team in England.

Mr. Ceres received his Solicitors Finals from the College of Law, York, UK, and his LLB Hons from the University of Leicester; and is an Adjunct Professor, teaching International Business Transactions at Fordham Law School in New York City.

Presentations/Publications

- Executing on corporate governance review and analysis of a large multi-jurisdictional record company with multiple entities including publishing, real estate, and other assets.
- Advising and conducting significant due diligence in connection with a commodities transaction to be structured as a public-private partnership with a West African country.
- Advising cosmetics company with US HQ and Caribbean focus in connection with multiple intellectual property applications (domestically and internationally); capital raises (including drafting and amending debt instruments).
- Working closely with U.S. and E.U. shipping concerns in coordinating UK international arbitral matters and multiple litigation matters in Nigerian local and High Courts.
- Assisting U.S. and Middle-Eastern joint venture with their sub-\$100 million Regulation D capital raise. Acting as outside General Counsel for U.K. maritime logistics company to set up a U.S. subsidiary, including negotiating and finalizing employment agreements for U.S. executive hires and other vendor contracts.
- Representing domestic real estate development concerns in joint venture agreement with Sub-Saharan African international partner, including due diligence of individual transactions ranging from \$10 million to \$25 million in deal size.

Memberships

Executive Board Member, Prince's Trust USA

President of the Board of Trustees for Brooklyn Excelsior Charter School

General Counsel and Board Member, National Math Foundation, Syracuse, NY Board of Directors, NYC & C

Admissions

New York

United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York

United States District Court for the Southern District of New York Solicitor of the Electoral Roll of England and Wales

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Presentations/Publications

- Panelist, Cross Border Transactional Disputes & Resolutions, “Indo-US Legal Sector: Redefining Relationships” Consulate General of India, New York/Services Export Promotion Council of India (June 2023).
- Author, Potential Legal and Non-Legal Considerations Relating to the Restitution of African Art, Submission to All Party UK Parliamentary Committee on African Restitution, Bell Ribeiro-Addy, Member of Parliament, Joint Chair (June 2023).
- Co-Author, “Digitized Design: Navigating IP Rights in the Age of the Metaverse” The Federal Lawyer (September/October 2022).
- Panelist, “Out of Context: Reframing and Repatriating Objects in Museums and Public Spaces”, 30th Annual Fordham Intellectual Property Law Journal Symposium (October 2022).
- Presenter, Repatriation of African Cultural Objects and Artefacts, African Union Consuls General, New York (April 2022).
- Moderator, Investing in Caribbean Growth Companies (November 2020).
- Panelist, Blacks on Wall Street Conference – New York, NY (February 2020).
- Panelist, "The Investment Giants: Can't the Elephants Just Get Along," Georgetown Africa Business Conference 2019, Washington DC (February 2019).
- Panelist, Constituency for Africa, 2018 Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series, Roundtable on Trade and Investment, African Union Mission, Washington DC (September 2018).
- Panelist, "AGOA: The US-Africa Trade Program, Taking Full Advantage," 2018 Africa Trade & Investment Global Summit, Washington DC (June 2018).