

## ASEAN CEO's Message

Welcome to another issue of *Dentons Rodyk Reporter*.

COVID-19 dominates our lives at the moment. Its short term impact has been enormous. While everyone has been focused on health, it has created huge stresses for business. There will also be far-reaching long-term implications. How we respond today will shape the future. Hopefully, it may remind people everywhere that we should collectively treasure expertise, consider more carefully global risks and rebuild international and multilateral cooperation. But such an outcome is not assured, and we may see an ever more fearful retreat into closed borders and nativism.

For myself, I have continued to appear in Court and arbitration hearings, utilising protocols for work segregation or remote access. Business and life must continue, while adapting and staying safe.

In this issue, we have included an article on "[Surviving the COVID-19 crisis – A legal perspective for businesses and corporates in Singapore](#)", which summarises key considerations for businesses in Singapore looking to survive this crisis.

In addition, Dentons has combined resources from all over the world to support our clients in several key areas that you may find useful in navigating the COVID-19 situation:

- Global [COVID-19 hub](#) from which you can navigate all the resources we have
- [COVID-19 Global Labor & Employment Tracker](#) – now covering 66 countries
- The Government Announcement Tracker which consolidates COVID-19 government announcements from across 30+ markets in one place – email [Global Taskforce](#) for access.
- 300+ insights/articles on [Dentons.com](#) relating to COVID-19
- Various hubs, such as [Data privacy hub](#); [Remote working hub](#); [Force Majeure hub](#)
- [COVID-19's impact on the global economy](#)

My partners and I welcome any questions you may have on the impact of COVID-19 on your businesses.

Let's all stay safe, observe safe distancing and work on getting through this crisis together.

**Philip Jeyaretnam, SC**

Global Vice Chair and ASEAN CEO

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# Business Bulletin

## Singapore Budget 2020: Tax Update

An article explaining tax changes arising from the recent Singapore Budget 2020, including changes in the corporate income tax system, GST and taxation of funds and cryptocurrencies.

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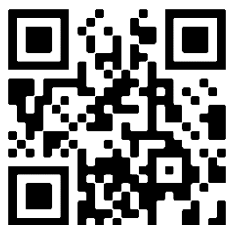
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## A Balancing Act: SGX RegCo's new approach to QR and enhancements to continuous disclosures requirements

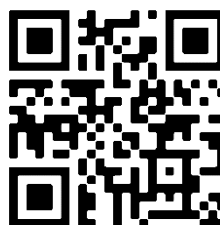
An article discussing SGX RegCo's new approach to QR and enhancements to continuous disclosures requirements.

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# COVID-19 Update: Practical Guide for Employers in Singapore

The coronavirus outbreak which was first alerted to the World Health Organisation (WHO) by Chinese authorities on 31 December 2019 has since breached a lockdown of Wuhan city where it first emerged, rattled the world economy, rapidly spread across the world — and landed in Singapore less than a month after on 23 January 2020.

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## Electronic Signatures: A workaround for issues arising from work-at-home measures

An article on the use of electronic signatures as a workaround for issues arising from work-at-home measures, as well as the potential changes that may be brought about to the Electronic Transactions Act, which may increase the viability of the use of electronic signatures in the business world.

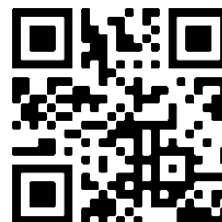
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# What employers need to know — Increases in local qualifying salary and employment pass minimum qualifying salary

An article on the recent changes to the local qualifying salary and employment pass minimum qualifying salary requirements, and the effects that these changes may have on employers in Singapore.

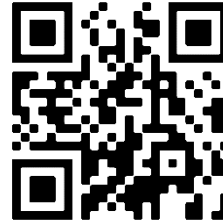
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# What employers need to know — the Fair Consideration Framework (FCF)

An article on the recent updates to the Fair Consideration Framework, its requirements and the penalties for non-compliance.

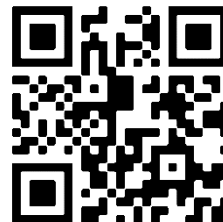
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## What employers need to know — Managing excess manpower in light of COVID-19

An article discussing the various options and measures available to employers in Singapore in managing excess manpower, which is a situation some employers are facing in light of the global spread of COVID-19.

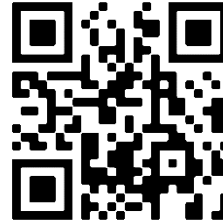
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## What employers need to know — Ensuring a safe work environment, additional measures for COVID-19

An article discussing the responsibilities and liabilities of employers in relation to workplace health and safety, a particularly relevant consideration in light of the current COVID-19 situation.

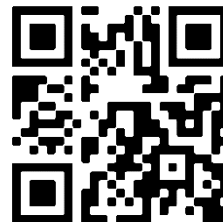
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## Shifting sands — Holding AGMs in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic

An article discussing the various options and measures available to companies listed on the SGX-ST for the holding of up-coming annual general meetings, in light of the tighter measures brought in to combat the spread of COVID-19.

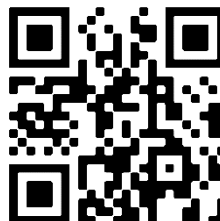
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## Shifting sands — Updates on holding AGMs in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic

An article discussing the recent updates (31 March 2020) on the various options and measures available to companies listed on the SGX-ST for the holding of up-coming annual general meetings, and the introduction of new legislation to provide legal certainty on the holding of meetings in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

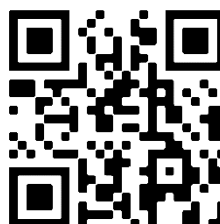
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# Singapore MOM to raise EP qualifying salary from 1 May 2020 and other key takeaways from the MOM Committee of Supply 2020 Speech

For Singapore, 2019 was a good year with employment growth, low retrenchments and increasing income; however the outlook for 2020 has become uncertain not least due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. Ministry of Manpower's (MOM) key challenges are to prevent large-scale job losses, prevent a scaling back or reversal of wage increases, and prepare Singapore businesses and workers for jobs of the future when the world reopens for business post-pandemic. This article summarises the key takeaways from measures announced in the speech by Minister for Manpower, Mrs Josephine Teo at MOM Committee of Supply 2020.

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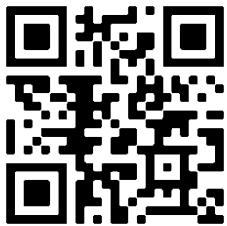
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## COVID-19: Maintaining Competition Hygiene in Times of Crisis

Life in a time of COVID-19 has seen the unprecedented closure of international borders, massive societal and trade disruptions and heightened market turmoil and uncertainty. To control the spread of the COVID-19 virus and mitigate against risks of infection, we are continuously reminded to practice good personal hygiene and observe social responsibility including adopting social distancing measures. From a competition compliance perspective, the same advice should apply to businesses. Despite the challenges arising from COVID-19, businesses should keep their social distance from competitors to ensure competition remains 'clean' and 'hygienic'.

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# Surviving the COVID-19 crisis – A legal perspective for businesses and corporates in Singapore

The COVID-19 crisis has wreaked havoc on the global economy. Corporates have taken drastic measures to stay afloat as they face supply chain disruptions, mounting debts, and a general slowdown in business activities. This article summarises key considerations for businesses in Singapore looking to survive this crisis.

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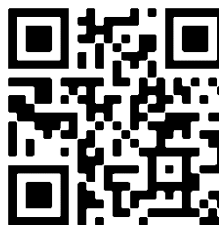
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# Litigation Briefs

## COVID-19 – A Frustrating Event?

The COVID-19 outbreak has led to the lockdown of entire cities, quarantine of individuals and cancellation of flights. Would the outbreak be treated as a frustrating event and automatically discharge parties from their contracts?

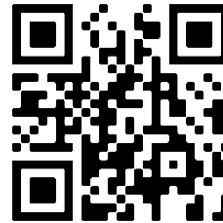
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## Enforcing Forced Leave of Absence – How Businesses Ca(n-CoV)er Themselves and Their Employees Fairly

The recent COVID-19 has brought into sharp focus the need for the government and employers to be able to take swift and robust measures to contain the potential spread of the virus at the workplace. In this article, we examine one key aspect of the Singapore government's containment measure, namely the Ministry of Health's (MOH) leave of absence advisory issued on 1 February 2020.

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## COVID-19, China and Construction – Unmasking *Force Majeure*, Delay and Extensions of Time

The widespread outbreak of the COVID-19 not only causes risks to human life, but also has severe and inescapable ramifications for the construction industry. Planned projects may be delayed as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak and the ensuing government restrictions, which are all rightly implemented for the safety of public health. Will Liquidated Damages be imposed by employers as a result of the delay, or can contractors bring claims for Extension of Time? Further and/or in the alternative, can contractors rely on *force majeure*?

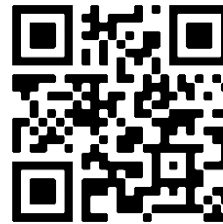
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## COVID-19, *Force Majeure* and Construction (Part II) – Outbreak of Disputes? Or Abatement in due course?

COVID-19 has affected Singapore, and many countries all over the world and across all industries. It has also disrupted supply chains in profound ways. In our previous article, we explored the concept of *force majeure*, and the claims for extension of time and liquidated damages in construction contracts. Apart from *force majeure*, are there any other legal principles that may apply to the current situation? In this article, we turn our attention to the doctrine of frustration under Singapore law, and how Singapore is relevant to resolving disputes connected with COVID-19.

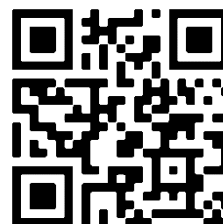
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# Many problems around us – but many ways to resolve, and enforce resolution of, them

An article exploring recent legal and infrastructural developments in the sphere of alternative dispute resolution, sparked by the introduction (and soon-to-be ratification) of the Singapore Convention.

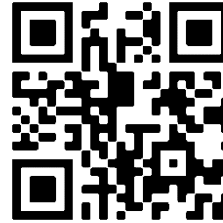
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# Writs of Seizure and Sale against Immovable Properties – Navigating Pitfalls and Roadblocks

For judgment creditors, the seizure and sale of immovable property is not always a straightforward matter. This may be the case even where the property is unencumbered and in the sole name of the judgment debtor. Across two articles, we explore some potential challenges in relation to a writ of seizure and sale in respect of immovable property, including in relation to the reserve price / forced sale value as well as the registration and renewal of a WSS and an attachment and execution order.

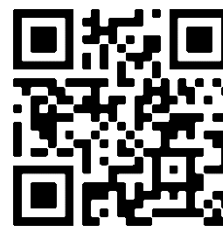
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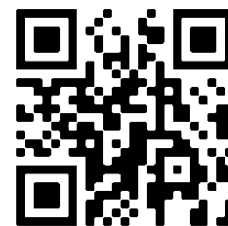


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# Legal update: The Report on Recommendations issued by the Ministry of Health (MOH) Workgroup to Review the Taking of Informed Consent and Singapore Medical Council (SMC) Disciplinary Process

A legal update on the Ministry of Health (MOH) Workgroup's recommendations to revise the Singapore Medical Council (SMC) Ethical Code and Ethical Guidelines (ECEG) and introduce a new test on the taking of informed consent.

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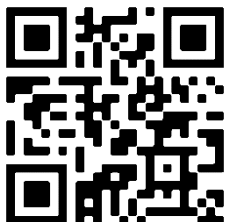
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# Property Note

## Qualifying Certificate – New Exemption for Singapore Listed Housing Developers with Substantial Connection to Singapore

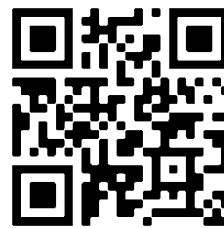
On 6 February 2020, the Ministry of Law and Singapore Land Authority (LDAU) jointly announced that they are prepared to grant exemption status to Singapore listed housing developers (with substantial connection to Singapore) from the Qualifying Certificate regime which regulates the acquisition, use and disposal of restricted residential properties.

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## Property Sale and Purchase contracts: Going digital amidst COVID-19

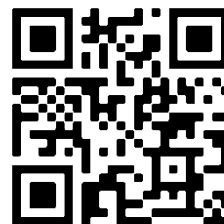
As COVID-19 cases around the world continue to rise, more countries and companies are enforcing lockdown and quarantine measures. In such circumstances, there will be practical difficulties when parties are unable to physically produce, execute and witness their contracts, especially when the law requires the aforesaid legal requirements to be satisfied for certain contracts. As such, we, as the lawyers acting for developers of property, have been receiving an increasing number of requests from Purchasers to exercise their options by faxing or emailing to us their signed contracts, as they are unable to return the physical signed contracts before the exercise deadline. What exactly is a party to a property transaction to do in this current situation? Are electronic exchanges of and electronic signatures on contracts for the sale and purchase of immovable property (SPAs) acceptable?

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## COVID-19 – From Construction to Development: Defaults, Deadlines and Dilemmas?

We are at the cusp of a COVID-19 pandemic. In our earlier articles on COVID-19, we focused on force majeure and the legal doctrine of frustration, specifically in the context of how construction delays may impact a contractor's obligations to the developer under the construction contract. Some contractors are already asserting and/or making force majeure claims. With the number of such claims likely to rise in the coming weeks, we turn now to focus on the position of the developer – how do construction delays potentially impact the developer, and in particular, the deadlines which may be imposed on the developer by various other third parties?

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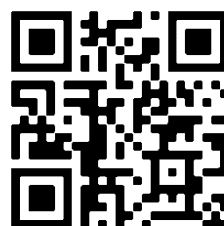
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# Acquiring Singapore real estate: Brief legal guide for foreign investors

While the effect which the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak will have on the Singapore real estate market is currently uncertain, the Singapore real estate market remains attractive in the medium to long term as an investment destination for foreign capital inflows, due to Singapore's macroeconomic stability and conducive environment for long-term capital value appreciation and preservation. This article aims to provide foreign investors with a brief introduction to the common transaction structures and some legal considerations, in relation to an acquisition of real estate in Singapore.

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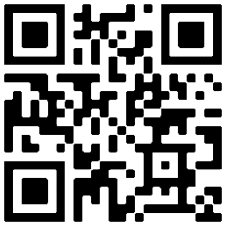
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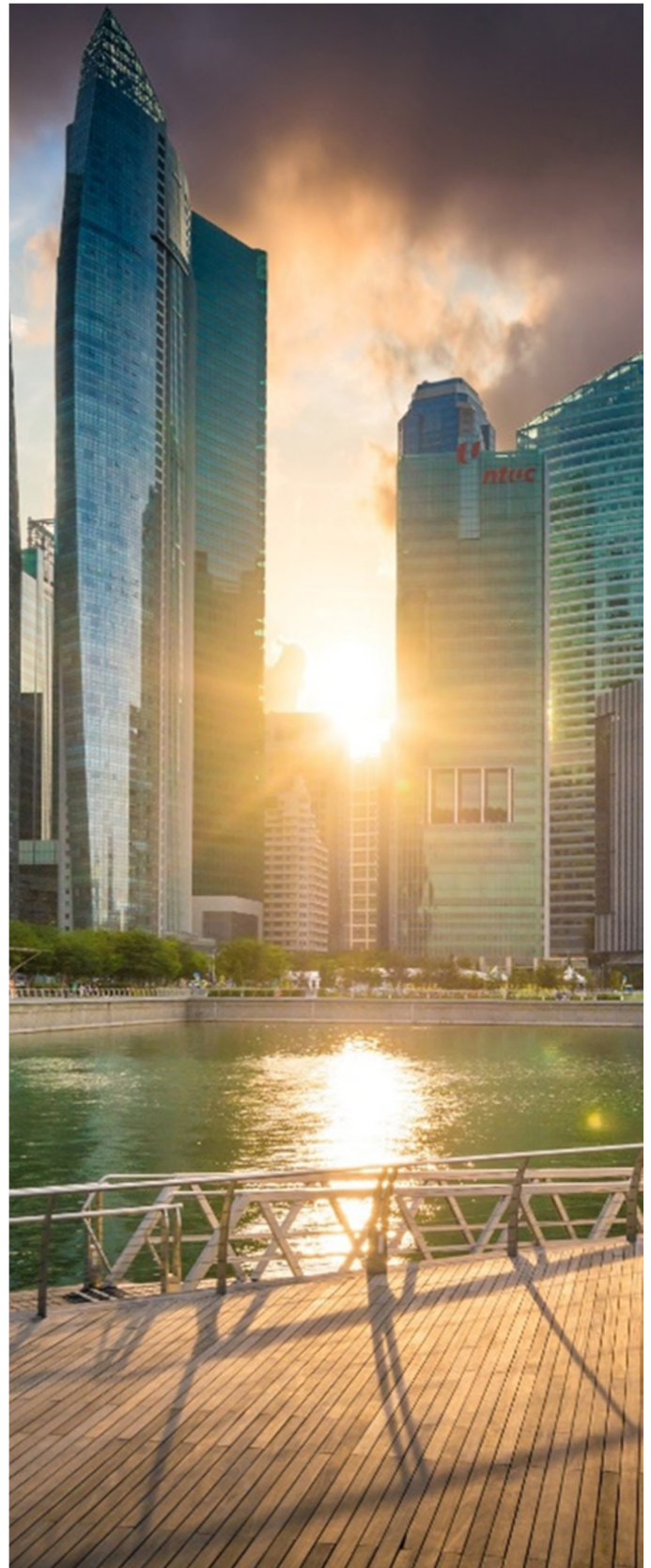




# Accolades

## India Business Law Journal's The International A-List 2020

Dentons Rodyk is pleased to announce that Senior Partner **S Sivanesan** and Partner **Sunil Rai** has been recognized in India Business Law Journal's 2020 list of The International A-List. The International A-List, which aims to recognise top India-focused lawyers at international law firms, is based on extensive research conducted by India Business Law Journal and the collective views of in-house counsel and private practice lawyers in India.



# About Dentons Rodyk

Situated at the southern most tip of Southeast Asia, Singapore is a massive regional hub for global commerce, finance, transportation and legal services. This important island city-state is a vital focal point for doing business throughout the Asia Pacific region.

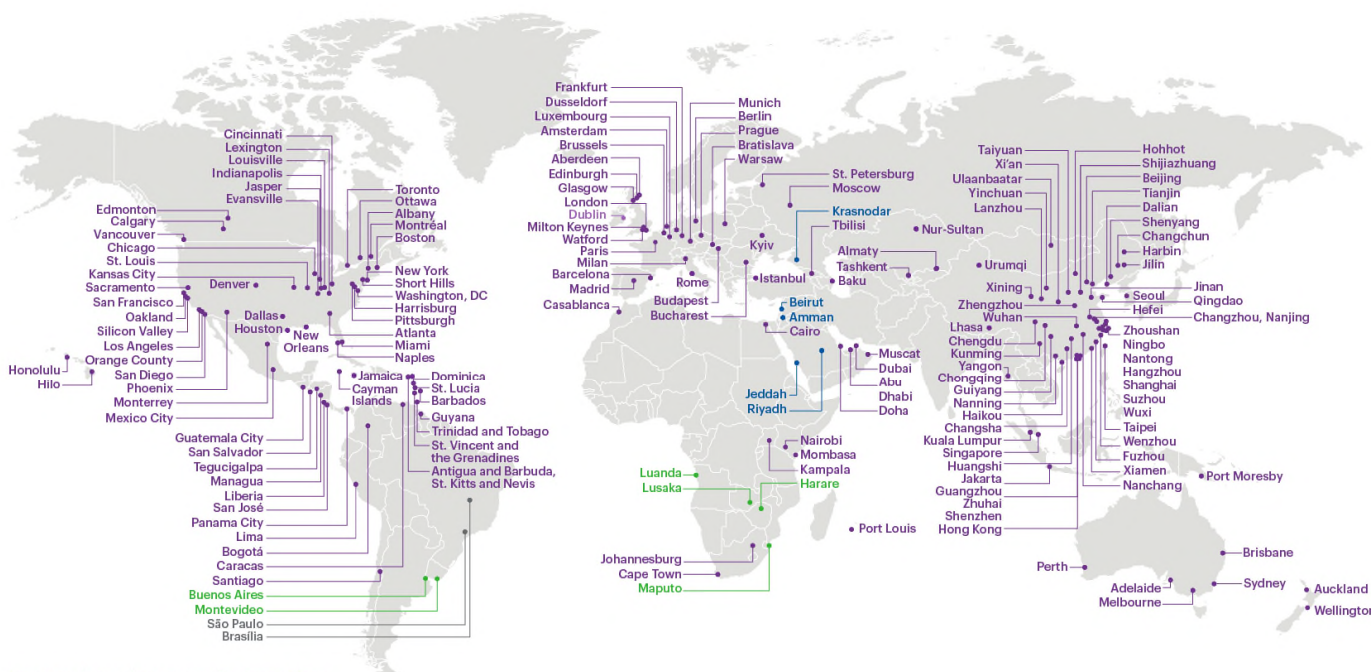
As one of Singapore’s oldest legal practices, trusted since 1861 by clients near and far, rely on our full service capabilities to help you achieve your business goals in Singapore and throughout Asia. Consistently ranked in leading publications, our legal teams regularly represent a diverse clientele in a broad spectrum of industries and businesses.

Our team of around 200 lawyers can help you complete a deal, resolve a dispute or solve your business challenge.

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 Locations in blue represent associate firms, offices and special alliances.  
 Locations in green represent proposed combinations that have not yet been formalized.  
 Locations in gray represent Brazil Strategic Alliance.

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