

Press release

Madrid, 16th October 2017

Spanish legal heavyweight ECIJA enters the Portuguese market merging with Antas da Cunha.

The number one Spanish TMT law firm ECIJA, also ranked as a top 10 firm in Spain, has merged with Portuguese law firm Antas da Cunha to form one of the biggest players in the Iberian market, with a global headcount of up to 35 partners and 180 professionals.

In its 20th anniversary, the Spanish Firm ECIJA, ranked in the Spanish market as the leading firm in TMT, according to the most prestigious international legal publications Chambers & Partners and Legal 500 has accomplished a strategic move by merging with Portuguese Firm Antas da Cunha.

ECIJA is a Top 10 law firm in the Spanish market and one of the best multidisciplinary and independent firms in the country. It has been recognised by the most prestigious international directories, offering comprehensive professional services regarding legal, compliance and information security services to domestic and international clients. Ecija is a full-service law firm with a presence in all areas of law and sectors, through its multidisciplinary teams that advise national and international clients.

In 2017, ECIJA was recognised as the "Best Information Technology, Data Protection & Intellectual Property Law Firm" in the Spanish Market by the Expansión Awards and also as the "Law Firm of the Year" in Intellectual Property, Information Technology & Data Protection by Forbes Awards 2017.

Antas da Cunha has experienced phenomenal organic growth since being founded by Managing Partner Fernando Antas da Cunha in 2015. In under two years the Firm had already grown up to almost 40 lawyers, which are now joining the ECIJA Group. Antas da Cunha has been awarded as the "Corporate Law Firm of the Year" and as "Labour Law Firm of the Year" in Portugal by British publication Corporate Intl. It has also been voted "Corporate and Commercial Law Firm of the Year" by Lawyer Monthly Magazine.

After the merger, ECIJA will count on offices in Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, Miami, Santiago de Chile and Lisbon, and will collaborate in any other worldwide jurisdiction as the sole member of MERITAS for the Spanish market, worldwide lawyers network with more than 7000 lawyers in over 70 countries around the world.

The Firm will operate in the Portuguese market under the name of Antas da Cunha ECIJA and be managed by Fernando Antas da Cunha. Following this integration, ECIJA now counts on 35 partners and more than 180 professionals throughout its six international offices headquartered in Madrid.

In the words of Hugo Ecija, founder and CEO at ECIJA "The Portuguese market has always been a natural aspiration. Now that we are consolidated in the top 10 Spanish law firms, it was also time to start our growth as an Iberian firm, motivated also by the needs of our clients, who are



increasingly operating in Portugal. Our new headquarters in this market also provide an access to other Portuguese-speaking countries and emerging economies of the African continent". In relation to the merger process, Écija says that "it has been a relatively simple move due to the shared values and vision of both firms. Antas da Cunha is an innovative and client oriented firm with great experience and recognition".

In the words of Fernando Antas da Cunha, Managing Partner of Antas da Cunha ECIJA "The firm has grown very quickly during our first two years and we weren't in the market to merge with an international firm. I had always assumed we would remain independent. However, the opportunity to start discussions with ECIJA happened organically and we are delighted to bring their expertise in the area of TMT to the Portuguese market. With GDPR less than one year away and the increasing importance of data privacy in today's world, we strongly believe there is a big opportunity for us to capitalise on in Portugal. We are now facing the big challenge of creating a leading Iberian firm. Having the trajectory, know-how and market recognition of ECIJA in the TMT area will undoubtedly make us a very relevant player in the Portuguese market. "

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