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SHEPPARD MULLIN LAUNCHES SHANGHAI OFFICE *Client Needs Drive Firm's First International Location*

LOS ANGELES, March 12, 2007 — Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP today announced the opening of the law firm's Shanghai office, marking a natural expansion of the firm's U.S.-based East Asia practice. The new office, Sheppard Mullin's first international location, is housed in the Platinum Tower in Shanghai's Luwan District, near several of the firm's existing clients.

Sheppard Mullin represents 55 of the U.S. Fortune 100 companies, most of which have significant business operations in greater China. The new office in Shanghai marks the next step in Sheppard Mullin's strategic growth plan, which saw the opening of offices in Washington, D.C. in 2003 and New York in 2005. As with Washington and New York, the decision to open in Shanghai was driven by the needs of existing clients.

"Many of our clients have operations in China and are pursuing aggressive growth plans there. It is natural for us to establish a footprint in China to provide the support and guidance that our clients require on both sides of the Pacific," said Guy Halgren, chairman of Sheppard Mullin. The firm has well established China and Korea teams handling outbound as well as inbound investment matters in a variety of industry sectors, including pharmaceuticals, manufacturing, infrastructure, entertainment/media, and hospitality.

Opening in Shanghai is also a natural expansion of the firm's other international practices, which include the successful prior launch of Latin America, Italy, and Israel teams. "Several of our domestic and international practices focus to a significant degree on Chinese companies looking to raise capital or develop markets outside of China, and our new Shanghai office allows us to expand the services that we provide to those clients," said Halgren.

The Shanghai office opens with four seasoned China hands positioned to immediately handle a full range of investment, intellectual property, real estate, trade, financial restructuring, and international disputes matters. Partner David Huebner has relocated from Los Angeles to Shanghai to head the China practice and lead the new office. Also relocating to Shanghai is special counsel Xudong Ni from the firm's Washington, D.C. office. Special counsel William Zheng and senior legal consultant Michael Zhang have joined Sheppard Mullin from China's AllBright Law Firm.

In addition, partners Edward Tillinghast and Jerry Gumpel will remain integral members of the Shanghai team and will anchor the U.S.-side of the firm's greater China practice from their offices in New York and Del Mar, California, respectively.

Huebner, a former chairman of Coudert Brothers LLP, specializes in intellectual property and international dispute resolution. He has represented governments and corporations in various sectors including pharmaceuticals, technology, entertainment/media, telecom, and construction. Huebner is a solicitor in England & Wales as well as a member of the Bars of California, New York, and D.C. He is a graduate *summa cum laude* from Princeton University and Yale Law School, and worked earlier in his career in Tokyo as a policy advisor to a member of the Japanese Diet. He sits on the ICC Commission on Arbitration and has handled numerous disputes in and related to greater China.

Ni, a native of China, has many years of experience handling foreign investment and trade matters, and helped found one of China's first private law firms. He also has prior experience at a Virginia-based business strategy consulting firm. He is a *magna cum laude* graduate of Peking University School of Law, and earned an LLM from the University of Pennsylvania Law School. He has particular expertise in strategic planning for foreign companies doing business in China, as well as deep industry experience in the aviation and banking sectors.

Zheng focuses his practice on foreign direct investment in the greater China region and has extensive experience in advising clients in various matters relating to intellectual property, corporate law, M&A, and venture capital in China. He worked earlier in his career for one of the Big Five accounting firms. He received his bachelor degree from Brandeis University and J.D. from Pace University School of Law. He is a member of the New York Bar.

Zhang has broad experience in intellectual property and corporate law, with a focus on advising clients on structuring investments and protecting intellectual assets. He has handled a wide range of matters in China for U.S. Fortune 100 companies and other international clients. He is a graduate of the Law School of the Shanghai Institute of Foreign Trade.

Tillinghast specializes in financial restructuring, cross-border insolvencies, creditors' rights litigation, distressed mergers and acquisitions, and advising distressed asset investors. Former head of Coudert Brothers' Global Insolvency and Restructuring practice, Tillinghast has written and spoken widely on the challenges of cross-border restructurings, and represents U.S. and greater China-based clients in cross-border matters in the U.S. and China.

Gumpel, the leader of the firm's International group, is a cross-border investment and M&A specialist. He represents U.S.-based multinationals and non-U.S. companies that have invested in the U.S.

About Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP

Sheppard Mullin is a full service AmLaw 100 firm with 490 attorneys in 10 offices located throughout California and in New York, Washington, D.C. and Shanghai. The firm's California offices are located in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Santa Barbara, Century City, Orange County, Del Mar Heights and San Diego. Founded in 1927 on the principle that the firm would succeed only if its attorneys delivered prompt, high quality and cost-effective legal services, Sheppard Mullin provides legal counsel to U.S. and international clients. Companies turn to Sheppard Mullin to handle a full range of corporate and technology matters, high stakes litigation and complex financial transactions. In the U.S., the firm's clients include more than half of the Fortune 100 companies. For more information, please visit sheppardmullin.com.