

A moment with Ahmed Saleh – Head of Oman Office

November 2013

Last month saw Al Tamimi & Company continue to expand its network of operations in the Middle East with the opening of a new office in Muscat, headed by respected Omani lawyer Ahmed Saleh.

Born and raised in the Eastern region of Oman, Ahmed spent his school days thinking he would grow up to be an engineer – not a lawyer. “At my school at that time, you chose a scientific path or an artistic path,” he recalls. “I chose the scientific path.”

With his decision to study engineering made, Ahmed’s educational promise was recognised and he was offered a sponsorship opportunity by a major oil company in Oman to study in the UK. 18 year-old Ahmed then moved to England, along with several other Omani students, to study for his A-Levels at Loughborough College. Whilst living abroad without his family was at times difficult and studying in a second language often challenging, Ahmed says his time in England was ‘very enjoyable’ and an experience on which he looks back with good memories.

Following the successful completion of his A-Levels, Ahmed was offered a place at the University of Swansea in Wales to study engineering. It was here that his analytical yet creative skills became evident and the question of whether he had ever considered a career in law was posed. Intrigued by the idea, Ahmed enthusiastically set out about researching the subject and decided to switch his degree to law. “I found law fascinating,” he says. “In particular, learning about case law was very interesting and I was so glad I had made the switch.”

After earning his law degree, Ahmed stayed in the UK for a while before returning to Oman to take up his first full-time legal role. Working for Oman’s Ministry of Legal Affairs, he spent a year drafting laws and reviewing international agreements for the government before moving to private practice in order to qualify. Whilst working for a local law firm in Oman on corporate and commercial matters, Ahmed qualified as a lawyer and then moved to the Muscat office of international law firm SNR Dentons. Almost immediately he was seconded to the firm’s London office where he spent the next year gaining experience in a number of different practice areas before deciding to specialise in corporate and commercial matters. Ahmed then returned to Oman and continued to work at Dentons for the next seven years, focusing on joint ventures, mergers & acquisitions and restructurings.

At the beginning of 2013, after having kept abreast of news in the legal market of the firm’s expansions plans, Ahmed began talks with Al Tamimi & Company about the possibility of opening an office in Oman. “As the largest law firm in the Middle East, it made sense to have an office in Oman,” says Ahmed and the firm’s management agreed with him. Since the country’s membership of the World Trade Organisation in 2000, which led to the internationalisation of its financial and commercial practices, Oman has witnessed a foreign direct investment boom and the country was seen as a key market for Al Tamimi.

As a qualified Court of Appeal Omani lawyer and with his vast experience, Ahmed was the clear choice to head the new Al Tamimi office and says it is a ‘great honour’ to do so. The office, in the country’s capital of Muscat, is the firm’s 13th office across a network of seven countries in the Middle East and was formally opened on 29 October with a launch event attended by a number of local dignitaries, government officials and clients based in Oman.

“The office launch party was a great event,” says Ahmed. “It was a very enjoyable evening and a good opportunity to meet both existing and potential clients of the firm – as well as colleagues from different offices I had not yet met – all of whom are excited that we now have a presence in Oman.”

Ahmed is now looking forward to the challenge of running the firm’s newest office and ‘continuing to provide the first class service’ that Al Tamimi clients expect to receive.