

## Former Swiss prosecutor: “There is more of a team spirit at the international level”

Michael Griffiths, 5 July 2017



Claire Daams

Cooperation between national authorities has become far less formal in recent years, according to former Swiss prosecutor Claire Daams, who recently joined a boutique law firm.

Daams, 50, spent 12 years as a prosecutor at the Office of the Attorney General of Switzerland (OAG). She spoke to GIR shortly after she joined the recently renamed Geneva-based firm Monfrini Bitton Klein on 3 July.

During her time at the OAG, Daams worked on some of the agency's most high-profile matters, including settling corruption and money laundering allegations with German engineering company Siemens in 2013. The case was a collaborative effort with prosecutors from Germany, the US and Liechtenstein.

When she started at the agency in 2003 as an associate federal prosecutor, she said cooperation between national authorities was “quite formal in nature”. However, by the time she left in 2015, Daams saw that the nature of cross-border communications had changed.

“I would say there is increased informal contact to sort out what is the best approach before sending formal requests,” she said, and added: “There is more of a team spirit at the international level and it is not unusual anymore for law enforcement agencies to talk to each other.”

While Daams has only just begun in the private sector, she plans to build a practice around corruption, money laundering and asset recovery matters. She told GIR that asset recovery was an area of law that she particularly enjoyed as a prosecutor.

“I had a focus on depriving criminals of the assets they obtained, so they would either go back to the victim or the state,” she said.

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Asset recovery is a specialist area for Monfrini Bitton Klein, particularly for newly appointed name partner Yves Klein, who moderated a panel on the subject at the International Bar Association's June anti-corruption conference in Paris.

"Both our government and private clients will benefit from her [Daams'] legal expertise and insight into criminal investigations, notably of bribery and corruption," Klein told GIR.

In addition to her time as a prosecutor, Daams was the head of legal and case consultancy at Swiss non-profit the Basel Institute on Governance from 2016 to 2017.

Daams also chaired the law enforcement group of the OECD's working group on bribery from 2008 to 2015.

Monfrini Crettol & Associés became Monfrini Bitton Klein on 1 June 2017, after David Bitton and Yves Klein became name partners.