

José Antonio Muñoz

Managing Partner



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Overview

José Antonio is the managing partner of Dentons Muñoz, in Central America and in Costa Rica. His practice focuses on the intersection of business and public law, public international law, and government. In addition to corporate law, he practices government relations, corporate governance, foreign direct investment and international investment disputes, international and domestic corporate and tax structuring, and real estate law. Moreover, he is leading the Firm's Rule of Law (ROL) initiative in association with a number of leading ROL organizations including The Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law in the UK and The World Justice Project in the USA.

José Antonio has been at the center of legal innovation across the region for more than three decades and is one of Central America's top corporate lawyers. Now, as founding partner of Dentons Muñoz, he seeks to extend the firm's global reach through the Dentons offices worldwide.

Throughout his career, José Antonio has played an active role in government relations by shaping Central America's public and private policy. He successfully lobbied in favor of trade laws such as CBI-I, CBI-II and US DR CAFTA; represented the Costa Rican private sector in the country's accession to GATT; and helped, with his proactive advocacy, to conclude the negotiation of a settlement agreement with the US International Trade Commission related to countervailing and dumping investigations. While deputy chief of mission and chargé d'affaires at the Embassy of Costa Rica in Washington, DC, José Antonio represented the government of Costa Rica at the US Department of State, USTR, USDOC, the US Department of the Treasury, and the National Security Council. Subject matters included Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) / labor investigations, freedom of the seas, international extraditions, and the applications to Costa Rica of the Gonzales and Hickenlooper Amendments to the US Foreign Assistance Act.

In Costa Rica, José Antonio has represented clients in cases involving: government affairs, international trade and customs; expropriation; creeping expropriation; incompatibility of local practices with international rule of law standards; and FCPA and UK anti-bribery matters. He has negotiated public private partnership (PPP) arrangements with the government for public works projects, helping navigate opposition to the proposals.

A member of the board of directors, president and former president of the Costa Rican–American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham), and now chair of the Association of American Chambers of Commerce in Latin America and the Caribbean (AACCLA), José Antonio has effectively helped the Chamber leverage its resources and networks to support its members' businesses and trade facilitation initiatives both in Costa Rica and in Washington, DC. In

2011, through AmCham's Factor f+m initiative, he positioned the Chamber as one of the first nonprofit associations to meet the Costa Rican board gender diversity and parity legal requirements.

Recognition

Honors and Awards

- The Distinguished Lawyer for 2011, Costa Rican Bar Association

Activities and Affiliations

Memberships

- Member of the board of directors, president and former president, Costa Rican–American Chamber of Commerce
- Chair (2017-2108) AACCLA- The Association of American Chambers of Commerce in Latin America and the Caribbean

Areas of focus

Practices

- Corporate
- General Counsel Services
- Public Law
- Real Estate
- Tax
- Trade, WTO and Customs
- Notary Services
- Project Development
- Public Policy and Regulation
- Mergers and Acquisitions

Industry sectors

- Government
- Infrastructure and PPP
- Transportation

Region

- Latin America and the Caribbean

Education

- Georgetown University, 1986, LL.M., Common Law Studies

Admissions and qualifications

- Costa Rica

Languages

- English
- French
- Italian
- Spanish