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Grant Thornton launches Latin America Business Group

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HOUSTON & NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)--As part of Grant Thornton LLP's focus on leveraging its strategic capabilities in high-growth emerging markets, the firm has established a Latin America Business Group (LABG), a joint initiative between the U.S. firm and a number of Grant Thornton's Latin America member firms. This unique, collaborative approach will offer clients seamless, integrated global support for complex business activities in some of the world's fastest-growing economies.

Not only will the LABG offer services to U.S.-based clients with, or planning, activities and operations in Latin American countries, but will ultimately also have a future focus on growing Latin American-based companies with investment into the United States. These services include direct and indirect tax, transfer pricing, cross-border transactions, specialty advisory and attestation, among others. The group will target major growing sectors in the Latin American economy, including infrastructure, industrial manufacturing, technology, automotive, agriculture and energy.

Partner Joseph Loretto, who spent two years on secondment to Brazil and is currently based in Houston, will lead the LABG as part of his current leadership role as director with Grant Thornton's International Business Center (IBC) for the Americas and U.S. Central region.

The group will be made up of specialized subject matter resources from Latin America, current and former U.S. secondees to Latin America and others who have extensive experience with clients operating in Latin America. These individuals will have in-depth knowledge of tax policies, regulatory and business matters within the Latin America region. Managers from Grant Thornton's Mexican member firm, Salles Sainz Grant Thornton, will also join the LABG team in the United States on secondment to focus on issues related to cross-border business with Mexico.

"We are pleased to have the opportunity to collaborate with Grant Thornton's Latin America member firms," said Jason Ramey, national managing partner of International Client Services. "The formation of the LABG reinforces the firm's commitment to the region as well as our strategy of providing truly integrated global solutions to clients with activities and operations in high-growth economies."

According to a recent Grant Thornton International Business Report, the Pacific economies in Latin America have made great strides toward embracing globalization. Not only have Chile, Peru, Columbia and Mexico formed the Alianza del Pacifico (the Pacific Alliance), a trade bloc that seeks to advance economic integration, free trade and free markets, but they were also involved in negotiations regarding the Trans Pacific Partnership. Mexico alone has 11 free trade agreements covering 43 economies. Brazil also has the prospect of the 2016 Olympics in Rio, which should provide opportunities for tourism, transport and construction businesses across the region.

To support the growth of the LABG, Karina Roiuk has joined Grant Thornton as an International Tax senior manager, based in the firm's New York office. She will work with Loretto and colleagues across the United States who are participating members of the LABG. Roiuk has nearly 20 years of experience providing services to clients doing business in Brazil and Latin America. She has worked with companies in a broad range of industries on a variety of complex tax issues, including mergers and acquisitions, foreign capital law, corporate law, corporate reorganization, indirect taxes, value-added tax and customs duties, direct tax and tax planning strategies. In this role, Roiuk also will work closely with Grant Thornton's Brazilian member firm, Grant Thornton Brasil.

"Karina brings to this role a deep familiarity with the challenges facing our clients doing business in Latin America, particularly in Brazil," said Loretto. "She will be integral in strengthening the growth of the LABG as well as our relationships with Grant Thornton firms abroad."

Most recently, Roiuk led the Brazil desk at Deloitte LLP in New York as a Tax senior manager, providing technical advice to U.S. organizations investing or doing business in Brazil. Previously, she served for nearly a decade in roles of increasing responsibility at Arthur Andersen LLP and PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP.

Roiuk received a law degree and a tax specialization degree from Brazil's Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Campinas and a master of laws degree in American Business Law from New York Law School. She is a member of the Bar Association in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

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