



Clifford Chance and Sullivan & Cromwell hired to weigh up LAN-TAM merger

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by Emiliano Mellino

Machado, Meyer, Sendacz e Opice Advogados in Brazil, Chile's Cariola, Diez, Pérez-Cotapos & Cía Ltda and Clifford Chance LLP are lined up to represent TAM, Brazil's largest airline, in merger talks with Chile's flag carrier, LAN.

LAN is taking counsel from **Pinheiro Neto Advogados** in Brazil, Claro y Cía in Chile and Sullivan & Cromwell LLP in the US.

The airlines announced on Friday they would be entering negotiations, with the aim of reaching a binding agreement to combine both companies' holdings into a single parent entity, Latam Airlines Group. They had a combined revenue of US\$8.5 billion last year, and expect the merger could generate annual synergies of around US\$400 million.

This deal takes place in a period of consolidation among global and Latin American carriers. Earlier this year Colombia's biggest airline, Avianca, merged with Central American aviation group TACA, while the merger between US airlines Continental Airlines and United Airlines was cleared last month by European regulators, making it the sector's largest company.

Machado Meyer and Clifford Chance have worked together in the past advising TAM on bond issuances. Machado Meyer also provided counsel to the company following the 2007 São Paulo plane crash that killed 200 people.

In March Claro y Cía advised Grupo Cueto when it purchased a stake in LAN from incoming Chilean President Sebastián Piñera.

Counsel to TAM

•International

Clifford Chance LLP

Partner Anthony Oldfield, counsel Sarah Jones and associate Anand Saha

- Brazil

Machado, Meyer, Sendacz e Opice Advogados

- Chile

Cariola, Diez, Pérez-Cotapos & Cía Ltda

Counsel to LAN

- International

Sullivan & Cromwell LLP

- Brazil

Pinheiro Neto Advogados

Partner Alexandre Bertoldi

- Chile

Claro y Cía