

Can a Foreign National Advocate or Foreign registered Law Firm Practice Law in Ethiopia?

Description

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The answer is YES. A foreign national advocate or foreign registered law firm can practice law in Ethiopia under two conditions. The first condition is that the case the foreign national advocate or foreign registered law firm seeks to engage involves the application of the law of the country that issued the advocacy license of the foreign national advocate or foreign law firm. The second condition is that the practice shall be done only in collaboration with a local advocate or law firm licensed under Ethiopian law.



The Federal Advocacy Service Licencing and Administration Proclamation No 1249/2021, done as of 5th day of August 2021, is the one that was revolutionary in the context of allowing foreign nationals advocates or foreign registered law firms to practice law in Ethiopia in the above two conditions. This proclamation repealed the previous Proclamation No 199/2000 that restricted the practice of law to only Ethiopian Nationals. The existing proclamation not only opens the door for foreign national advocates or foreign registered law firms to practice law in Ethiopia but also with equal footing to Ethiopian nationals, foreign nationals of Ethiopian origin are given the green light to practice law in Ethiopia.

The scope of the existing proclamation on Article 3 provides that the proclamation shall be applicable not only to federal advocates and law firms licensed under the proclamation but also foreign national advocates and law firms working within Ethiopia.

Hence the grounds for denial of an advocacy license or imposition of disciplinary measures shall also apply, as appropriate, to advocacy service providers holding a foreign license.



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Therefore a foreign national advocate or foreign registered law firm with a valid advocacy license granted to the foreign national or foreign registered law firm in a foreign country may use their foreign license to render advocacy service to clients in Ethiopia on cases involving the application of the foreign law the advocacy license is issued on and in collaboration with a local advocate or law firm licensed under the Proclamation.

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