

## Grand Jury Reform

D.C. Circuit Judge Brett Kavanaugh ruled grand jury witnesses have the right to review transcripts of their testimony.

Page 3



## Heart of the Matter

Family law started out as a challenge for Judge Morris Jacobson, but now he can cut right to the point. *On the Bench.*

Page 4



# THE RECORDER

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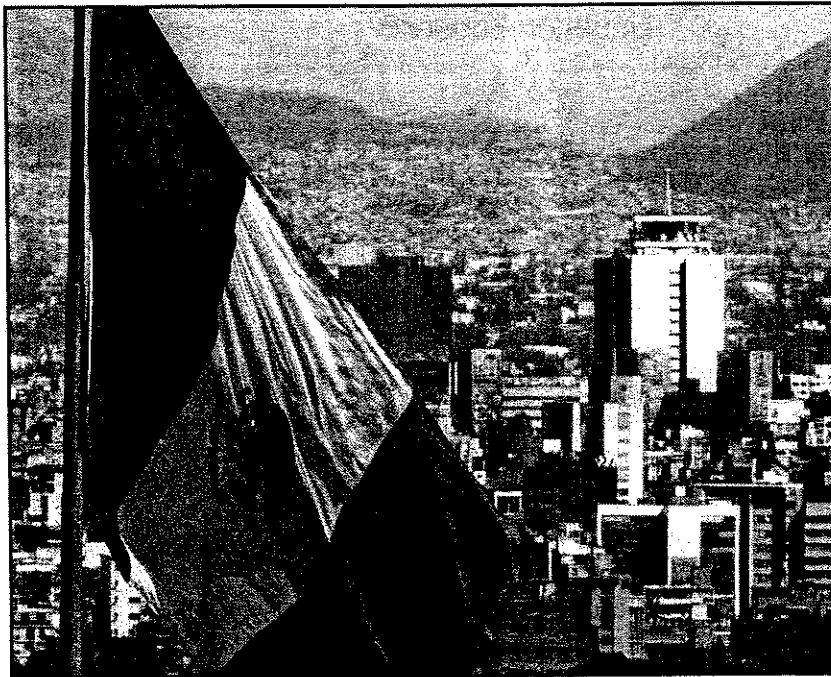
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ALM

## O'Melveny reaches across the border



ANDREW WINNING/NEWSCOM

By Kellie Schmitt

RECORDER STAFF WRITER

LOS ANGELES — The first thing Fernando Eraña noticed about O'Melveny & Myers was that its attorneys here take short lunch breaks.

Eraña, the first to take part in a novel associate exchange program, said lunch at his home firm in Mexico City could easily go more than two hours, and it starts hours later.

"It was hard to get used to it the first week, but now I'm going to lunch at noon," said Eraña.

Eraña and an O'Melveny counterpart are trading places for three months, in what firm leaders describe as an effort to raise the firm's profile in Latin America and strengthen relationships with Mexican contacts to better serve clients' cross-border needs.

"We're trying to buck that trend of having all Latin

See MEXICO page 11

**BORDER CROSSING:** O'Melveny & Myers entered an associate swap with a Mexico City firm.

## MEXICO

Continued from page 1

American work coordinated from the East Coast." said Michael Camunez, a partner in the L.A. office. "L.A. is a natural springboard."

The relationship with Mexico City-based Solórzano, Carvajal, González and Pérez-Correa, a 22-lawyer firm referred to as Solcargo, grew out of networking at an international securitization conference last year. O'Melveny was eager to solidify a relationship with local counsel in Mexico for clients involved in cross-border litigation or international arbitration, Camunez said, pointing to clients such as UBS and JPMorgan Chase & Co. that have international legal needs.

"Markets are changing, our clients' needs are changing and we see this as a way of getting ahead of the curve," Camunez said.

And it has a side benefit. While the exchange isn't a formal part of the firm's diversity program, creating relationships like this bring a diverse, global perspective to the office, leaders said.

O'Melveny was attracted to Solcargo because it focuses heavily on cross-border work and has an "impressive client" list, said Francisco Flores, the O'Melveny counsel orchestrating the exchange program. Top Solcargo clients include Clear Channel Communications and Overseas Private Investment Corp.

Eraña won't be practicing U.S. law in the L.A. office — and won't be receiving a U.S. associate salary; Solcargo is paying him. (The visiting attorneys will not be billing clients at their host firm.) But Eraña will be soaking up O'Melveny's legal strategies, especially in structured finance. He's also helping its attorneys with advice on work involving Latin America.

Eraña said he's hoping the exchange will help him professionally, and it's nice to use what he learned during his LL.M. studies at Northwestern University.

Since the program is in its infancy, both sides handpicked associates they anticipated would do well in an international environment. In October, O'Melveny's Eduardo Rivas, who is fluent in Spanish, will head south for the other half

of the exchange.

Rivas, 30, said young lawyers in his generation — he graduated from law school in 2004 — have a new outlook on law, realizing that their clients will likely be large institutions whose reach extends well beyond the country's borders. When those clients look for advice about Latin America, he wants to offer the practical experience of having worked there, he said.

Eraña said he particularly enjoys L.A.'s museums, such as The Huntington Library's gardens and The Getty. And apart from structured finance, he's also enjoyed his exposure to some other U.S. law firm customs. O'Melveny might not have leisurely lunches, but it does have a lush summer associate program — and Eraña has been invited along.

"We don't have all the parties, lunches and all these events — that's so different," he said.

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