
Brent Gurney and Sarah Ganslein Discuss Strategic Trade Controls at United Nations Conference in Lima

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WilmerHale Partner [Brent Gurney](#) and Senior Associate [Sarah Ganslein](#) spoke about strategic trade controls at a United Nations conference in Lima, Peru on March 23 and 24. Convened by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, the conference focused on combatting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540. The Regional Centre is one of five branches of the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs in New York. Gurney and Ganslein provided a unique industry-based perspective to participants during their presentation, which Partner [Ron Meltzer](#) and Senior Associate [David Horn](#) helped prepare.

During the conference, Gurney and Ganslein discussed lessons learned from law enforcement matters they have handled for clients involving investigations by the Department of Justice, the Department of Commerce, Homeland Security Investigations, and other authorities into potential violations of export control laws, particularly regarding controlled dual-use goods. Gurney highlighted red flags for potential criminal activity and talked through the various methods criminals use to set up false fronts and obtain illicit goods, especially in countries with lax or non-existent trade controls or enforcement mechanisms. Ganslein discussed the importance of the Caribbean states' efforts to achieve greater transparency and interaction with industry stakeholders, as well as increased governmental interagency and international cooperation.

"The conference was a great opportunity to showcase the firm's experience regarding trade controls and enforcement matters, while also broadening our understanding of international concerns, particularly regarding transshipment risks," explained Gurney.

Other presentations covered topics such as proliferation financing, how to approach the development of new legislation, the implementation of strategic trade control regimes in Colombia and Mexico, and shipping security. The workshop also featured interactive educational exercises, including team-based scenarios modeling the decision-making process for granting or denying an import license and a competition to test participants' abilities in identifying dual-use items that could be used in WMD.

In addition to United Nations officials, the conference also featured representatives from the US

Department of State, European Union, CARICOM, Organization of American States, International Maritime Organization, US Department of Energy, Stimson Center, and the University of Georgia, as well as diplomats from Colombia, Mexico, South Africa, Belize, Grenada, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago.

[View the presentation materials.](#)