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Law Letter of Recommendation

It is my pleasure to write this letter in support of XXX application for admission to the LL.M. program at Harvard Law School. I am a graduate of the HLS LL.M. program and a former Frank Knox Memorial Fellow. I am confident that XXX combines the intelligence, diligence and intellectual curiosity to benefit from, and contribute meaningfully to, the program. In this letter I will discuss the main reasons for my confidence in his abilities and potential.

XXX is an associate in this law firm's dispute resolution department, and I am a partner in the firm. I first encountered XXX in late 2015, when he joined the firm. Currently dividing my time between Singapore and Tokyo, I lead our firm's international arbitration practice in Japan; in this capacity I supervise Taro's work on several client matters and observe him daily in professional settings.

XXX day-to-day responsibilities include legal research, analysis, drafting (in both English and Japanese languages), and project management in a broad range of dispute matters. XXX has represented and provided legal advice to Japanese and international clients in various legal proceedings. He has also been instrumental in core pro bono activities, particularly those involving LGBT equality and support of orphanages.

Having introduced myself and given an overview of XXX activities within our law firm, I would now like to present three observations about Taro's attributes that will, I hope, serve to illustrate his suitability for admission to the LL.M. program at HLS.

First, XXX approaches each task in a careful, methodical fashion, bringing to bear on the particular assignment his considerable intelligence. By way of illustration, I refer to a situation in which I was asked to provide an overview of the current Japanese legislation on more than 30 inquiries related to the enforcement procedures of international arbitral awards. International arbitration is a complicated area of law, and in Japanese jurisprudence it has not been well researched and extensively considered because there are only a limited number of international arbitration cases in Japan. In addition, XXX had not previously experienced international arbitration work, having been trained in domestic litigation, an area of legal practice that he focused on early in his career. However, XXX conducted a thorough analysis of the matter by researching both English and Japanese relevant literature; he then adapted the new procedural framework with ease. He produced a stellar legal analysis, receiving high praise from the client. I am confident that Taro would bring the same intellectual rigor—and open mind—to graduate studies at HLS.

Second, XXX is an excellent team player. For example, when we organized a series of seminars on investment treaty arbitration, which chiefly targeted leading Japanese companies in various industries, XXX was a core member of the project team. The seminar series, which lasted for more than six months, consisted of seven sessions covering the entire range of investment arbitration procedures from beginning to end. From the outset, he assumed responsibility for managing the project. He created an outline for the seminar series and coordinated the necessary research activities conducted by the other six project team members, who were both Japanese and non-Japanese colleagues. Taro was the team member who drove the overall process forward. Although it was very challenging to manage and organize the whole seminar series so that it enticed clients by offering complicated and esoteric topics, he rose to the challenge. Each session had dozens of attendees and they provided us with extremely positive feedback. I am certain that this project would not have been successful without his diligence, insight, and project management acumen.

Third, XXX has a strong sense of responsibility. We are currently working on an Energy Charter Treaty arbitration case under the ICSID Rules against the Kingdom of Spain, relating to changes to a regulatory regime on tariffs affecting the client's interests in the Spanish renewable energy sector. This is only the third-ever investment treaty arbitration commenced by a Japanese company. As this case requires both Japanese and foreign perspectives, XXX was the obvious choice to manage it. He is in charge of the analysis of hundreds of Japanese documents and legal issues, as well as day-to-day communication with the client. Taro approached this role with characteristic rigor (researching and considering the legal issues arising from different legal regimes and sources) and enthusiasm (debating the points with vigor). I am confident that he similarly would thrive in pursuing new and challenging areas of legal research at HLS.

I should also mention that XXX has shown all the attributes described above when he works on pro bono matters. It has been a tremendous pleasure to work with him. His keen intellect, work ethic, and versatile skillset will assure him a very bright future. As a graduate of HLS, I am confident that he would be an outstanding student and alumnus. I recommend XXX for admission to Harvard's LL.M. program in the strongest possible terms, and I would be glad to answer any questions that you might have.

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