Louis Lehot Discusses Technology Innovation with Delegation of Belarussian Human Rights

Louis Lehot is an emerging growth company, venture capital, and M&A lawyer at Foley & Lardner in Silicon Valley.

California, Palo Alto, Aug 9, 2021 (Issuewire.com) - Louis Lehot, a corporate and technology law partner with leading global law firm Foley & Lardner LLP in Silicon Valley, recently visited with a delegation of Belarussian human rights activists, including Mrs. Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, who ran in the 2020 Belarussian presidential election as the main opposition candidate. The group, which also included leading academics, entrepreneurs, investors, and thought leaders, convened in Silicon Valley to explore ways to create vibrant economic growth fueled by clusters of technology innovation.

In a wide-ranging and thorough conversation, the participants discussed the importance of academic freedom in universities, freedom of expression, the rule of law, principles of private property, intellectual property protection, statutes to allow for the creation and funding of business enterprise, the role of a sophisticated judiciary, industrial policy, and other principles of democratic societies. The attendees shared their experiences building companies in clusters of innovation around the world, where universities fostered research in technology and innovation, how pools of risk capital formed to fund new enterprises, and how freedom of movement, expression, and wealth creation fostered companies that could grow from the garage to the global stage.

Specifically, participants of the Silicon Valley consortium discussed the role of Stanford University, the University of California at Berkeley, and other leading academic institutions in creating technology and training generations of technologists. They explained the history of Silicon Valley, and how investors had congregated around the universities and raised funds to create an alternative asset class to fund risky new ventures, called "venture capital." As new companies raised funds, brought products to market, and disrupted industries, they went global. Larger pools of equity capital then became available at a lower cost. These companies went for stock exchange listings in the public markets and raised more equity capital. As they developed histories of good cash flow and well-valued assets, they became eligible for debt capital to further finance growth. Investment banks flocked to Silicon Valley, as did private equity investors for mature companies. The participants described how clusters of innovation had similarly developed in other markets such as Israel, Europe, and Asia.

Some key takeaways from the discussion included:

1. The importance of the government's role in providing a system where the rule of law is predictable and incentivizes the creation of technology innovation.
2. How white papers can be used to drive discussion and develop consensus around key principles, goals, and priorities.
3. Using regulatory "sandboxes" to allow for development and experimentation within areas of technology innovation.
4. The key role the rise of the digital economy plays in technology innovation.

- The importance of connecting entrepreneurs in the diaspora with the home country to bring back learning, capital, and innovation.
- The importance of the empowerment of women.

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Louis Lehot is an emerging growth company, venture capital, and M&A lawyer at Foley & Lardner in Silicon Valley. Louis spends his time providing entrepreneurs, innovative companies, and investors with practical and commercial legal strategies and solutions at all stages of growth, from the garage to global.

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