



Business Crime 2018

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A practical cross-border insight into business crime

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Extraterritorial Regulatory and Criminal Enforcement



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Business crime increasingly involves conduct in the territory of multiple countries. This poses a challenge for law enforcement to effectively deter and address conduct that affects the population solely by acting within national borders. But international law circumscribes a state's power to make its law applicable in the first place, and sharply limits its power to enforce that law abroad. This chapter describes the international law principles that have traditionally limited enforcement to matters closely tied to a state's territory, explains how changes in that law are challenging those norms, and indicates how companies can understand and adapt to that emerging regime.

The Jurisdiction to Prescribe

The "jurisdiction to prescribe" is the authority of a state to make its law applicable to particular circumstances. A state may always apply its law within its own territory and to its own nationals, wherever they are located. International law permits a state to apply its law extraterritorially in three further cases: first, when the relevant conduct has significant and foreseeable effects in the state. Second, when the conduct is directed at the state or its vital interests. And third, under "universal jurisdiction", a state can prosecute a person located in its territory to address extremely heinous conduct such as war crimes. Restatement (Third) of the Foreign Relations Law of the United States §§ 401, 402, 404 (1987).

Most countries still maintain the position internally that their lawmakers have the power to enact a law with extraterritorial application simply by saying so. Nonetheless, out of respect for other countries and in deference to the political branches that can best weigh any foreign relations concern, canons of construction instruct that a law has no extraterritorial effect unless it clearly indicates that it does. Such canons provide a defence in certain cases of prosecutorial overreach where the matter has limited connection with the prosecuting country and the criminal law does not explicitly describe its geographic scope.

In common law countries, courts implement that principle through a "presumption against extraterritoriality". In the United States, a statute reaches conduct anywhere in the world if the statute gives a "clear, affirmative indication that it applies extraterritorially". Otherwise, the enforcement action may go forward only if the conduct that is the "focus" of the statute occurred within U.S. territory. *RJR Nabisco, Inc. v. European Cmty.*, 136 S. Ct. 2090, 2100-01 (2016); *Kiobel v. Royal Dutch Petroleum Co.*, 133 S. Ct. 1659 (2013); *Morrison v. Nat'l Australia Bank*, 561 U.S. 247 (2010). Precedent suggests that criminal law may have extraterritorial reach if the nature and purpose of the offence necessarily encompass conduct abroad, but that principle has not been recently tested. *Pasquantino v. United States*, 533 U.S. 349 (2005) (wire fraud statute satisfied by a wire communication touching the United States in furtherance of a scheme, even one to evade foreign taxes); *United States v. Bowman*, 260 U.S. 94 (1922) (crime of defrauding the United States necessarily reaches frauds originating overseas).

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Australia also focuses on the text of the statute. The presumption holds unless "express words" or "necessary implication" demonstrate the law's extraterritorial effect. *Meyer Heine Pty. v. China Navigation Co.*, 115 CLR 10 (Austl. 1966). Canada, on the other hand, and perhaps more like *Bowman*, focuses on the nature of the conduct. As long as the relevant conduct has a "real and substantial connection" to Canada, that conduct is subject to its laws. *Libman v. R.*, 2 S.C.R. ¶ 63 (1985).

In civil law countries, a law published in the official gazette must also clearly indicate its extraterritorial scope. For example, in the Netherlands, the Criminal Code sets out the situations in which its criminal law applies to conduct outside its territory. It specifies, among other situations, crimes committed on board a Dutch flag aircraft or vessel, crimes against Dutch persons, and other conduct treaties authorise the Netherlands to address, in addition to applying within Dutch territory and to Dutch citizens and residents. Netherlands Criminal Code arts 2-8. Chinese criminal law reaches the extraterritorial conduct of its nationals and conduct against its nationals if the offence is subject to a minimum sentence of at least three years of imprisonment, in addition to applying within its territory and to its citizens. Criminal Law of the PRC arts 6-11. When interpreting the sources of law, civil law courts rely heavily on international comity to determine whether the law should apply to foreign persons or conduct. Comity accords appropriate deference to the laws and jurisdiction of foreign sovereigns, not out of binding obligation, but out of respect and to avoid conflict. Although the doctrine of comity exists in common and civil law countries, it is much more central to a civil law analysis and, like the presumption, restricts the extraterritorial application of law.

Extraterritorial Application of Regulatory and Criminal Law in Select Areas

Antitrust and Competition

Competition and antitrust law has had cross-border effect ever since the first multinational corporation emerged. Several countries now explicitly apply their competition law abroad. For example, Germany holds that its "Act shall apply to all restraints of competition having an effect within the scope of application of this Act, even if they were caused outside the scope of application of this Act." GWB § 130(2). That approach stems from European law, which has blocked several mergers between entities primarily operating outside of Europe, such as the proposed merger of MCI WorldCom with Sprint, and of General Electric with Honeywell, despite how both enterprises were incorporated and based in the United States and received approval from U.S. regulators. The European Court of Justice recently clarified that the competition provisions of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union apply both (1) where anticompetitive conduct anywhere has an "immediate, substantial, and foreseeable" effect on the EU market, and (2) where an anticompetitive restraint of trade is implemented within the EU, such as by selling the product or carrying out a boycott there. *Intel Corp. v. Eur. Comm.*, No. C-413/14 P ¶¶ 294, 324 (E.C.J. Oct. 20, 2016).

China's Anti-Monopoly Act has explicit extraterritorial reach, covering "monopolistic conducts in economic activities within the territory of the People's Republic of China; and ... monopolistic conducts outside the territory of the People's Republic of China, which serve to eliminate or restrict competition on the domestic market of China". Anti-Monopoly Law art. 2.

Bribery and Corruption

Anti-corruption law became a remarkable example of extraterritorial reach because it specifically targeted foreign acts and criminalised conduct that was largely accepted. The United States led that effort with the 1977 adoption of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, and the United Kingdom assertively enforced its prior laws and the more recent Bribery Act. Those statutes were so influential that a number of multilateral treaties regularised the view that such conduct was criminal, including the OECD Bribery Convention.

Several Latin American countries have recently enacted legislation targeting bribery and corruption. Colombia's was its first foreign bribery law. Colombia, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Peru now all impose corporate liability where individuals, including contractors, make corrupt payments to foreign officials. Those laws reflect the marked shift from the prior attitude that those payments were an expected cost of doing business. And they represent the increased role those countries are taking in investigating corrupt payments, bringing prosecutions, and commanding concessions in settlement negotiations.

Cybercrime

Global connectivity has not created new crimes so much as provided new ways to perpetrate existing crimes, including across previously unimaginable distances. A criminal can pick your pocket from the other side of the planet. The newly codified crimes are readily considered domestic, despite covering conduct orchestrated abroad, because of that conduct's foreseeable and substantial effect in the country and its targeting of the country, its vital interests, or its persons.

However, addressing cybercrimes and cyber-facilitated crimes requires international cooperation. Without effective enforcement, there is no deterrence. And a crime on the books is little comfort to businesses, institutions and individuals who suffer an attack if the stolen funds or information cannot be securely returned.

Securities

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The emerging rule is that a nation's securities laws reach any act that impacts the market or listed companies. For example, Hong Kong holds that its prohibition against fraudulent or deceptive securities schemes applies to conduct or transactions in Hong Kong even where the securities are listed only on foreign exchanges. *SFC v. Young Bik Fung*, [2016] HKCFI 57. Hong Kong regulators recently applied that statute to a short seller who explained on his website why he believed the Hong Kong listed company he was shorting would fare poorly. Regulators won a five-year ban against the trader, though his appeal is still pending. Hong Kong law reached the trader's statements because of their "probable" inducement of transactions in Hong Kong. *SFC v. Left* (HKMMT Aug. 26, 2016).

Morrison, the leading case on the extraterritoriality of American law, was a securities fraud case. There, the U.S. Supreme Court held that existing statutory language did not permit foreign private plaintiffs to sue in U.S. court for fraud in foreign transactions in a security listed on a foreign exchange. Without a domestic transaction or a U.S. listed security, an enforcement action would stretch the statute too far.

The lower courts are divided on whether the Dodd-Frank Act altered that conclusion by amending the statute. Dodd-Frank Sections 929P(b) and 929Y were finalised the same day as *Morrison* was announced. The sections state that the federal district courts have "jurisdiction" to hear the securities law enforcement actions the DOJ or SEC brings. *Compare United States v. Vilar*, 729 F.3d 62, 74-75 (2d Cir. 2013) (holding on the strength of *Morrison* that the presumption against extraterritoriality applies equally to criminal law, so no criminal prosecution for securities fraud could be grounded on extraterritorial conduct), *with SEC v. Traffic Monsoon, LLC, --* F. Supp. 3d --, 2017 WL 1166333 (D. Utah Mar. 28, 2017), *appeal docketed*, No. 17-4059 (10th Cir. Apr. 17, 2017) (reasoning that courts should accord DOJ and SEC securities law enforcement actions extraterritorial effect in line with Congress's intent because Congress could not have taken *Morrison* into account by the time it passed the law).

Corporate Governance, Offshore Banking, and Tax

Traditionally, companies were organised and governed under the laws of their place of incorporation. Now, vigilance and oversight regimes dictate significant aspects of corporate structure geared towards compliance. For example, the U.S. Sarbanes-Oxley Act prescribes several types of internal controls and whistleblower protections for U.S. listed companies, no matter where they operate. Prosecutors are also working together to unveil complex affiliate structures. The U.S.-Swiss "Program for Swiss Banks" encourages Swiss banks to come forward and reveal the beneficial owners of certain accounts where the banks have reason to believe they

violated U.S. tax law by failing to disclose the identities of U.S. taxpayer account holders in exchange for deferred prosecution or non-prosecution agreements. The U.K. and China are likewise increasing oversight to determine where citizens and noncitizens are absconding resources, so they can collect tax and track down other unlawful conduct.

Another way countries are attempting to preserve their corporate tax base is to discourage inversion. Inversion is the currently legal practice of changing the country of incorporation, typically by merging into a foreign entity, to enjoy the tax advantage in the foreign state compared to the original state of incorporation. While some jurisdictions are considering changes to discourage inversion, many are rethinking how they go about collecting tax based on the commerce that occurs within their borders. In the short term, crossborder businesses will face more potential pitfalls as they aim to comply with those shifting and unsettled standards.

Money Laundering

Effective enforcement against money laundering and racketeering is essential to reduce the incentive for crime and to break up criminal enterprises. As those enterprises span borders and funds flow freely, enforcement efforts must keep pace.

In the United Kingdom, the Proceeds of Crime Act applies when a significant part of the underlying scheme occurred in the U.K. and the conduct had harmful consequences in the U.K. *E.g.*, *R* v *Rogers* [2014] EWCA Crim 1680. In the United States, "there is extraterritorial jurisdiction for [money laundering] if: (1) the transaction or series of related transactions exceeds \$10,000; and (2) the laundering is by a United States citizen, or, if by a foreign national, the conduct occurs in part in the United States. There is extraterritorial jurisdiction for [transactions in criminally derived property] if the defendant is a United States person". USAM 2101 (citing 18 U.S.C. §§ 1956(f), 1957(d)).

The Jurisdiction to Enforce

Even if a country may properly apply its law to particular conduct, a country may generally conduct searches, arrests, or enforce punishment only within its own territory. Restatement 401(c), 431-432 (country may "induce or compel compliance or punish noncompliance with its laws or regulations" in the territory of another country only with the latter's consent).

For example, Belgium issued an arrest warrant seeking to prosecute a Congolese foreign affairs minister under its universal jurisdiction war crimes statute. The International Court of Justice rebuked Belgium for overreaching its jurisdiction to enforce, finding that it was improper for Belgium to seek to arrest someone within Congolese territory without the Republic's consent. *Arrest Warrant of 11 April 2000 (Dem. Rep. of Congo v. Belg.)*, 2002 ICJ Rep. 121 (Feb. 14, 2002).

The United States standard for certain warrants' extraterritorial reach is the subject of pending appeals. A set of statutes empowers United States prosecutors to secretly obtain the information about a person that an internet service provider or e-mail provider possesses, typically by obtaining a search warrant approved by a judge. After Microsoft complied with a warrant to the extent of providing the information on the target available within the United States, it filed an action to resist providing the data stored only on overseas servers, notwithstanding its technical capability to bring that information into the United States. The Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit applied the presumption against extraterritoriality to hold that the statute that authorised the warrant did not apply extraterritorially and thus could not command production of data stored abroad. The government has asked the Supreme Court of the United States to review the decision.

Regardless of the ultimate holding and rationale of the U.S. Supreme Court and the judiciaries of other nations that will address similar issues, prosecutors will want the power to gather evidence and enforce the criminal laws that the legislature extends to extraterritorial conduct. A third canon stands in the way: domestic law should be interpreted, if at all possible, not to conflict with international law. Murray v. Schooner Charming Betsy, 6 U.S. (2 Cranch) 64 (1804). That constraint previously diminished in importance in the context of criminal law as treaties regularised the criminality of certain conduct across many countries, such as the OECD Bribery Convention, which every OECD member and seven other states have ratified. However, the Charming Betsy canon gives a court room to conclude that a particular statute, despite being amended to apply extraterritorially, cannot command people or evidence located abroad because the statute did not displace international law's limits on the jurisdiction to enforce.

To work around those barriers, prosecutors will likely expand the tools that already serve them well in cross-border investigations. Interpol has no police officers of its own but is the largest international clearinghouse for law enforcement activity requests, with 190 member countries. Interpol facilitates cooperation among law enforcement agencies by directly connecting law enforcement agencies with minimal diplomatic and political interference.

Many countries also belong to bilateral or multilateral mutual legal assistance treaties ("MLATs") specifically addressed to sharing information in the context of criminal and regulatory enforcement. Law enforcement most often uses MLAT processes to obtain bank records, execute search warrants, freeze and reclaim the proceeds of crime, obtain testimony, and access online records. Depending on the language of the pertinent treaty, that cooperation may be limited to the prosecutors. While some MLATs permit criminal defendants to make international requests using the MLAT process, most, including those involving the United States, do not.

Further, law enforcement agencies in friendly countries are willing to – and often do – share information informally. As a result, more prosecutions are the joint effort of law enforcement in multiple countries, especially with respect to business crimes. Acting Assistant Attorney General Kenneth A. Blanco, ABA National Institute on White Collar Crime (Miami, FL, Mar. 10, 2017).

Conclusion

In many areas, prosecutors and regulators have been assertively enforcing domestic law over transnational conduct. International law norms, including limits on each country's jurisdiction to prescribe the applicable law and its jurisdiction to enforce its own law, have helped to slow that expansion. But principles like comity and the presumption against extraterritoriality cannot stem that tide, particularly as lawmakers affirm that specific legislation has extraterritorial effect.

As prosecution by multiple countries becomes more common, resolutions will also be multinational, yet the targets of those investigations will face a significant risk that the settlements they reach will not insulate them from enforcement actions brought by yet more countries. On the other hand, it may be reasonable to settle in certain jurisdictions while continuing to contest the merits in others because the law of each country differs, such that even conduct that the target admits violates certain laws may not violate the law of other countries.

Further, expansions in extraterritorial application and practices that seek to command access to evidence located abroad will aggravate conflict with data privacy laws. Countries will have to balance the rights of their populations to privacy with the desire to maintain channels of ready law enforcement cooperation. For example, the EU General Data Protection Regulation prohibits the transfer of personal data out of the EU unless the recipient country offers "adequate protection" for the data. Only 11 jurisdictions have so far received a blanket adequacy finding. The only exceptions to the GDPR for law enforcement purposes are the exchange of flight passenger name records and terrorism-related financial transaction information.

What is clear is that international law enforcement efforts will continue to increase. "This is no longer the future, it is the here and now of global criminal investigations." Blanco, *supra*. That raises the stakes. Businesses must strengthen their practices and controls to comply with the laws of the many countries in which they operate and sell to best mitigate the impact of the multijurisdictional investigations they may well face.

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