



Wealth Talk: Nicholas Surmacz on Investigations and Extradition Risks Facing African HNWIs

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In the seventh episode of Kobre & Kim's ten-part Wealth Talk series with *Family Wealth Report* on the global challenges facing high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs) and their advisers, Kobre & Kim's Nicholas Surmacz, who focuses on investigations and enforcement related to EMEA, examined the investigation and extradition risks for HNWIs from Africa with Robin Rathmell.

In recent years, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) has turned their attention toward Africa, focusing on foreign corruption and money laundering. The DOJ has also brought more civil cases in addition to criminal ones against individuals, and have taken a broad view of what they can enforce. Increased risks also come from the UK, where an arrest framework created post-Brexit allows authorities to arrest anyone subject to an INTERPOL Red Notice from a designated list of countries. This means people may be arrested at the border and held for some time even if no court, in the UK or elsewhere, has made any finding against them.

Surmacz advises African HNWIs and their advisers who suspect they may be under investigation by any government to always have counsel on standby in the event of arrest at an international border. They should also think strategically about what to bring with them at a border crossing. In addition, steps can be taken to create lawful "safe zones," jurisdictions where individuals can travel to and from lawfully in order to continue to conduct business.

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