Startup States Society Names Mark Beer OBE and Professor Chris Berg as Advisors

Geneva institute appoints former DIFC Courts Registrar General and RMIT University economist to advise on the lawful establishment of new countries.

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, September 23, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Startup States Society, a Geneva-based institute that studies how new countries can be established peacefully and lawfully under public international law, today announced the appointment of Mark Beer OBE and Professor Chris Berg as Advisors.

> “Building a new country within the law demands legal and economic depth of the highest order. Mark Beer OBE and Professor Chris Berg bring both, and we are honoured to welcome them.”
>
> *Julien Andrew Starr, Founding Director, Startup States Society*

Mr Beer, the former Registrar General of the DIFC Courts in Dubai, and Professor Berg, an economist at RMIT University in Melbourne, bring experience in legal institution-building, economics, technology, governance, and statecraft to the Society's work.

The Society's research addresses a central question: if a new country were to be established today, how could it be done lawfully and without conflict? Its work examines the legal, negotiated, territorial, and institutional foundations such a project would require, together with the consent on which it would depend.

The Society's research considers a range of possible purposes for a new country, including a sanctuary for refugees fleeing violence, a working model of a carbon-negative economy, a neutral jurisdiction in the tradition of Switzerland, and a lifestyle jurisdiction in the tradition of Monaco.

"A new country is not created by a declaration, a flag, or a slogan," said Julien Andrew Starr, Founding Director of the Startup States Society. "It requires law, negotiation, territory, institutions, and consent. New countries need not begin with conflict. They can begin with an idea, an agreement, and the determination to build."

Mark Beer OBE spent two decades building some of the world's most respected legal institutions. As founding Chief Executive and Registrar General of the DIFC Courts in Dubai, he

built the fledgling court into one of the world's top three commercial courts within a decade, while also serving as Registrar of the Dubai World Tribunal and head of its Dispute Resolution Authority. He served as President of the International Association for Court Administration and sits on the International Council of the Supreme Court of Kazakhstan, having negotiated the 2015 enforcement agreement between Kazakhstan's Supreme Court and the DIFC Courts, and is now the Chairman of The Metis Institute. He was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) by Queen Elizabeth II for strengthening legal and trade ties between Britain and the United Arab Emirates.



The emblem of the Startup States Society, Geneva, Switzerland.

Professor Chris Berg holds a professorship in economics at RMIT University in Melbourne. He has a PhD in economics and has authored more than a dozen books, including Understanding the Blockchain Economy, which applies institutional economics to the ways blockchain reshapes firms, governments, markets, and civil society, and Artificial Intelligence: A Classical Liberal Approach. He is deeply involved in technology policy and regulation in Australia and around the world, has advised dozens of frontier technology firms, and sits on the board of Shielded Labs, a non-profit supporting the privacy-focused cryptocurrency Zcash. His current research examines how AI and blockchain may reshape the way societies govern themselves.

The two appointments broaden the legal, economic, and technological expertise available to the Society as it develops its research and advisory work.

The Startup States Society does not build new countries itself at present. It supports a limited number of founders who do, working peacefully within the framework of public international law and applying methods drawn from entrepreneurship to questions of statecraft.

Founders, entrepreneurs, researchers, and governments interested in the Society's work can find further information at startupstates.swiss. A plain-language introduction to the subject is available at HowToStartANewCountry.com.

About the Startup States Society

The Startup States Society is a Geneva-based institute, constituted in Switzerland as an association (Verein) with the Swiss business identification number CHE-418.101.559. Founded in 2025, it studies how new countries can be established peacefully and lawfully under public international law, and supports the founders, researchers, and governments working towards that goal. Learn more at startupstates.swiss.

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