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INTERNATIONAL BAR ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE 2026

A conference presented by the IBA Arbitration Committee

27th Annual IBA Arbitration Day: 'New Horizons': focusing on the influence of new technologies, sectors and geographies on the future of human living and the evolution of International Arbitration

28–29 January 2026, Rosewood Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Working programme

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All speaker materials and biographies can be found at www.ibanet.org/conference-details/conf2693

Thursday continued

0935 – 0945 **Welcome from the IBA Leadership**
Amir Singh Pasrich *International Law Affiliates, New Delhi, Delhi; LPD Secretary-Treasurer / IBA Treasurer; International Bar Association*
Claudio Visco *Lipani Legal & Tax, Milan; President, International Bar Association*

0945 – 1015 **Welcome and Introduction**
Ali Al Hashimi *Global Advocacy and Legal Counsel, Dubai*
Kate Brown de Vejar *DLA Piper, Mexico City; Co-Chair, IBA Arbitration Committee*
Caline Mouawad *Chaffetz Lindsey, New York*
Dietmar Prager *Debevoise & Plimpton LLP, New York; Co-Chair, IBA Arbitration Committee*

1015 – 1130 SESSION ONE

From outer space to desert sands and under the sea

This panel will explore the complexities of projects in these frontier environments, and the disputes they give rise to. The panel will educate us about current trends and innovations, and how we can prepare for the disputes of the future arising out of these challenging projects.

Moderator

Rasem Kamal *Kamal & Associates, Ramallah; Co-Chair, IBA Arab Regional Forum*

Speakers

Amna Al Owais *Dubai International Financial Centre Courts, Dubai*

Juan Carlos Boue *Curtis Mallet-Prevost Colt & Mosle, London*

Rebeca Mosquera *Saudi Aramco, Dhahran; Institution Officer, IBA Arbitration Committee*

Mahesh Rai *Drew & Napier, Singapore*

1130 – 1145 **Coffee/tea break**

1145 – 1300 SESSION TWO

New energies (green hydrogen, energy storage and the electrification of everything)

The new energies panel will delve into the rapidly evolving trends shaping the sector, from the rise of green hydrogen to breakthroughs in energy storage technologies. Meanwhile, the surging demand for electricity is driving robust investment in upgrades, smart grid solutions, and cross-border energy networks. With investment and innovation comes complexity and disputes. Our speakers will examine these trends, what we need to know, how we can anticipate points of friction and support the sector's transition.

Moderator

Niuscha Bassiri *ArbBoutique, Brussels*

Speakers

Richard Defontaine *GE Vernova, Dubai*

Magdalena Konig *ADNOC Group, Abu Dhabi*

Reza Mohtashami KC *Three Crowns LLP, London*

Tuuli Timonen *Dottir, Helsinki; Conference Quality Officer, IBA Arbitration Committee*

1300 – 1415 **Lunch**

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1415 – 1445 **A Conversation with....**

Speakers

Aisha Ahmed Abdallah *Anjarwalla & Khanna, Nairobi*

VK Rajah SC *V K Rajah, Singapore*

1445 – 1600 SESSION THREE

Smart Cities

The smart cities panel will delve into the complex interplay between living, transportation, and energy infrastructure as cities embed the internet of everything into their core design. This is traditional infrastructure disputes on steroids, as lawyers adapt to the critical importance of interoperability, resilient systems, cybersecurity risks and new regulatory frameworks. As Smart Cities reimagine urban life, the challenge for dispute experts will be to anticipate, interpret, and resolve unprecedented, interconnected conflicts.

Moderator

Amr Omran *Freshfields, Dubai; Conference Quality Officer, IBA Arbitration Committee*

Speakers

Shamala Devi Balasundaram *Chooi & Company, Kuala Lumpur*

Mapanza Nkwilimba *DLA Piper Middle East LLP, Doha*

Harman Singh *Board Member, ASCA; Smart Cities Lead, GHD, Melbourne, Victoria*

Iryna Telychko *Etihad Rail, Abu Dhabi*

1600 – 1615 **Coffee / tea break**

1615 – 1730 SESSION FOUR

Virtual assets

This fourth panel will explore the rapidly evolving landscape of disputes arising from virtual assets, including cryptocurrencies, blockchain innovations, and digital tokens. Our experts will analyze the latest trends driving growth and disputes in the fintech sector, and the main challenges faced by parties and arbitrators dealing with these issues, including the predictability of future asset values in these dynamic markets, and the impacts of an ever-changing regulatory landscape.

Moderator

Nadine Debbas Achkar *Debbas Arbitration, Beirut*

Speakers

Cecilia Carrara *Legance, Rome; Committee Liaison Officer, IBA Arbitration Committee*

Shumin Lin *Drew & Napier, Singapore*

Min Shi *Oxera, London*

Nik Yeo *Fountain Court Chambers, London*

1730 – 1745 **Closing remarks**

Linda Fitz-Alan *Abu Dhabi Global Market Courts, Abu Dhabi*

Sara Koleilat-Aranjo *Morgan Lewis & Bockius, Dubai; Vice Chair, IBA Arbitration Committee*

1900 – 2100 **Hosted networking dinner**

Saadiyat Beach Club

Please ensure you have your IBA Delegate Badge. Coaches will be departing from the Rosewood add: between 1820 – 1840 and returning back to the Rosewood between 2100 – 2300.

The IBA, its officers and staff accept no responsibility for any views expressed, presentations or materials produced by delegates or speakers at the Conference.

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