

ASIAN-AFRICAN LEGAL CONSULTATIVE ORGANIZATION



REPORT ON THE AALCO'S REGIONAL ARBITRATION CENTRES

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REPORT ON THE AALCO'S REGIONAL ARBITRATION CENTRES

I. Introduction

A. Background

1. The Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) has been at the forefront of promoting international commercial arbitration in Asia and Africa for more than five decades. The origins of this initiative can be traced back to the late 1960s, when AALCO first established a working relationship with the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL). At that time, UNCITRAL had only recently been created by the United Nations General Assembly in 1966 with a mandate to promote the progressive harmonization and unification of international trade law. Among the priority areas of cooperation identified between AALCO and UNCITRAL was the settlement of disputes in international commercial transactions, particularly the promotion of arbitration as an effective means of dispute resolution.

2. In the 1960s and 1970s, however, there were very few permanent arbitral institutions in the Asian-African region. Most parties were compelled to resort to arbitration institutions located in Europe or North America, creating unreasonably high litigation expenses, fees of counsel and experts, and procedural practices unfamiliar to parties from developing countries. This imbalance underscored the urgent need for regional mechanisms that would be more accessible, cost-effective, and responsive to the particular requirements of Asian and African States.

3. It was in this context that the Thirteenth Annual Session of AALCO, held in Lagos, Nigeria in 1972, considered for the first time the establishment of Regional Arbitration Centres. The Session requested the Secretariat to conduct independent research on the practical challenges of international commercial arbitration from the perspective of Asia and Africa.

4. At the Fifteenth Annual Session of AALCO, held in Tokyo, Japan in 1974, the Trade Law Sub-Committee reviewed the Secretariat's comprehensive study on international commercial arbitration. At this Session, the Member States endorsed the Sub-Committee's

recommendation that concrete steps should be taken to develop institutional arbitration in the two regions. This marked a turning point, as AALCO formally committed itself to laying the foundation for regional institutions that would balance the then West-dominated arbitration system.

5. Building on this momentum, the Sixteenth Annual Session of AALCO, convened in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 1976, tasked the Secretariat with preparing a feasibility study on the establishment of Regional Arbitration Centres. The study was to serve as the basis for developing principles or model rules to be considered by Member States.

6. The outcome of this work was presented to the Eighteenth Annual Session of AALCO, held in Baghdad, Iraq in 1977. The Secretariat study, entitled Integrated Scheme for Settlement of Disputes in Economic and Commercial Matters, envisaged a network of Regional Arbitration Centres under AALCO auspices. The objective was to minimize the diversion of arbitration cases from the Asian-African region to Western centres and to create a fair, inexpensive, and speedy dispute settlement mechanism tailored to the realities of developing countries.

7. At the Nineteenth Annual Session, held in Doha, Qatar in 1978, AALCO Member States endorsed the recommendations of the Trade Law Sub-Committee to establish the first two Regional Arbitration Centres: one in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and another in Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt.

8. This vision soon found realization through practical steps. In April 1978, an Agreement was concluded between AALCO and the Government of Malaysia establishing the Kuala Lumpur Regional Centre for Arbitration (now the Asian International Arbitration Centre, AIAC). In January 1979, a similar Agreement was signed with the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt establishing the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA). These Agreements recognized the Centres as intergovernmental organizations with legal personality, immunities, and privileges, and with the support of the Host Governments in terms of premises, staff, and financial grants. Both Centres adopted the UNCITRAL Arbitration

Rules with suitable modifications, making them available to parties within and beyond the region for both institutional and ad hoc arbitration.

9. The success of Kuala Lumpur and Cairo encouraged the expansion of the network. The Lagos Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration was inaugurated in 1989, further extending AALCO's institutional reach in Africa. The Tehran Regional Arbitration Centre was later established through an Agreement concluded with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1997, which entered into force on 10 June 2003 after ratification.

10. A fifth Centre in Nairobi, Republic of Kenya, was conceived through a Memorandum of Understanding signed during AALCO's Forty-Fifth Annual Session in New Delhi in 2006. This was followed by a formal Agreement signed at the Forty-Sixth Annual Session in Cape Town, Republic of South Africa in July 2007. The Nairobi Centre for International Arbitration (NCIA) was subsequently institutionalized through national legislation and inaugurated on 5 December 2016, becoming the third AALCO Centre in Africa after Cairo and Lagos.

11. Most recently, the AALCO-Hong Kong Regional Arbitration Centre (AALCO-HKRAC) was inaugurated on 25 May 2022, pursuant to the Host Country Agreement signed between AALCO and the Government of the People's Republic of China. At its launch, it was highlighted that the Centre would integrate into AALCO's broader dispute settlement framework while promoting innovation in arbitration and other forms of alternative dispute resolution, including online dispute resolution.

12. In addition to administering cases, the Centres have collaborated closely through initiatives such as the AALCO Annual Arbitration Forum (AAAF), first convened in Kuala Lumpur in 2018. After a pause during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Forum resumed in Cairo in 2022, was hosted by Hong Kong in 2023, and returned to Kuala Lumpur in 2025 under the theme "Empowering a Resilient ADR World: Reigniting Regional Alliance". These gatherings have become premier platforms for dialogue, exchange of best practices, and collective strategizing on how to strengthen arbitration and ADR in the Asian-African context.

13. Over the years, the Regional Arbitration Centres have witnessed a steady increase in both domestic and international cases, covering diverse fields such as oil and gas, insurance, intellectual property, construction, and investment disputes. In recent years, their scope has expanded beyond commercial arbitration to also include sports arbitration, thereby ensuring equitable solutions for small businesses, athletes, and stakeholders in developing economies. Many Centres have also broadened their services to encompass mediation and conciliation, thereby reinforcing AALCO's contribution to the wider landscape of dispute resolution. In performing these functions, the Centres also play a vital role in bridging diverse legal systems by building consensus across common law, civil law, Islamic law, and mixed legal traditions, particularly in the field of arbitration.

14. As AALCO approaches its Seventieth Anniversary in 2026, the Regional Arbitration Centres stand out as one of the Organization's most enduring and dynamic achievements. Looking ahead, the continued vitality of these Centres will depend not only on sustained financial and institutional support from Member States, but also on the strategic expansion of the network itself. In this regard, the Secretariat encourages Member States to explore the establishment of new Centres under the auspices of AALCO, thereby creating a more comprehensive system that can respond effectively to the rapidly evolving landscape of dispute settlement in trade, investment, and other emerging sectors.

15. The growth of such a network would also foster closer collaboration between existing AALCO Centres and national arbitration institutions within Member States, enhancing capacity-building, knowledge-sharing, and the development of innovative best practices. By forging partnerships with domestic arbitration centres and professional bodies, AALCO's Regional Centres could help harmonize standards while ensuring that the benefits of equitable, accessible, and credible dispute resolution extend to all stakeholders, including small businesses, investors, athletes, and local communities.

16. Equally important, the expansion of the network should be matched by deliberate efforts to cultivate a new generation of arbitrators from Asia and Africa. By providing opportunities for young practitioners, scholars, and professionals to participate in training, internships, and arbitral

proceedings, the Centres can strengthen the long-term sustainability of the arbitration ecosystem. This new generation will embody the diversity of the region's legal traditions while bringing fresh perspectives, thereby enhancing the legitimacy and representativeness of the global arbitration community.

17. The Secretariat remains committed to promoting this vision and strongly encourages Member States to give due consideration to establishing new Centres in their jurisdictions, thereby reinforcing the Organization's role as a unique Asia-Africa platform for international dispute resolution, and ensuring that the AALCO network remains responsive, inclusive, and future-ready.

18. The Secretariat is therefore pleased to submit, for the consideration of Member States, the reports of the Directors of the Asian International Arbitration Centre (AIAC), the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA), the Tehran Regional Arbitration Centre (TRAC), the Nairobi Centre for International Arbitration (NCIA), and the AALCO-Hong Kong Regional Arbitration Centre (AALCO-HKRAC), covering the activities undertaken during 2024-2025.

REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ASIAN INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION CENTRE (MALAYSIA) (AIAC)

(1ST AUGUST 2024 – 30TH JUNE 2025)



A. INTRODUCTION

Building on the momentum of the Supplementary Agreement to the Host Country Agreement, formalised on 20th February 2024, the Asian International Arbitration Centre (Malaysia) (“AIAC” or “the Centre”) has embarked on its most visionary reform initiative since inception in 1978 as the first regional arbitral centre under the auspices of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (“AALCO”), which is driven not merely to modernise operations, but to reposition the AIAC as a leading arbitral institution on equal footing with other institutions around the world. At the heart of this transformation is the AIAC’s commitment to independence, impartiality, transparency and excellence.

Paving the way for a seamless transition, a Protem Committee for the AIAC Court of Arbitration (“Protem Committee”) was constituted comprising twenty members of high repute in the legal and Alternative Dispute Resolution (“ADR”) communities, to advise the Centre on the establishment of its inaugural AIAC Court of Arbitration (“AIAC Court”). Tasked with developing the institutional and procedural framework for the AIAC Court, the Protem Committee played an instrumental role in laying the groundwork for its successful launch. Every effort is made towards ensuring that the reforms are meaningful, enduring and impactful.

The AIAC Court, which will oversee appointments and other case management-related functions, is designed to reinforce the independence and integrity of AIAC-administered proceedings, while strengthening consistency, transparency and overall institutional quality. The AIAC Court, which will be international in composition and stature, will certainly attract greater pool of international arbitrations while fortressing AIAC’s established strength in the domestic sphere.



As part of its continuing commitment to evolve in line with international best practices, the AIAC will be unveiling its new Suite of Rules 2025, which will be a comprehensive revision of the 2023 edition and other existing Rules. The revisions to the Suite of Rules incorporate feedback obtained from the experience in administering a wide array of cases and developed through an extensive consultative process. The new Suite of Rules 2025 aim to ensure that the AIAC-administered ADR proceedings remain adaptive, practical and internationally respected, catering to the evolving needs of global commerce while maintaining fidelity to the rule of law.

With the steadfast support from the Government of Malaysia and under the auspices of AALCO, the AIAC remains committed in its mission to promote international arbitration and ADR, elevate global confidence in its processes and contribute meaningfully to the rule-based international order.

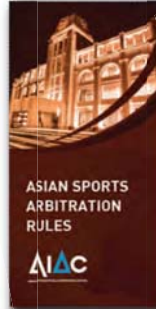
B. AIAC'S CURRENT PRODUCTS



AIAC Arbitration Rules 2023



AIAC i-Arbitration Rules 2023



Asian Sports Arbitration Rules



AIAC Mediation Rules 2023



AIAC Adjudication Rules and Procedures



Guide to Domain Name Dispute Resolution



AIAC Software Development Contract (AIAC SDC)



AIAC Standard Form of Building Contracts (AIAC SFC) 2024



AIAC Islamic Standard Form of Building Contracts (AIAC i-SFC) 2024

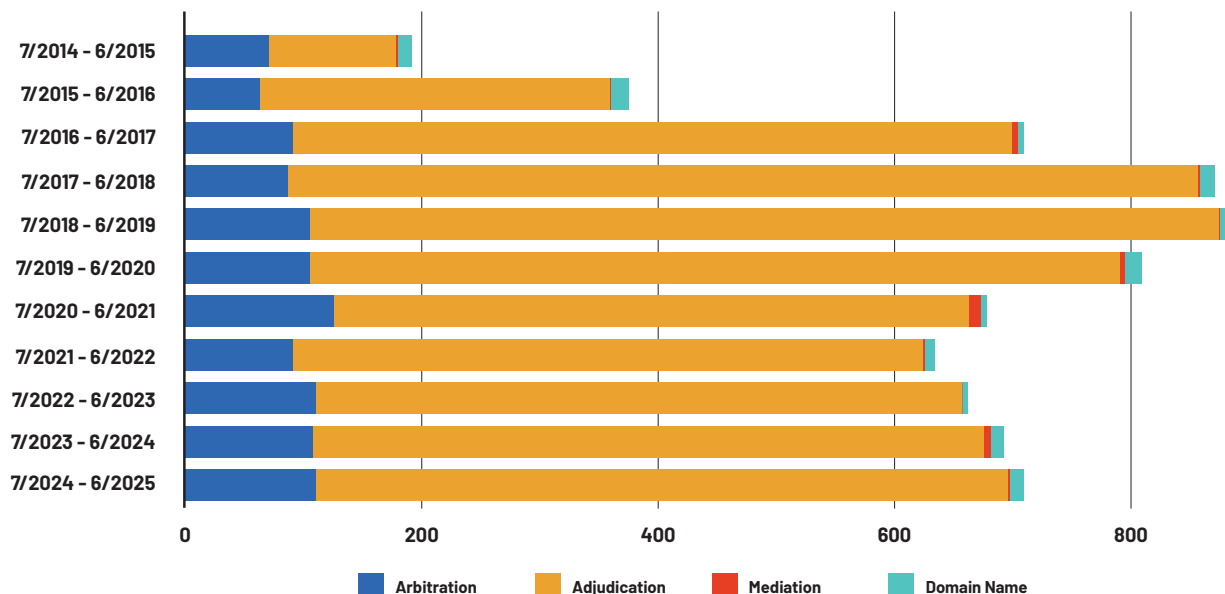
C. AIAC'S UPCOMING PRODUCTS

As part of the AIAC's broader institutional reforms and in alignment with the restructuring of its governance framework, the Centre is undertaking a comprehensive revamp of its AIAC Suite of Rules. This marks the most significant overhaul of the AIAC's procedural framework since its rebranding in 2018, ensuring the new Suite of Rules reflect the powers and functions of the inaugural AIAC Court, including its President. The amendments to the Suite of Rules shall reflect insights drawn from years of case administration and aim to embed international best practices, while enhancing procedural clarity, efficiency and transparency.

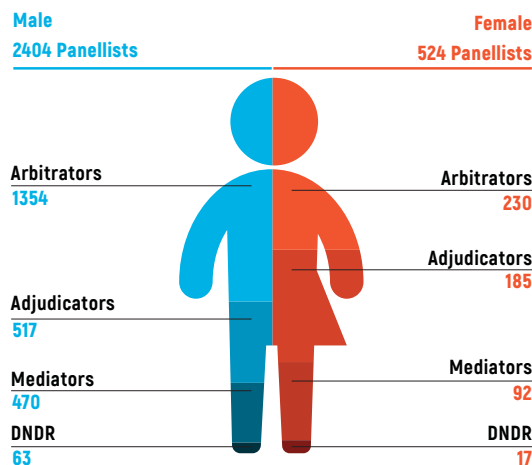
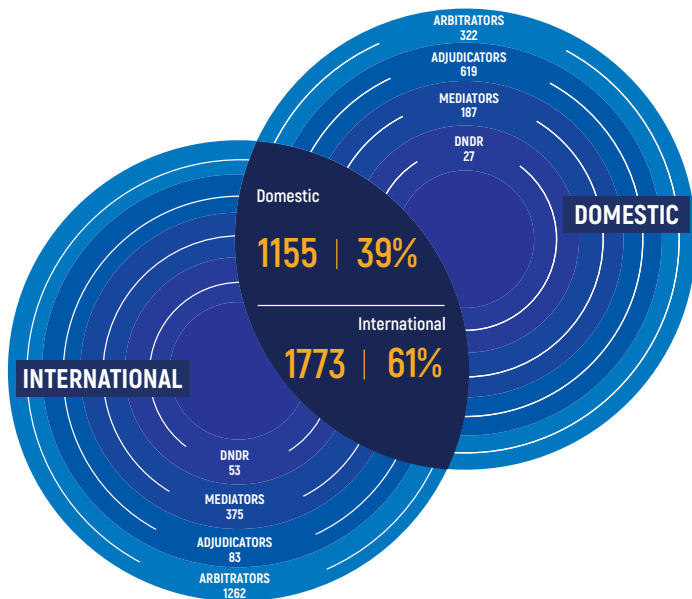
Additionally, the AIAC will convene separate dedicated committees comprising distinguished practitioners and subject-matter experts to craft bespoke rules and procedures to enhance the AIAC's robust offerings and provide international users with a dedicated and effective framework for the resolution of disputes.

D. STATISTICS AT A GLANCE

In the fiscal year of August 2024 to June 2025, the AIAC has recorded a total of 709 registered cases across various types of ADR proceedings, namely arbitration, adjudication, mediation and domain name disputes. The chart below illustrates the total number of cases registered at the AIAC for fiscal years between July 2014 to June 2025:



As of June 2025, the AIAC has in record a total of 2928 ADR panellists from various jurisdictions and backgrounds.



DIVERSITY OF PANELLISTS

E. AIAC'S SPEAKING ENGAGEMENT

The AIAC remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing ADR across the region and beyond, alongside fostering partnerships with all stakeholders, both domestically and globally. Aligned with these outreach objectives, the AIAC has actively participated and contributed in 19 events throughout the fiscal year as follows:

Event	Country
First Annual Conference on China International Construction Law	China
Global Business and Law Conference	China
International Forum on Chinese Enterprises Going Overseas	China
6 th China-ASEAN Legal Cooperation Forum	China
ESG ADR Forum 2024	Malaysia
Services Conference 2025 – Advancing Malaysia's Services Sector: Innovation, Regional Leadership and Sustainable Growth	Malaysia
Services Roundtable Discussion to Drive Transformation in Malaysia's Services Sector	Malaysia
8 th IBA Asia Pacific Regional Forum Biennial Conference	Malaysia
Advocacy in Arbitration & Litigation	China
International Arbitration and Dispute Settlement (IADS) Program	China
APAC Vis Pre-Moot	Malaysia
GRR Live: Restructuring in Asia 2025	Hong Kong
Alternative Dispute Resolution Conference 2025	Singapore
6 th Global Legal Association Arbitration & Litigation Conference	Malaysia
Egypt Arbitration Day 2025	Egypt
China & Malaysia: Enterprise Investment and International Arbitration	China
Tashkent Law Spring International Legal Forum 2025 – The Age of Digital Technologies: A Legal Perspective of the Future	Uzbekistan
Forum on Foreign-related Legal Services under Belt and Road Cooperation	China
ASEAN Sub-Forum – ASEAN Investment Law Practice and Dispute Resolution	China

F. AIAC'S CROSS-BORDER OUTREACH EFFORTS, SIGNING OF THE MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING AND ENTERING INTO STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Since the AIAC's establishment over 4 decades ago, strategic partnerships and capacity-building initiatives have remained as core pillars in expanding the AIAC's cross-border outreach. As part of its strategic vision, the AIAC has entered into partnerships with various institutions, domestically, regionally and globally. In line with the above vision, the AIAC also organised and co-organised more than 30 events in the fiscal year, covering diverse ADR topics.

F.1 MoUs and Cooperative Agreements

The AIAC has formalised a series of Memoranda of Understanding ("MoU") and Cooperative Agreements with key ADR stakeholders, within and beyond Malaysia as outlined below:

Partnership	Parties
MoU	AIAC and Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre (HKIAC)
MoU	AIAC and Borneo International Centre for Arbitration and Mediation (BICAM)
MoU	AIAC and Inns of Court Malaysia (ICM)

MoU	AIAC and South China International Arbitration Center, Hong Kong (SCIAHK)
Supplementary MoU	AIAC and eBRAM International Online Dispute Resolution Centre Limited
MoU	AIAC and Shenzhen Court of International Arbitration (SCIA)
MoU	AIAC and The Asian Football Federation (AFC)
Cooperation Agreement	AIAC and Chongqing Arbitration Commission (CQAC)
MoU	AIAC and Tashkent State University of Law (TSUL)
MoU	AIAC and Tashkent Mediation Center (TMC)
MoU	AIAC and Colombo International Arbitration Centre (CIAC)
MoU	AIAC and Multimedia University (MMU)
MoU	AIAC and Japan Association of Arbitrators (JAA)
Memorandum of Cooperation	AIAC and Beijing Lawyers Association (BLA)

F.2 Courtesy Visits and Engagements

The AIAC welcomed and engaged with a range of key stakeholders, including institutions, law firms and students. The courtesy visits, meetings and engagements as listed below have opened the doors for potential collaborations and partnerships:

- 39 Essex Chambers
- AALCO Hong Kong Regional Arbitration Center
- ADCO Law, Jakarta, Indonesia
- ALSA Universitas Diponegoro (UNDIP)
- AON Insurance Brokers (M) Sdn Bhd
- Attorney General's Chambers Malaysia (AGC)
- Balai Ikhtisas Malaysia (BIM)
- Bar Council ATC and Bombay Bar Association
- Beijing Arbitration Commission/ Beijing International Arbitration Center
- Beijing Lawyers Association
- Beijing Leaqual Law Firm
- Beijing Zhongwen Law Firm
- Brunei Darussalam Arbitration Centre Berhad (BDAC)
- Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA)
- Cheang & Ariff
- China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT)
- China-ASEAN Commercial Arbitration Cooperation Center (CACACC) & Guangxi Arbitration Association
- Chongqing Arbitration Commission Office
- Clyde & Co, Singapore
- DeHeng Law Firm, China
- Delegation of Lawyers from Hainan
- Department of Justice and the Law Reform Commission, Hong Kong SAR
- Department of Quantity Surveying of International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM)
- Drew Network Asia
- Egyptian Center for Arbitration and Settlement of Non-Banking Financial Disputes (ECAS)
- Embassy of Malaysia in Cairo
- Foshan Lawyers Association
- H.E. Dr. Kamalinne Pinitpuvadol (Secretary-General of AALCO)
- H.E. Mr. Keisuke Suzuki (Minister of Justice, Japan)
- Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce (HKGCC)
- Hong Kong International Arbitration Center (HKIAC)
- Hong Kong SAR Delegation led by the Secretary for Justice, Hong Kong
- Hui Ye Law firm, China
- IBA – Alternative Dispute Resolution International Center (IBA – ADRIIC)
- International Law Club (ILC), Faculty of Law, UiTM Shah Alam

- Japan Association of Arbitrators (JAA), Japan Commercial Arbitration Association (JCAA), Japan International Mediation Center (JIMC) and law firms in Japan
- Johor State Legal Advisor
- Kelantan Bar
- Khaitan & Co, India
- Kunming Arbitration Commission
- Lee Hishammuddin Allen & Gledhill (LHAG)
- Lex Magister Delegates of Chinese Lawyers
- Malaysian Bar
- Malaysian Institute of Arbitrators (MIArb)
- Moscow State University, Russia
- National Commercial Arbitration Centre (NCAC), Cambodia
- O.P. Jindal Global University
- PDLegal LLC
- People's High Court of Zhejiang Province
- Persatuan Mahasiswa Undang-Undang UNISZA
- Samdani Qureshi Aqlaal Law Firm
- Sarawak Energy
- School of Law of University Wollongong Malaysia, KDU College
- Shandong Provincial Department of Justice and the Shandong Lawyers Association
- Shanghai Bar Association
- Shanghai Intellectual Property
- Shearn Delamore & Co
- Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC) & Singapore International Mediation Centre (SIMC)
- Studentengenootschap voor Onderneming en Recht (S.G.O.R), Netherlands
- Thomas Philip Law Firm & Anggraeni and Partners, Indonesia
- Tian Tai Law Firm, Beijing
- Tsinghua Law School
- Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology (TAR UMT)
- UOW Malaysia KDU College (India Mobility Programme)
- WM Leong & Co (in association with Nishimura & Asahi)
- Wong Partnership
- Yinghe Law Offices
- Zul Rafique & Partners

G. AIAC'S ACTIVITIES

G.1 August 2024

Talk of the Town: Arbitration, Emerging Trends and the Scale of Justice

On 9th August 2024, the AIAC and the China International Economic and Trade Arbitration Commission (CIETAC) Hong Kong Arbitration Center organised a joint event entitled, “*Talk of the Town: Arbitration, Emerging Trends, and the Scale of Justice*”. The event was supported by the Legal Affairs Division of the Prime Minister’s Department (BHEUU JPM), HKSAR Department of Justice, FHKI, HKGCC, Chinese Manufacturers’ Association of Hong Kong, MAYCHAM, Hong Kong Institute of Arbitrators, CIArb East Asia Branch, AALCO Hong Kong Regional Arbitration Centre, and HK-ASEAN Foundation. There were four integral aspects wherein the first examined the interplay between arbitration and insolvency, addressing the issues such as the effect of arbitration clauses on the insolvency process. While the second aspect addressed the rise of litigation funding and its pros and cons, the penultimate aspect dealt with ethical issues such as conflict-of-interest arising from repeat appointments and underscored the importance of the IBA Guidelines on Conflicts of Interest in International Arbitration. The final aspect sparked an enlightening discussion on the application of artificial intelligence in arbitration proceedings.

International Arbitration Congress 2024: Redefining Its Horizon – Malaysia, Asia and Beyond

On 27th August 2024, the AIAC hosted the International Arbitration Congress, themed “*Redefining Its Horizon: Malaysia, Asia and Beyond*”. The event featured a Special Address by YB Dato’ Sri Azalina Othman Said, Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department (Law and Institutional Reform), who highlighted the importance of maintaining high standards in international arbitration. The Congress included three insightful sessions. The first session aptly explored the features, challenges and prospects of the Court of Arbitration given the forthcoming AIAC Court of Arbitration. The second delved into the history and future collaboration of AALCO’s arbitration centres; and the final session focused on the essential factors that define a premier arbitration seat, with particular attention to the role of the judiciary.

G.2 September 2024

Elevating Asian Arbitration: The Latest Practice and Prospect in International Arbitration in China and Malaysia

The AIAC together with the China International Economic and Trade Arbitration Commission (CIETAC) Hong Kong Arbitration Center organised a joint event entitled, “*Elevating Asian Arbitration: The Latest Practice and Prospect in International Arbitration in China and Malaysia*” on 20th September 2024. The Opening Remarks were delivered by the representatives of both the collaborating institutions, Mr. Chengjie Wang, Vice Chairman & Secretary General of CIETAC and Datuk Almalena Sharmila Johan of AIAC. The first session explored the transformation of dispute resolution mechanism in China and Malaysia with reference to the challenges faced in the data era and construction dispute resolution. The session also discussed the AIAC’s reform initiatives and the legislative amendments to Malaysia’s arbitration law. The second session discussed the best practices in Chinese and Malaysian arbitration domains and the use of technology in the same.

Seat of Arbitration: Discovering the Fundamentals of International Trade and Investment Disputes

In conjunction with the China Arbitration Week 2024, the AIAC and China International Economic and Trade Arbitration Commission (CIETAC) Beijing jointly organised an event entitled, “*Seat of Arbitration: Discovering the Fundamentals of International Trade and Investment Disputes*” in Beijing, China. The session witnessed a lively discussion on the choice of seat of arbitration for multi-party cross-border disputes and the evolving landscape of arbitration in the context of China’s Belt and Road Initiative. The visit to China by the AIAC delegation marked a significant milestone in enhancing institutional collaborations and reinforcing the AIAC’s global presence in alternative dispute resolution.

7th International Mediation Competition 2024

The AIAC partnered with the University of Law Moorgate Campus to host the mediation competition entitled, “*Mediate Wise*” from 30th September 2024 to 6th October 2024. This collaboration underscores the AIAC’s initiatives in capacity building and its commitment to nurture young talents in the ADR industry.

G.3 October 2024

Asia ADR Week 2024

The AIAC hosted its annual flagship event, the Asia ADR Week, themed “*Supernova: Igniting the Transformation of ADR*” from 17th to 19th August 2024. The Conference welcomed several distinguished guests, with the Keynote Address delivered by YAB Dato’ Sri Haji Fadillah bin Haji Yusof, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Energy Transition and Water Transformation, Malaysia. The Special Address was delivered by YB Dato’ Sri Azalina Othman Said, Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department (Law and Institutional Reform), Malaysia. With more than 50 experts and an overwhelming number of participants, the Asia ADR Week 2024 featured a dynamic platform for intellectual discourse, learning, collaboration and networking. The sessions spanned across various issues relating to the ADR practices such as jurisdictional issues in intellectual property rights disputes, interplay between ESG and international arbitration as well as the discretionary powers of the arbitral tribunal. Special focus was on the institutional courts of arbitration, as the AIAC is set to establish its AIAC Court of Arbitration alongside the legal reforms to the Arbitration Act of Malaysia. Novel topics such as paradigm shifts in arbitration in outer space and aviation were also explored. Indeed, just as a supernova’s explosion radiates light across the universe, the ADR practitioners illuminated the pathways to dispute resolution, breaking barriers and forging innovative solutions across borders.

G.4 November 2024

JDRN – AIAC Symposium 2024: Capacity Building in Judicial Dispute Resolution

The AIAC, in partnership with the Judicial Dispute Resolution Network (JDRN) and supported by the Inns of Court Malaysia (ICM) hosted the JDRN-AIAC Symposium 2024 entitled, “*Capacity Building in Judicial Dispute Resolution*”. The Symposium brought together distinguished judges and legal professionals, including 30 visiting judges from 11 jurisdictions, to explore the evolving ADR mechanisms with a focus on judicial capacity-building. The Symposium featured an Opening Address by the AIAC’s Director, Dato’ Mary Lim Thiam Suan, who emphasised the importance of specialised training for judges. A panel session, moderated by the AIAC’s Assistant Director, Ms. Heather Yee Jing Wah, included renowned speakers namely, Lady Justice Sarah Jane Asplin, Justice Dato’ Lim Chong Fong and Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah, who shared insights and strategies for strengthening judicial expertise in mediation, arbitration as well as other ADR methods. The Symposium served as a platform for speakers to exchange their jurisdiction-specific experience on judicial training in ADR and highlight effective strategies for enhancing judicial capacity in ADR.

GC Roundtable with Toby Landau KC

The AIAC along with the Inns of Court Malaysia, David Grief International Consultancy and Chambers Lab jointly organised an event entitled, “*GC Roundtable with Toby Landau KC*” on 11th November 2024. The session held under the Chatham House rules was tailored to gain strategic perspectives on managing complex cross-border disputes, discuss emerging trends and best practices in international and investor-state arbitration, and explore practical approaches to mitigating legal and reputational risks. The Roundtable saw a lively networking lunch sponsored by Messrs. Cecil Abraham & Partners.

Great Wall of Alliance: Forum on International Commercial Arbitration and Dispute Resolution

The AIAC, in collaboration with China International Economic and Trade Arbitration Commission (CIETAC) Beijing organised an event entitled, “*Great Wall of Alliance: Forum on International Commercial Arbitration and Dispute Resolution*” to celebrate the remarkable 50-year milestone of Malaysia-China diplomatic relations. This Forum comprised of four sessions, artistically themed as “*The Green Silk Road*”, “*The Digital Silk Road*”, “*The Maritime Silk Road*” and “*The Economic Silk Road*” to explore ADR in different industries. The first session concentrated on the opportunities and challenges associated with dispute resolution of green projects under the Belt and Road Initiative. The second session discussed the technological advancements and digital infrastructure, including the use of Online Dispute Resolution mechanism for

resolving technology-related disputes. The third session focused on the maritime trade, particularly shipping regulations, new challenges faced by maritime industry and possible resolution of the same. The final session addressed trade barriers, investment protection, supply chain and quality control issue while touching base on the role of arbitral institutions in resolving like disputes.

Kuala Lumpur Forum on International Arbitration 2024

On 13th November 2024, the AIAC in collaboration with the Government of Malaysia organised the Kuala Lumpur Forum on International Arbitration 2024 entitled, “*The Future of International Arbitration: Reforms and Innovations*” at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre. This KL Forum brought together global experts to discuss trends and challenges shaping the ASEAN's arbitration landscape, as Malaysia prepared to take lead of the ASEAN Chairmanship in 2025. A Special Address was delivered by Ms. Anna Joubin-Bret of UNCITRAL. The Forum explored ASEAN's growing influence on global arbitration, legal frameworks and judicial approaches to arbitral awards. Discussions also addressed challenges such as third-party funding, integrity in arbitration and the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in reshaping arbitration practices. The KL Forum showcased ASEAN's leadership in alternative dispute resolution and emphasised innovative reforms in driving regional and global growth in the field.

Global Trade Mediation Networking Forum: Business Rights and Consumer Protection

The AIAC together with the Malaysian Guangdong Import & Export Chamber of Commerce (MGIECC) organised a joint event entitled, “*Global Trade Arbitration Networking Forum: Business Rights and Consumer Protection*”. Following the introductory sessions by the joint organisers, the participants were presented with an overview of the AIAC's products and services. This was followed by an in-depth panel discussion on legal avenues for businesses and consumers in resolving commercial disputes. The event concluded with a tour of the AIAC and a networking session.

G.5 January 2025

AIAC Evening Talk Series 2025 – Mediation in Criminal Cases: Innovative or Unorthodox?

The AIAC successfully hosted its first evening talk of the year entitled, “*Mediation in Criminal Cases: Innovative or Unorthodox?*” on 27th January 2025. This session featured a dynamic and forward-looking discourse on the innovative use of ADR in Malaysia, with a particular emphasis on the growing relevance of mediation. An interesting aspect of the talk revolved around analysing mediation as a potential tool to resolve criminal matters, which sparked fresh perspectives, lively dialogues and critical reflections among both the panellists and participants. The discussion also examined how mediation, which is traditionally used to resolve civil disputes, could be adapted to offer more effective and restorative approaches within the criminal justice system.

G.6 February 2025

AIAC Guest Lecture Series 2025 – Seat of Arbitration at the Crossroad: Sustainability versus Global Appeal

On 13th February 2025, the AIAC proudly hosted the inaugural session of the AIAC Guest Lecture Series 2025 entitled, “*Seat of Arbitration at the Crossroad: Sustainability versus Global Appeal*” featuring the esteemed Professor Emilia Onyema, Director of the SOAS Arbitration and Dispute Resolution Centre (SADRC). Professor Onyema delivered an engaging and thought-provoking lecture which essentially explored how jurisdictions can balance sustainability with global competitiveness as arbitration hubs. The lecture was concluded with an interactive Question & Answer segment skillfully moderated by Dato' Mary Lim Thiam Suan

of AIAC, which served as a platform for participants to raise pertinent questions and share insights on the multitude of challenges faced by different arbitration seats. The dialogue underscored the importance of maintaining an adaptable and user-centric arbitration framework to meet the ever-evolving needs of the arbitration industry.

AALCO Annual Arbitration Forum 2025

The AIAC, in collaboration with AALCO and the Legal Affairs Division of the Prime Minister's Department (BHEUU JPM) hosted the AALCO Annual Arbitration Forum 2025, themed "*Empowering a Resilient World: Reigniting Regional Alliance*" from 20th to 21st February 2025. The Special Remarks were delivered by YB Dato' Sri Azalina Othman Said, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reform) while the Keynote Address was delivered by H.E. Dr. Kamalinne Pinitpuvadol, Secretary-General of AALCO. The first day featured an all-around analysis of various key topics including Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS), multi-tiered dispute resolution clauses as well as insights on strengthening ADR in the Asia and Africa regions. The second day focused on discussions of selected core areas such as tech-driven ADR, effect of ADR on investment dynamics and enforceability of awards in the AALCO region. Showcasing the spirit of regional solidarity and alliance, the Forum witnessed an overwhelming participation of the ADR community from within and beyond Malaysia.

G.7 March 2025

AIAC Evening Talk Series 2025 – Through the Fog: Tackling Fraud and Corruption in International Arbitration

On 5th March 2025, the AIAC hosted an evening talk entitled, "*Through the Fog: Tackling Fraud and Corruption in International Arbitration*". The session brought together leading voices in the field of arbitration to address among others, the complexities, challenges and ethical considerations surrounding fraud and corruption within the context of international arbitration. Drawing insights from notable cases as well as their own extensive experience in dispute resolution and compliance, the speakers and moderator provided valuable perspectives into identifying red flags, arbitrators' duties when faced with suspected misconduct and the emerging role of AI in addressing these issues. Though fraud and corruption in arbitration remain relatively uncommon in Malaysia, this session served as a timely discussion to reflect and learn from the high-profile cases reported in other leading jurisdictions.

Soft Launch of the ASEAN Sports ADR Forum 2025

The soft launch of the ASEAN Sports ADR Forum 2025 that took place on 21st March 2025 was officiated by YB Dato' Sri Azalina Othman Said, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reform) and YB Puan Hannah Yeoh, Minister of Youth and Sports. With the aim of setting the stage for the main Forum scheduled in the second quarter of the year, the soft launch featured meaningful conversations on the evolving landscape of sports dispute resolution in the region. With a strong show of support from policymakers, key players and industry stakeholders, the soft launch reaffirmed the growing recognition of ADR in safeguarding fairness and integrity, particularly in the sporting industry.

Questions You Always Wanted to Ask

The AIAC collaborated with the CIArb Malaysia Branch Young Members Group to organise an engaging session entitled, "*Questions You Always Wanted to Ask*" on 20th March 2025. Moderated by Mr. Kalaiarasan Rasadurai, the session featured a line-up of women leaders in the ADR field as speakers, mainly Dato' Mary Lim Thiam Suan of AIAC, Ms. Shanti Abraham, Ms. Serene Hiew and Ms. Janice Tay. Attendees had a rare but timely opportunity to engage directly with these leading women voices in the industry through a candid and interactive dialogue segment, exploring career pathways, professional challenges as well as personal reflections, in this ever-evolving ADR world. The informal dialogue fostered not only an open conversation full of practical insights, but also valuable mentorship, making it a standout initiative in support of the young and budding practitioners in the ADR community.

AIAC Guest Lecture Series 2025 – Horses for Courses: Mastering Winning Advocacy Techniques before Commercial Arbitration Tribunals, Investment Treaty Arbitration Tribunals and International Courts

On 24th March 2025, the AIAC continued its Guest Lecture Series by organising the second session featuring the esteemed Professor Robert Volterra for a lecture entitled, “*Horses for Courses: Mastering Winning Advocacy Techniques Before Commercial Arbitration Tribunals, Investment Treaty Arbitration Tribunals and International Courts*”. In this insightful lecture, Professor Volterra provided a nuanced analysis of the distinct approaches required when advocating before the commercial arbitration tribunals, investment treaty tribunals as well as the international courts. Drawing from his extensive experience in international arbitration, Professor Volterra shared key advocacy techniques, bringing his insights to practise with real-life examples and practical applications.

G.8 April 2025

AIAC’s Adjudicators Continuing Competency Development (CCD) Workshop Series 2025 – Year in Review: Case Law Updates on Adjudication

The AIAC’s CCD Workshop Series is aimed to be interactive and helpful for key industry players who regularly appear and participate in adjudication proceedings. In line with this objective, on 12th April 2025, the AIAC conducted its first CCD workshop of the year entitled, “*Year in Review: Case Law Updates on Adjudication*”. This session provided yearly update with a comprehensive analysis of the key judicial decisions made by the Malaysian courts in the year 2024 and the first quarter of 2025. Discussions also focused on the landmark cases that have significantly shaped the construction law landscape in Malaysia.

AIAC x CIArb Malaysia ASEAN Conference 2025

On 14th April 2025, the AIAC in collaboration with CIArb Malaysia hosted the ASEAN Conference 2025, themed “*Catalysing the Future of ADR and Dispute Resolution*” which brought together regional leaders and experts to explore arbitration and its developing landscape in the ASEAN region. The Conference facilitated an anticipated discourse on among others, the impact of Belt and Road Initiative, the growing complexities of cross-border disputes, and the need for specialised construction arbitration and culturally attuned advocacy strategies. With significant contributions from legal experts and institutional leaders, the Conference reinforced ASEAN’s role as a rising arbitration hub and called for continued innovation, inclusion and regional collaboration in strengthening dispute resolution frameworks within the region and beyond.

AIAC Evening Talk Series 2025 – Malaysia Esports: Legal Barriers, Complexities and Opportunities

Building on the success of the two well-received sessions earlier this year, the AIAC hosted an evening talk on 17th April 2025, entitled “*Malaysia Esports: Legal Barriers, Complexities and Opportunities*”. As ADR in the sporting industry continue to gain prominence, this session turned the spotlight on the rapidly evolving world of esports. The panellists essentially discussed the regulatory challenges, growth as well as the potential of adapting ADR mechanisms to resolve esports-related disputes. The panel, which featured not just legal practitioners but also representatives from the Malaysian esports federation, shed knowledge and insights on the challenges in the Malaysian esports industry and explored the ways forward for continued development, particularly from a legal standpoint.

AIAC Arbitration-in-Practice (AIP) Workshop Series 2025 – Setting the Stage: An Analysis on the Powers, Duties and Obligations of the Arbitral Tribunal

The AIP Workshop Series is designed to offer practical and professional development training to newly accredited arbitrators, young and budding practitioners who regularly appear in arbitration proceedings. On 25th April 2025, the AIAC hosted the first AIP workshop entitled, “*Setting the Stage: An Analysis on the Powers, Duties and Obligations of the Arbitral Tribunal*”. The focus areas of this workshop include the powers, duties and obligations of the arbitral tribunal before and after the appointment process, principle of natural justice as well as the consequences of exceeding/abusing the powers granted.

AIAC Guest Lecture Series 2025 – The Investment Puzzle: Defining the Concept of Investment in Investor-State Arbitration

Building the momentum from the first two Guest Lecture Series, the AIAC organised the third session entitled, “*The Investment Puzzle: Defining the Concept of Investment in Investor-State Arbitration*” on 21st April 2025. The session featured the esteemed Professor Markus Petsche from the Department of Legal Studies of Central European University (CEU), Vienna who also serves as a counsel at Petsche Pollak. Professor Petsche’s lecture focused on the intricacies of investment arbitration, particularly on the complexities surrounding the concept of investment. The lecture also included an in-depth analysis of Article 25 of the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) Convention supported by key case laws revolving around the interpretation of Article 25.

Waze Your Way Through CIPAA: A Hands – On Workshop on Unspoken Complexities & Winning Strategies

On 22nd April 2025, the AIAC, in collaboration with Turner International and Ho Partnership organised a practical workshop on the Construction Industry Payment and Adjudication Act 2012 (CIPAA) entitled, “*Waze Your Way Through CIPAA: A Hands-On Workshop on Unspoken Complexities & Winning Strategies*”. This workshop offered legal and construction professionals a practical dive into the commonly faced challenges and unpacked the lesser-known procedural pitfalls. Through case studies and interactive group exercises, participants explored strategic approaches to adjudication and effective techniques for drafting winning submissions. A key highlight was the “*Winning Strategies*” segment, where expert adjudicators shared insights on effective case presentation in adjudication proceedings under pressure.

G.9 May 2025

BIM – AIAC ADR Summit 2025

The AIAC, in collaboration with Balai Ikhtisas Malaysia (BIM) hosted the BIM–AIAC ADR Summit 2025. Centered around the theme “*Empowering Professional Excellence: Building a National Professional Ecosystem and Advancing Ethical AI and ADR Practices*”, the Summit featured experts across diverse sectors for a timely discussion on various key areas including the inter-professional development, ethical use of AI and the transformative role of ADR in resolving modern-day disputes. The Summit concluded with a resounding call for institutions such as the AIAC to adopt ADR frameworks that support BIM-integrated processes in order to resolve disputes with greater efficiency and effectiveness.

AIAC’s Adjudicators CCD Workshop Series 2025 – From an Adjudicator’s Perspective: Issues and Challenges in the Conduct of Adjudication Proceedings

Following the success of the first CDD Workshop, the second workshop entitled, “*From an Adjudicator’s Perspective: Issues and Challenges in the Conduct of Adjudication Proceedings*” was held on 25th May 2025. The CCD Workshop explored the key issues and challenges faced by adjudicators in the adjudication proceedings which encompass technical, factual, legal and procedural concerns. In order to navigate these challenges effectively, the panellists also shared practical insights and strategies.

2025 ADNDRC Domain Name Practice Development Workshop and Seminar on Global Brand Preservation and Domain Name System

The AIAC was proud to support the 2025 ADNDRC Domain Name Practice Development Workshop and Seminar on Global Brand Preservation and Domain Name System that took place on 19th May 2025 at CIETAC, Beijing. The Opening Remarks were delivered by Mr. Wang Chengjie, Vice Chairman & Secretary General of CIETAC and Council Member of ADNDRC. Gathering global experts and industry leaders, the workshop focused on strategies for protecting intellectual property, enhancing domain name dispute resolution systems and safeguarding trademark rights in a digital space. The event which was conducted in a hybrid format saw participants from across the globe join-in for the insightful sessions specifically on domain name disputes.

The ASEAN Sports ADR Forum 2025 – Ensuring Fair Play: Advancing Sports Dispute Resolution in Asia

The ASEAN Sports ADR Forum 2025, organised by the AIAC in collaboration with the Legal Affairs Division of the Prime Minister's Department (BHEUU JPM) and the Ministry of Youth and Sports Malaysia (KBS) was held on 23rd May 2025. The Forum themed “*Ensuring Fair Play: Advancing Sports Dispute Resolution in Asia*” convened stakeholders from across the world to explore the future of sports dispute resolution within the ASEAN region and beyond. The Forum was officiated by YB Puan Hannah Yeoh, Minister of Youth and Sports and graced by His Royal Highness Tunku Tan Sri Imran ibni Almarhum Tuanku Ja'afar Al-Haj, Honorary Member of the International Olympic Committee, alongside the representatives of BHEUU JPM. The Forum facilitated a timely and transformative gathering where esteemed panellists from across the region shared critical insights on advancing fair, accessible and robust mechanisms for resolving sports-related disputes. The initiative underscored Malaysia's growing role as a regional and global hub for sports dispute resolution.

AIAC Evening Talk Series 2025 – E-Invoicing for Arbitrators: Streamlining Billing and Enhancing Efficiency

On 28th May 2025, the AIAC hosted an evening talk entitled, “*E-Invoicing for Arbitrators: Streamlining Billing and Enhancing Efficiency*” aimed at exploring the realities of digital invoicing including seamless integration of e-invoicing into arbitration practice. The session kicked-off with a comprehensive presentation offering practical insights on navigating the e-invoicing process and meeting the tax requirements of the Inland Revenue Board of Malaysia. Participants were also shown a live demonstration of the MYINVOIS portal, particularly on the registration and document submission processes.

AIAC Arbitration-in-Practice (AIP) Workshop Series 2025 – Arbitration in Action: The Conduct of Effective Hearings

The second AIP Workshop entitled, “*Arbitration in Action: The Conduct of Effective Hearings*” was held on 25th May 2025. Led by a panel of distinguished speakers and seasoned practitioners, the session offered participants an in-depth analysis and valuable insights on the conduct of hearings in arbitration proceedings. Offering participants a comprehensive understanding of the procedures in the conduct of hearing, the discussion also covered various types of interlocutory applications, as well as the use of interim measures and reliefs during the hearing stage.

G.10 June 2025

AIAC Evening Talk Series 2025 - International Arbitration, Investment and Trade

The AIAC, in collaboration with Foley Hoag LLP hosted an evening talk on 19th June 2025 entitled, “*International Arbitration, Investment and Trade*”. This session focused essentially on the emerging trends in international arbitration, investment and trade, with discussions delving into the complexities of cross-border disputes. The panellists also touched-base on the short term and long term of sanctions, as well as the critical role of trust in investment arbitration. A brief update on the forthcoming AIAC Court of Arbitration was featured in this session, offering participants a preview of its objectives and significance within the broader dispute resolution landscape.

H. CONCLUSION AND THE AIAC'S WAY FORWARD

The past fiscal year has marked a period of significant progress for the AIAC, underscoring its growing influence in the global arbitration landscape. Through a dynamic array of outreach initiatives and strategic partnerships, the AIAC has broadened its global footprint and expanded its reach, alongside fostering collaborations and continued innovation in the field of ADR.

In line with its commitment to knowledge-sharing and capacity-building, the AIAC has organised, co-organised and supported a spectrum of events in the past fiscal year, which gathered leading minds in the ADR field across the world. These events tackled a wide spectrum of timely and complex topics, aimed at spreading ADR knowledge, key developments and best practices. With this, the AIAC remains committed to invest in and strengthen capacity-building initiatives in the coming year in tandem with its efforts to contribute to the ADR community at large.

As part of its long-term strategic vision, the AIAC will continue to engage and foster regional partnerships, with internationalisation being the central growth strategy. In parallel with this vision to strengthen our domestic network, the imminent establishment of the AIAC Sarawak will mark another significant milestone achieved to broaden the AIAC's presence and visibility in the region.

Looking ahead, the forthcoming AIAC Court of Arbitration and comprehensive revisions to the AIAC Suite of Rules 2025 will enhance good governance and reaffirm the core principles of transparency, integrity and impartiality in case administration as well as decision-making processes.

In this forward-looking journey, the AIAC is firmly rooted to continued growth, innovation and excellence in ADR. Its ever-expanding products of specialised services will continue to position the AIAC as a distinguished one-stop ADR hub for comprehensive dispute resolution solutions.



CRCICA

Semi-Annual Report

January 2025- August 2025



THE CAIRO REGIONAL
CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL
COMMERCIAL ARBITRATION
مركز القاهرة الإقليمي
للتحكيم التجاري الدولي

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CRCICA Caseload 2024

The total number of cases filed before CRCICA until 31 December 2024 reached 1747 cases. In 2024, 76 new cases were filed, compared to 53 in 2023.

Of the 76 cases filed this year, 11 related to ad hoc proceedings, representing 14% of cases, and 20 cases included multiple parties, representing 26% of cases. Further, 3 mediations were referred to the Centre in 2024 compared to 3 in 2023. The Centre also registered 1 dispute board case in 2024, compared to 2 dispute board cases in 2023.

The Centre's caseload during 2023 involved disputes relating to a variety of sectors, including: Retail, Real Estate Development, Construction, Tourism & Hospitality, International Sale of Goods, Healthcare, Oil & Gas, Media & Entertainment, Corporate Structuring, and Public Works.

For the first time since 2019, construction disputes were not the most prevalent before the Centre during 2024. In fact, disputes arising from the Retail sector ranked in first place with 22% of cases, followed by Real Estate Development disputes with 12% of the total number of cases. Construction disputes came in third with 10.5% of cases, followed by Tourism and Hospitality disputes with 6.5% of cases. Disputes arising from International Sale of Goods, the Healthcare sector, and the Oil & Gas sector tied for fifth place, representing 5% of cases each.

The parties to disputes included 28 Non-Egyptian parties. Parties from Libya came in at the top of Non-Egyptian parties referring their disputes to the Centre, with 11 parties, followed by parties from the United Arab Emirates, with 5 parties. In third place, 2 parties from Saudi Arabia referred their disputes to the Centre.

There were also parties from China, Cyprus, Egypt, France, India, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Russia, Tunisia, and the United Kingdom.

It is worth noting that these conservative figures do not include Egyptian companies owned or ultimately controlled by non-Egyptian shareholders.

The year 2024 witnessed the appointment of 151 arbitrators, including 15 Non-Egyptian arbitrators, representing 10% of appointments, with the number of arbitrators with a British nationality coming at the top, followed by arbitrators coming from Lebanon and then from Tunisia. There were also appointments of arbitrators from Bahrain, Egypt, and Qatar.

In 2017, the CRCICA signed the Pledge for Equal Representation in Arbitration, according to which the CRCICA, having due regard to the circumstances of the relevant case, implemented a gender diversity policy when acting as an appointing authority in addition to its implementation of a regional and age diversity policy where appropriate.

During 2024, 5 female arbitrators were appointed, representing 3% of appointments, compared to 7 female arbitrators appointed in 2023, representing 5% of appointments that year. Moreover, 17 arbitrators under 40 were appointed in 2024, representing 11% of appointments, compared to 12 arbitrators under 40 appointed in 2023, representing 9% of appointments that year.

These numbers and percentages, though both still modest, show a tendency to increase under 40 appointments by the CRCICA as well as by parties and co-arbitrators.

Of the 151 arbitrators appointed in 2024, only 30 were appointed by the Centre, representing 20% of all appointments. In exercising its power as appointing authority, the Centre took the opportunity to appoint 5 non-Egyptian arbitrators (16%), as well as 4 female arbitrators (13%) and 9 arbitrators under 40 (30%).

CHART – LANGUAGE OF PROCEEDINGS

In 2024, 66 arbitration cases were conducted in Arabic, (i.e. 87%), whereas 7 cases, (i.e. 9%) were conducted in English. The remaining 3 cases were bilingual proceedings, Arabic-French as well as Arabic-English.

During 2024, cases where the sum in dispute does not exceed USD 1million constituted over half of the Centre’s caseload. These were followed by cases where the sum in dispute ranges between USD 1 million and USD 3 million and then cases where the sum in dispute ranges between USD 5 million and USD 10 million.

The average value of sums in dispute in cases registered in 2024 amounted to USD 3,143,454, representing a decrease from the average in 2023, USD 4,643,018, but slightly higher than the average in 2022, which amounted to USD 3,136,929.

The total sum in dispute during 2024 reached USD 238,902,561, about the same as the total sum in dispute during 2023, i.e. USD 246,079,985.

HEARINGS IN 2024:

Throughout this year, 108 hearings took place using CRCICA’s hearing facilities. 69 of the hearings related to cases brought under the CRCICA Arbitration Rules, 17 hearings related to ad hoc cases administered by CRCICA, 21 hearings related to non-CRCICA proceedings, including ICC, ICSID and non-CRCICA administered ad hoc proceedings, and 1 hearing related to a dispute board case.

Of the 108 hearings that took place using CRCICA’s hearing facilities, 3 were held remotely, representing 3% of hearings, 8 hearings were held in a hybrid format, representing 7% of hearings, and 97 hearings were held physically, representing 90% of the hearings. For more information about CRCICA’s caseload and Hearings in 2024, please click here:

https://cricica.org/news/caseload-2024-case-numbers-bounce-back/?utm_source=ZohoCampaigns&utm_campaign=CRCICA+recap+2024&utm_medium=email

*It is worth mentioning that on 31 July 2025, the total number of arbitration cases filed before the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (“CRCICA”) reached **1806 cases**, with 59 new cases.

CRCICA News

CRCICA Arbitration Rules Chosen for 35th Vis Moot

The Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA) has announced that its Arbitration Rules will be used for the 35th Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot in 2028. This marks a significant historical moment for the Vis Moot, the world's leading competition in international commercial arbitration, as it's the first time the rules of an independent international arbitration institution from the Arab region and African continent have been selected.

CRCICA expresses great pride in this achievement, viewing it as a testament to its growing international prominence, impartiality, and modern arbitration rules, which became effective on January 15, 2024. The center anticipates that the 35th Vis Moot, involving thousands of law students, professors, and arbitrators globally, will further solidify CRCICA's position as a leading regional arbitration institution.

Learn More: <https://www.vismoot.org/sponsors/application-for-use-of-institutional-rules/>

Dr. Nabil Elaraby Commemoration Event

On February 12, 2025, the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA) held a commemoration event for Dr. Nabil Elaraby, its late Chairman of the Board of Trustees, former Director, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, and former Secretary-General of the Arab League, who passed away on August 26, 2024. The event featured a welcome by H.E. Nabil Fahmy and a documentary about Dr. Elaraby's life, followed by speeches from notable figures including H.E. Amr Moussa, Professor Alain Pellet, Professor Dr. Nasser Alkidwa, and Mr. Marwan Elaraby. Speakers offered heartfelt tributes, emphasizing Dr. Elaraby's exceptional career, his pivotal role in establishing and developing CRCICA, and his lasting contributions to international law, public service, and Egypt's sovereignty, remembering him as a visionary leader whose legacy continues to inspire.

Prof. Georges Affaki's lecture entitled: "The Arbitrator between the Duty of Impartiality and the Duty of Disclosure: Reflections on the Legitimacy of the Standard and the Risks of Extremism in Its Application" at CRCICA

On February 4, 2025, the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA) hosted a seminar featuring Professor Georges Affaki, a prominent international arbitrator and Justice of the Qatar International Court, who delivered a lecture titled "The Arbitrator between the Duty of Impartiality and the Duty of Disclosure: Reflections on the Legitimacy of the Standard and the Risk of Extremism in Its Application." Moderated by CRCICA Director Prof. Ismail Selim, the session delved into the crucial concept of disclosure in international arbitration, emphasizing its role in ensuring fairness and impartiality while warning against excessive requirements that could hinder efficiency. Prof. Affaki discussed the standards for challenging arbitrators, the distinction between objective and subjective disclosure standards, and the impact of an arbitrator's reputation, ultimately advocating for a balanced approach to disclosure that promotes transparency without leading to opportunistic challenges. The seminar concluded with recommendations to distinguish between disclosure as an obligation and its actual impact on impartiality, emphasizing an objective standard and the importance of a moderate approach to maintain arbitration's effectiveness.

The Future of Finance: Legal and Arbitration Challenges in the Fintech Era” Conference

On February 17, 2025, the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA), in partnership with SOAS University of London’s Arbitration and Dispute Resolution Centre (SADRC) and sponsored by Nour and Partners in association with Al-Tamimi and Company, and Shalakany Law Firm, hosted the "The Future of Finance: Legal Innovation and Arbitration in a Digital World – Opportunities and Challenges in the FinTech Era" conference. The event brought together judges, economists, legal and arbitration professionals, and FinTech pioneers to explore the evolving digital finance landscape. Opening remarks by Dr. Ismail Selim and Professor Steven Finizio emphasized the need for adaptive legal frameworks, followed by a keynote address from Mr. Ahmed Monir of the Central Bank of Egypt on regulatory sandboxes. The conference featured three dynamic panels discussing arbitration for FinTech, regional challenges and opportunities, and the future outlook including AI integration and smart contracts. Dr. Selim also introduced CRCICA’s new Expedited Rules and model clauses for FinTech B-to-C agreements, highlighting their cost-effectiveness and efficiency. The conference concluded by reaffirming the vital role of innovative arbitration practices in the FinTech ecosystem.

Dr. Ismail Selim, Director of CRCICA, Participates in GAR Live Panel in Riyadh

On February 24, 2025, Dr. Ismail Selim, Director of the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA), participated as a distinguished panelist at the 2nd edition of GAR Live: Riyadh, part of Riyadh International Disputes Week. During "The Institution Roundtable" session, Dr. Selim provided insights into CRCICA's structure, governance, and engagement with stakeholders, particularly highlighting the Centre's new Expedited Rules. These innovative rules are designed to streamline arbitration by combining speed, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness, aiming to resolve cases within three to six months with transparent fee agreements and reduced costs. Dr. Selim, in his capacity as both CRCICA Director and President of IFCAL, continues to champion global cooperation among arbitration institutions.

CRCICA holds the 6th edition of the AlexU-CRCICA Arbitration Conference

The Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA) and Alexandria University's Faculty of Law recently held their 6th joint Arbitration Conference on March 13, 2025, in Cairo, Egypt. This significant event brought together legal professionals, academics, and practitioners to discuss crucial issues in international trade and dispute resolution. A key highlight was a keynote speech by Mr. Sherif El Saadani, who addressed the underutilization of the United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods (CISG) within Arab legal systems, emphasizing its importance in international trade. The conference also featured a panel discussion on the complexities of contracts and arbitrations involving state parties, moderated by Mr. Youssef Al Saman, with insights from distinguished legal experts. Another critical discussion, moderated by Mr. Abdallah El Shehaby, focused on whether pre-arbitral steps in multi-tier dispute resolution agreements should be considered conditions precedent to arbitration, featuring a robust debate among prominent figures in arbitration. The success of the conference, supported by various sponsors and media partners, underscores CRCICA's and Alexandria University's dedication to advancing legal expertise and best practices in international arbitration in the region.

AlexU-CRCICA Vis Pre-Moot series 2025 - Sixth Edition

The sixth edition of the AlexU-CRCICA Vis Pre-Moot series successfully concluded in Cairo, Egypt, from March 15-17, 2025, serving as the only sponsored pre-moot for the Vis Moot in Africa and the Middle East. Organized by Alexandria University and the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA), the event provided a crucial platform for 10 participating teams to refine their international arbitration advocacy skills. After rigorous rounds, the University of Jordan emerged as the champion, with Cairo University also delivering an exceptional performance in the finals. The pre-moot was praised for its high caliber of talent and its role in preparing future leaders in international arbitration, offering participants valuable experience, expert feedback, and a taste of the intensity of a moot court competition.

CRCICA Director Dr. Ismail Selim Delivers Opening Remarks at the International Forum on Belt and Road Legal Services in Xiamen

Dr. Ismail Selim, President of both the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA) and the International Federation of Commercial Arbitration Institutions (IFCAI), delivered opening remarks at the International Forum on Belt and Road Legal Services in Xiamen, China, on March 30, 2025. His participation alongside high-ranking Chinese officials and the Deputy Director General of WIPO underscored CRCICA's dedication to global legal dialogues and the development of effective dispute resolution mechanisms crucial for international trade and investment within the Belt and Road initiative. This engagement highlights CRCICA's ongoing strategic efforts to enhance its visibility among Chinese companies and foster partnerships that strengthen international arbitration practices, particularly given China's increasing economic presence in Egypt and the broader region.

CRCICA Director Explores Chinese Legal and Arbitration Landscape

Following his participation in the International Forum on the Belt and Road Legal Services in Xiamen, China, Dr. Ismail Selim, Director of the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA), conducted high-level visits on April 1st to key legal and arbitration institutions in Xiamen and Shanghai, including the Central Legal Zone of the Higher Silk Road, the Shanghai Xuhui District Justice Bureau, and the HONGQIAO International CBD (Minhang). These visits involved in-depth discussions with representatives from various arbitration and legal bodies, focusing on the internationalization of arbitration practices and potential collaborations in international arbitration, legal training, and institutional capacity-building, particularly in light of growing Chinese investments in Egypt and the broader region. CRCICA aims to meet the increasing demand for neutral and efficient dispute resolution mechanisms in cross-border projects by enhancing its strategic outreach and visibility among Chinese companies and legal institutions.

Dr. Ismail Selim Contributes to High-Level Dialogue on African Arbitration During Paris Arbitration Week

During Paris Arbitration Week on April 9, 2025, Dr. Ismail Selim, Director of the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA), President of IFCAI, and Vice President of the African Arbitration Association, participated in a pivotal panel discussion titled "Commercial and Investment Arbitrations Involving Africa in the Context of Global Geopolitical and Economic Developments: A Sectoral Overview." This session, jointly organized by the Africa Arbitration Association (AfAA) and the Lagos Chamber of Commerce International Arbitration Centre (LACIAC), brought together leading arbitration practitioners to

examine the evolving landscape of disputes involving African entities amidst global geopolitical and economic shifts. Dr. Selim's contribution, alongside other distinguished speakers, highlighted CRCICA's commitment to remaining at the forefront of international arbitration developments and contributing to discussions on dispute resolution within Africa's dynamic commercial and investment environment, specifically addressing how escalating East-West tensions, climate change, energy transition, and technological advancements are shaping dispute trends across the continent.

CRCICA Director Dr. Ismail Selim Shares Expertise at Rising Arbitrators Initiative Event During Paris Arbitration Week

During Paris Arbitration Week on April 10, 2025, Dr. Ismail Selim, Director of the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA), served as a distinguished speaker at the Rising Arbitrators Initiative (RAI) event titled "From Profile to Practice: How Rising Arbitrators Gain Visibility and Appointments." Held at Quinn Emanuel's Paris offices, the event focused on career development for emerging arbitrators. Dr. Selim provided valuable insights into CRCICA's transparent and flexible approach to arbitrator appointments, emphasizing party autonomy, the role of its diverse List of Arbitrators, and rigorous internal verification processes. He also detailed how candidates can be considered for inclusion, criteria for the List, and CRCICA's consideration of specialized expertise like Capital Market – Securities Disputes, while also mentioning other ADR services like Emergency Arbitrator, Mediation, and Dispute Boards as avenues for gaining experience. The event also saw the launch of the RAI Arbitrator Tool (RAT), a new resource for RAI members, and Dr. Selim's participation underscored CRCICA's commitment to nurturing the next generation of arbitration professionals.

CRCICA at CIArb European Branch Annual Conference on the Evolution of ADR

Mr. Tarek Badawy, an Advisory Committee member of the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA) and Partner at Meysan, recently participated in the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CIArb) European Branch's Annual Conference, "Darwinism in ADR," held in Athens, Greece, from April 24-26, 2025. A key highlight was Mr. Badawy's role as a distinguished speaker on a panel discussing "The continuous evolution of arbitration institutions' policies and practices to meet users' needs," where he shared insights alongside representatives from prominent international arbitration institutions such as the ICC, LCIA, VIAC, and PCA. His involvement underscores CRCICA's commitment to staying at the forefront of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) developments and contributing to the global arbitration discourse, ultimately enriching the center's knowledge and benefiting its users.

CRCICA at the SCO Arbitration Forum

The Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA) proudly participated in the SCO Arbitration Forum held on April 25, 2025, in Urumqi, Xinjiang, China. Represented by Case Manager Ms. Jaidaa Nassar, CRCICA joined nearly 400 participants from 28 countries and regions at the event, which was organized by the China International Economic and Trade Arbitration Commission (CIETAC) and garnered over 17 million livestream views. Ms. Nassar's presence underscored CRCICA's commitment to fostering international cooperation and strengthening ties within the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) framework, marking a further step in deepening relations between CRCICA and leading Chinese institutions.

CRCICA Director Speaks on AI in Arbitration at the First Arab Judicial Conference

Mr. Tarek Badawy, an Advisory Committee member of the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA) and Partner at Meysan, recently participated in the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CIArb) European Branch's Annual Conference, "Darwinism in ADR," held in Athens, Greece, from April 24-26, 2025. A key highlight was Mr. Badawy's role as a distinguished speaker on a panel discussing "The continuous evolution of arbitration institutions' policies and practices to meet users' needs," where he shared insights alongside representatives from prominent international arbitration institutions such as the ICC, LCIA, VIAC, and PCA. His involvement underscores CRCICA's commitment to staying at the forefront of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) developments and contributing to the global arbitration discourse, ultimately enriching the center's knowledge and benefiting its users.

AfGAC Training at CRCICA

An intensive, practice-oriented training program for legal and engineering professionals, organized under the African-German Arbitration Cooperation (AFGAC) Initiative, successfully concluded at the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA) from May 11-13, 2025. The program, jointly led by prominent Egyptian practitioners and international arbitration experts from the Hamburg Arbitration Circle e.V., including Dr. Ismail Selim, aimed to enhance arbitration expertise and foster cross-regional cooperation. Participants received joint certificates of attendance, marking the beginning of a series of training initiatives under AFGAC, a collaborative platform dedicated to reinforcing arbitration as a trusted dispute resolution mechanism across Africa and globally.

Arab Arbitration Forum Honors Dr. Ismail Selim

On May 11, 2025, Ambassador Mohamed Mostafa Kamal of the Arab Arbitration Forum honored Dr. Ismail Selim, Director of the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA), during a meeting in Cairo. Their discussion focused on the future of arbitration in the Arab region, with Ambassador Kamal commending Dr. Selim's significant contributions to advancing arbitration and developing its mechanisms throughout the Arab world, as well as his dedication to promoting amicable dispute resolution through leading arbitral institutions.

CRCICA Hosts Insightful Discussion on Protecting Foreign Investors and State Regulatory Power

On May 28, 2025, the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA) hosted a conference on "Contractual and Conventional Tools for the Protection of Foreign Investors and State's Regulatory Power," bringing together legal experts, government officials, and arbitration specialists. The event featured an inaugural session with remarks from Dr. Ismail Selim, Minister of Parliamentary and Legal Affairs and Political Communication H.E. Coun. Mahmoud Fawzi, and President of the State Lawsuits Authority Counselor Abdel-Razak Mahmoud Shoaib, along with online contributions from ICSID's Deputy Secretary-General Mr. Gonzalo Flores and PCA's Senior Legal Counsel Ms. Ashwita Ambast. Discussions covered substantive issues like force majeure, hardship, and fair and equitable treatment in investment agreements, as well as procedural issues such as the suitability of arbitration, ISDS reform, and the exhaustion of local remedies. The final panel addressed the enforcement and challenges of arbitral awards under the New York Convention, including the enforceability of awards from potential multilateral

investment courts. The conference underscored the importance of ongoing dialogue to balance foreign investment protection with state regulatory power.

Advancing Arbitration in Erbil: CRCICA's Director Leads Workshop and High-Level Visit

From June 1-2, 2025, Dr. Ismail Selim, Director of the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA), visited the Kurdistan Region of Iraq to bolster regional arbitration cooperation and legal capacity. On June 1st, he led a specialized workshop in Erbil for senior judges, focusing on arbitration agreement drafting, distinctions between dispute resolution methods, and recent developments in comparative arbitration law, while also introducing CRCICA's services. The following day, Dr. Selim met with senior officials at the Kurdistan Region Investment Commission to discuss strengthening institutional ties and exploring collaboration in investment dispute resolution. This visit highlights CRCICA's dedication to advancing legal excellence and fostering partnerships throughout the region.

CRCICA at China-Africa International Arbitration Cooperation Conference

We are pleased to share the valuable contribution of Mr. Ahmed Ibrahim, Member of the CRCICA Advisory Committee, to the **China-Africa International Arbitration Cooperation Conference**, held on June 13, 2025, in Changsha, China.

Speaking during the session titled "Collaborative Development of Regional Arbitration: Construction and Improvement of China-Africa Dispute Resolution Mechanism," Mr. Ibrahim shed light on CRCICA's pivotal role in fostering China-Africa cooperation and enhancing regional arbitration frameworks.

Conference was coorganized by China International Economic and Trade Arbitration Commission (CIETAC)

CRCICA & ICCA organize a High-Level Judicial Dialogue on the 1958 New York Convention Under the Patronage of the Egyptian Ministry of Justice

On June 21, 2025, the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA), in collaboration with the International Council for Commercial Arbitration (ICCA) and under the patronage of the Egyptian Ministry of Justice, hosted a high-level New York Convention Roadshow in Cairo, focusing on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards. The event, generously sponsored by Gaillard Banifatemi Shelbaya Disputes and Youssef + Partners, gathered sixty-eight judges, including sixty-six senior Egyptian judges and two from Somalia, representing various judicial bodies. The workshop aimed to deepen understanding of the 1958 New York Convention, with sessions covering its application, enforcement procedures, grounds for refusal, and comparative judicial approaches from Egypt, the UAE, and France. Discussions also included the Ministry of Justice's proposed amendment to Article 3 of the Egyptian Arbitration Law and the Convention's interaction with regional legal instruments, fostering a rich exchange of judicial perspectives on the challenges and developments in international arbitration enforcement.

CRCICA Workshop on the Judicial Practice in the Application of Arbitration Law

On June 22, 2025, the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA), under the auspices of the Egyptian Ministry of Justice, held a workshop on "Judicial Practice in the Application of Arbitration Law" at its headquarters. The event brought together judges, legal academics, and arbitration specialists for in-depth discussions on key issues in Egyptian arbitration law. Opening remarks were delivered by Judge Hossam Sadek, Judge Aly El Hawary, and Dr. Ismail Selim. Sessions covered the judiciary's role in enforcing arbitration agreements, including waiver concepts and applicable law, as well as interim and conservatory measures issued by arbitral tribunals and emergency arbitrators. A final discussion focused on the complex interpretation of Article 3 of the Egyptian Arbitration Law, including its legislative context, the impact of conflicting court rulings, and proposed amendments. This interactive workshop highlighted CRCICA's dedication to fostering dialogue between the judiciary and the arbitration community to advance arbitration practice in Egypt and the region.

CRCICA Organizes Seminar on Settling Financial Disputes with CAM and GZAC

On Tuesday, June 24, 2025, the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA) hosted a seminar titled "CRCICA, CAM & GZAC at the Crossroads of Settling Financial Disputes," co-hosted with the Milan Chamber of Arbitration (CAM) and the Guangzhou Arbitration Commission (GZAC). Dr. Ismail Selim, Director of CRCICA, welcomed attendees, highlighting the shared commitment to excellence and cooperation in international dispute resolution. The event included remarks from CAM's Director General, Mr. Stefano Azzali, and GZAC's President, Mr. Wang Tianxi, with CRCICA and GZAC signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance future cooperation. Discussions emphasized arbitration's critical role in resolving financial disputes across banking, capital markets, and cross-border investments, showcasing CRCICA's expertise in handling such cases with its modern rules, neutral venue, and multilingual team. The seminar, sponsored by Badran Law Office and offering simultaneous interpretation, aimed to foster global alliances and advance impartial and effective arbitration in the financial sector.

CRCICA and Guangzhou Arbitration Commission Sign Strategic MoU, Strengthening Global Arbitration Ties

On June 24, 2025, the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA) and a high-level delegation from the Guangzhou Arbitration Commission (GZAC), led by President Mr. Wang Tianxi, signed a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This agreement, signed after the GZAC delegation toured CRCICA's facilities, signifies a shared commitment to fostering international cooperation and advancing arbitration best practices. The MoU is expected to facilitate joint initiatives and knowledge exchange, promoting arbitration as a preferred method for resolving cross-border disputes, especially within the financial sector across Africa, Asia, and beyond.

CRCICA Successfully Concludes First Emergency Arbitrator Case

The Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA) successfully concluded its first Emergency Arbitrator Case in May 2025, demonstrating the practical impact of its updated CRCICA Arbitration Rules 2024. The urgent application, filed on March 26, 2025, concerning a shareholders' agreement, led to the appointment of an Emergency Arbitrator within 24 hours, who then issued an award on interim measures by April 16, 2025. This swift resolution highlights the efficiency of the Emergency Arbitrator Rules, a vital mechanism for parties seeking immediate interim relief in urgent situations to

prevent irreparable harm, with such measures enforceable by Egyptian courts under Article 24 of the Egyptian Arbitration Law.

CRCICA Director Dr. Ismail Selim Speaks at Italian Arbitration Day 2025

On June 6, 2025, Dr. Ismail Selim, Director of the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA), delivered a compelling speech titled "Navigating Institutional Arbitration: Between Use and Abuse" at the Italian Arbitration Day (IAD) 2025 in Milan. Organized by the Associazione Italiana per l'Arbitrato (AIA) and the Milan Chamber of Arbitration (CAM), the event provided a platform for Dr. Selim to discuss the critical role of arbitral institutions in maintaining legitimacy, transparency, and adaptability within a dynamic legal landscape. He highlighted CRCICA's 2024 Arbitration Rules and the growing importance of practice notes, while also referencing international jurisprudence to underscore the need for greater accountability from institutions given their quasi-judicial recognition. Dr. Selim concluded with an optimistic call for institutions to "sing and fly" on the sailboat of institutional arbitration, guided by vision and legitimacy.

CRCICA Showcases Its Independence and Diversity Commitment at LIDW 2025

As part of London International Disputes Week (LIDW) 2025, Mr. Tarek Badawy, a member of CRCICA's Advisory Committee and Partner at Meysan Partners, represented the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA) on a high-level panel discussion. He emphasized CRCICA's 46-year history of independence, founded under the auspices of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO), highlighting the diplomatic and contractual immunities that protect its operations and arbitrators. Mr. Badawy also showcased CRCICA's strategic global expansion, noting its unique registration as a Permanent Arbitration Institution in Russia alongside other major global institutions. Furthermore, he presented statistics demonstrating CRCICA's commitment to enhancing diversity through increased appointments of younger, female, and non-Egyptian arbitrators, reflecting its dedication to inclusivity and balanced representation in international arbitration.

CRCICA's Francesca Hany completes China-Africa Legal Exchange Program

Francesca Hany Georgy, a Legal Researcher at the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA), successfully completed the 12th China-Africa Legal Professional Exchange Program from June 30 to July 12, 2025. Hosted by the China Law Society, the program immersed Francesca in the legal, economic, and institutional aspects of China-Africa cooperation across Guangzhou, Xiangtan, and Changsha. She represented CRCICA at two major legal forums, delivering a keynote address that analyzed the challenges within the existing African arbitration framework for China-Africa disputes, advocating for deeper institutional cooperation and the development of inclusive dispute resolution mechanisms. Her

participation highlights CRCICA's commitment to fostering cross-regional legal collaboration and creating culturally sensitive dispute resolution frameworks for the Africa-China context.

CRCICA's Mariam Deif Allah Obtains Diploma in International Arbitration from Africa Arbitration Academy

The Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA) is pleased to announce that Mariam Deif, a Case Manager and Legal Researcher in its Dispute Management Department, has successfully earned a Diploma in International Arbitration from the esteemed Africa Arbitration Academy. Mariam completed an intensive three-week program from June 9-28, 2025, hosted by leading international law firms in London. This experience allowed her to deepen her expertise in commercial and investment arbitration, engage with prominent experts, and build valuable connections with peers from 11 African jurisdictions. CRCICA extends its gratitude to the Africa Arbitration Academy for its exceptional work in advancing arbitration practices across the continent and congratulates Mariam on this significant accomplishment.

Building Bridges in Arbitration: CRCICA's Impactful 2025 International Visits

In 2025, the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA) served as a prominent hub for international collaboration, hosting numerous high-level delegations and representatives from global entities. These significant visits included representatives from the Riyadh Chamber of Commerce & Industry, the Shanghai Municipal Bureau of Justice, the Maritime Silk Road Central Legal District in Xiamen, China, and a distinguished delegation from Uzbekistan. CRCICA also welcomed a high-level delegation from the Shenzhen Government and the Shenzhen Court of International Arbitration (SCIA), in addition to delegations from the International Center for Arbitration and Mediation of Rabat (CIMAR), the Asian International Arbitration Centre (AIAC), and the OHADA Common Court of Justice and Arbitration (CCJA). The Centre was further honored to receive H.E. Ms. Lenka Miháliková, Ambassador of the Slovak Republic to Egypt, accompanied by Mr. Miroslav Ondrej, the Commercial Counsellor. These engagements underscore CRCICA's growing international stature and its commitment to fostering global partnerships in the field of arbitration and dispute resolution.

CRCICA's Activities in Cooperation with the Ciarb Egypt Branch

CRCICA hosts and closely cooperates with the Ciarb [Egypt Branch](#).

The Crisis of International Law Within the Developments of the International System Since the Adoption of the UN Charter

On April 9, 2025, the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (Egypt Branch), in collaboration with the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA), hosted a seminar in Cairo titled "The Crisis of International Law Within the Developments of the International System Since the Adoption of the UN Charter." The event featured Ambassador Ahmed Fathalla, a member of the UN International Law Commission, as the speaker, and Ambassador Mohamed Mostafa Kamal as the moderator. The discussion centered on the UN Charter's core principles, including sovereign equality, peaceful dispute resolution, and refraining from the use of force, examining how these principles have evolved and been interpreted amidst contemporary international system developments, while also touching upon the UN's role in economic, social, and human rights issues.

Ciarb Egypt Branch New Mentoring Programme Cycle

The Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CI Arb) Egypt Branch has launched a pioneering Mentoring Programme, the first of its kind initiated by a CI Arb Branch in the region. This initiative offers young CI Arb members under 40, interested in arbitration and alternative dispute resolution (ADR), a valuable opportunity to learn from seasoned arbitration professionals. The program aims to foster growth and success in the field, with applications currently open for mentees and mentor supporters for the upcoming 2025-2026 cycle. Further details and the application form are available on the CI Arb Egypt Branch website.

AI in Arbitration and Dispute Resolution (Part II)

On May 14, 2025, the Egyptian Branch of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CI Arb), in collaboration with the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA), hosted "Artificial Intelligence in Arbitration and Dispute Resolution (Part II)." The seminar, moderated by Mr. Taher Hozayen and featuring Eng. Ahmed Afifi as speaker, explored the current and future applications of AI in arbitration, highlighting its potential to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of international commercial arbitration. Attendees gained valuable insights into how AI is transforming the field of dispute resolution.

To watch the videos of some of the Branch events, please visit the Branch YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/@ciarbegypt>

For more information about the Branch activities and future events, please follow the Branch LinkedIn page <https://www.linkedin.com/company/ciarbegypt/>

Future Events

6th Annual Conference of the African Arbitration Association (AfAA)

CRCICA is the strategic partner of the AfAA 6th Annual Conference taking place in Cairo Egypt between the 10 and 13 October 2025

EAD – Egypt Arbitration Days

Egypt Arbitration Days (EAD) is set to take place from 13 to 16 October 2025 in Cairo. This inaugural event will bring together leading experts, practitioners, and thought leaders in arbitration to discuss emerging trends, challenges, and opportunities in the field. Discover insightful panels, networking opportunities, and invaluable knowledge that will shape the future of arbitration in Egypt and beyond!

CRCICA Celebrates the 30th Anniversary of the Egyptian Arbitration Law

CRCICA is organizing an international conference on 15 October 2025 to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the Egyptian Arbitration Law. The Conference will be held at the new conference centre at CRCICA premises, as part of the EAD – Egypt Arbitration Days.

For more information about CRCICA's future events, please follow our media pages:

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/crcica/mycompany/>

<https://www.facebook.com/crcica>

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REPORT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL CENTRE FOR
INTERNATIONAL COMMERCIAL ARBITRATION -LAGOS, NIGERIA FOR
THE PERIOD OF SEPTEMBER 2024 TO AUGUST 2025

INTRODUCTION

The president of the session of AALCO and Vice-President

The secretary General, H.E Dr. Kamalinne Pinitpuvadol

Your Excellences,

Distinguish Delegates,

Ladies & Gentlemen.

The Regional centre for International Commercial Arbitration Lagos, Nigeria (“The Centre”) hereby presents her report on its activities for the period of October 2024 to August 2025

ABOUT THE CENTRE

ESTABLISHMENT

ORIGIN

Regional Centre For International Commercial Arbitration Lagos (RCICAL) was established by the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO), a forty-eight (48) member nations inter-governmental organization for Asia and Africa region, in its 19th annual session held in Doha, Qatar on the 23rd January 1978, in furtherance of its economic and commercial dispute resolution policy mechanism. RCICAL is wholly established, owned, and controlled by its parent organization (AALCO).

HOST AGREEMENT

The Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) being a prominent member state of AALCO offered to be a host state to RCICAL through negotiations and exchange of letters which culminated into an agreement which terms were expressed in the Headquarters Agreement between AALCO and the FGN on 26th April 1999, as amended (No.1) of 16th April 2015, in which the Federal Government of Nigeria was granted to host RCICAL in Nigeria. Pursuant to the terms of the Headquarters Agreement, The RCICA Act CAP R.5 LFN 2004 was enacted to give legal backing and recognition to the terms, existence, and operations of RCICAL within the domestic legal order in the territory of the host state Nigeria, in accordance with customary international law.

JURIDICAL PERSONALITY

The Headquarters Agreement is the constitutive instrument of RCICAL legally recognized as an International Agreement under public international law, which endowed RCICAL with international legal personality as it is, with its parent body-AALCO. The constitutive instrument made RCICAL a public, regional, independent, non-profit making and neutral arbitral institution of international character and global recognition. RCICAL is clothed with ability and capacity to function and act in the economic and commercial field as an international legal person distinct from its host state Nigeria and other member states of AALCO, with attendant rights and obligations including the ability to maintain international claims, enforce and defend its rights, enjoy some prescribed powers and functions, immunities and privileges from and in the jurisdiction of the host state for the independent and unfettered fulfilment of its missions. This entails a judicial implication regarding the host government itself or its organs or agencies or persons that may be involved as disputants.

POWERS AND FUNCTIONS

The constitutive instruments and the Act cap R5 LFN 2004 endowed RCICAL with the Jurisdictional powers and functions to enable its functional necessity in the host state's domestic legal order for the independent and unfettered fulfilment of its mission in the region to wit: -

- a) Promotion of international arbitration in the region.
- b) Co-ordination of activities and assistance to existing arbitration institutions in the region.
- c) Assistance to the Ad-hoc arbitrations especially in cases where they are taking place in accordance with the UNCITRAL rules.
- d) Assistance in the enforcement of arbitral awards
- e) Conducting arbitrations under the auspices RCICAL
- f) Enforcement of arbitral awards.
- g) Make its own rules and capacity to enter into international agreements.
- h) Maintain a register of suitably qualified Arbitrators and experts witnesses.
- i) Carry out or do such order activities or other things conducive or incidental to its other functions.

The FGN offered AALCO to be the host government to RCICAL on the basis of terms therein the Headquarters Agreement and FGN acceded to, and enacted the Regional Centre Act Cap R.5 LFN 2004 and RCICA (Immunities and Privileges) Order 2001 that incorporated the terms of agreement to give domestic legislative force to the operations of RCICAL in Nigeria in accordance with and under customary international law.

1. The FGN therefore declared: Per Senator Kanu Godwin Agabi SAN, Honourable Attorney General of the federation and Minister of Justice, June 2000.

“That the enactment of the Regional Centre Act Cap R5 LFN 2004, in no way makes RCICAL an agency of the FGN. Indeed, RCICAL is an international institution hosted by Nigeria. The enactment of the Act, therefore, is following Section 12 of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria which provides that international agreement or treaties entered by the Government of Nigeria should be domesticated and incorporated into our laws before enforcement in the country.... that RCICAL is entitled to enjoy all privileges and Immunities accruable to similar international bodies. The Government of Nigeria, therefore, does not interfere and will not interfere with the activities of RCICAL. FGN involvement in RCICAL’s activities therefore is to enable the fulfillment of international obligation embodied in the Headquarters agreement signed in April 1999 between FGN and AALCO under whose auspices RCICAL operates”

“And that RCICAL is established to cater for the arbitration and other ADR needs of both private and public sectors of the economy as well as countries in sub- sahara Africa. The facilities for arbitration at the centre are made available to all nationalities. In respective of whether the parties to such international commercial disputes are nationals of member states of the AALCO or not. By this Act Cap R.5 LFN 2004, implementing the Headquarters Agreement of the RCICAL, Lagos has become an International Arbitration Centre.”

DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRE

HON. WILFRED DANOLA IKATARI is a person of remarkable multi-disciplinary knowledge, skills and practice in the fields of Education, Agricultural science, Applied economics, Law, Public Administration and Arbitration. He is conferred with Doctor of public Administration, (DPA).

He is currently the Director/Chief Executive of the Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration, Lagos-Nigeria

He holds Higher National Diploma in Agricultural Science and Applied Economics. He also holds a Bachelor of Laws Degree, both of the Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

He also holds Barrister-at-Law and Call to Bar certificates of the counsel of Legal Education of the Nigeria Law School and Body Of Benchers respectively.

Hon. Ikatari practiced Law in the Law firm of Messrs EGELE and EGELE, Attorneys - at -Law and Arbitrators, Daniel Chambers, founded by Chief Francis Forum Egele SAN, FC Arb, of blessed memory. His Law practice focused on commercial, Property, oil and gas, criminal, Banking and capital market.

Hon. Ikatari is a trained Teacher and served in the teaching service system of the old Rivers State, Nigeria. He was appointed as a Special Member, representing the

legal profession, Board of Governing Council, Rivers State polytechnic, Bori , Rivers State. (now Ken Saro Wiwa polytechnic).

He was appointed as Honourable Commissioner 1, Local Government Service Commission, Bayelsa state, Nigeria.

Hon. Ikatari was appointed by the Late former President, Umaru Musa Yara'dua, GCFR, as Honourable Member (Judge) of the Investment and Securities Tribunal of Nigeria. He was Chairman of the panels of Tribunal and made remarkable Judicial contributions to the Capital Market jurisprudence and the administration of the Tribunal.

He holds certificates:- In International Capital Market and Financial Derivatives of the Goldman Sachs Executive University London ,UK; Advanced Administrative Law and Judgement Writing of the National Judicial College, Reno, Nevada, USA; Securities and Capital Market Regulations and Development of the United States Securities And Exchange Commission, Washington D C; Courts Administration and Management for Judges; International Investment Treaties and Investors-State Arbitration of the International Law Institute in Collaboration with Georgetown University, Washington DC, USA.

MEMBERSHIP:

- Member, Nigeria Science Teachers Association
- Member, Institute of Directors Nigeria
- Member, Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, UK
- Fellow, Asian Institute of Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Fellow, Institute of Management Consultants IMC Nigeria
- Fellow, The Africa Business Club
- Fellow, Centre for Public Service Productivity and Development
- Distinguished Fellow of the African Institute of Public Administration - Ghana
- Certified Management Professional Consultant
- Certified Management Consultant, The Institute of Management Consultants
- Member, Working Group II, United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL)
- Member, Working Group III, United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL)

THE FACILITIES FOR ARBITRATION

Senator Kanu Godwin Agabi SAN Honourable Attorney general of The Federation and Minister of Justice, in June 2000 declared on behalf of the Federal Government of Nigeria..

“That RCICAL is established to cater for the arbitration and other ADR needs of both private and public sectors of their economy as well as countries in the region and internationally. The facilities for arbitration at the Center are made available to all nationalities, irrespective of whether the parties to such international commercial dispute and national of member states of AALCO or not”

(a) Providing Facilities For Institutional Arbitration: -

The officer and the staff are available to handle all correspondents, demand for deposit of costs, disbursement of same, catering services, secretariat and registry, lounge, interpretations, custody of documents, library services, logistics and other ancillary services necessary for the smooth administration and conduct of proceedings at the Centre.

(b) Providing Facilities And Assistance In Ad hoc arbitration: -

The Centre provide facilities alone to parties in dispute and as requested to conduct their arbitration proceedings at the Centre. The parties may also request the services of the Centre’s staff to assist in Secretarial, Catering, Recording, Interpretation etc. The Centre always avail such services upon request and payment of fixed charges in accordance with its non-profit nature.

(c) The Centre’s facilities for the conduct of institutional and ad hoc arbitration proceedings viz Hearing rooms equipped with hard and software installation for communication, recording, storage, transmission and retrieval; Arbitration retiring rooms, Mediation rooms, Conference Hall; Double Arm and Lounge, ICT rooms and library etc.

STRATEGIC FEATURES OF THE CENTRE

The special characteristics that endowed the Centre a strategic advantage to parties to resolve their dispute in assured institution that provides a neutral and friendly environment for all nationalities.

- The Centre was established by multi-lateral organization AALCO
- Has an International Legal Personality.
- It's under the Control and Supervision of the Secretary General (AALCO)
- It's a unique public regional, neutral, independent, non-profit Arbitral Institution.

- Endowed immunities and privileges is enjoyed by Centre's staffs, parties, witnesses, counsel to parties, every activity, property and documents of the Centre.
- Its renders assistant in their enforcement of Award made under its Rules internationally.
- It's powers and functions are statutory provided in the constitutive documents (Headquarters Agreement).
- Foreign lawyers are not prohibited from appearing in arbitral proceedings in either institutional or ad-hoc under the auspices of the Centre
- It has attendant rights and obligations including the ability to maintain international claims, enforce and defend its rights.

RENOVATION/REMODELLING OF CENTRES ADMINITRATIVE QUARTERS AND FACILITIES UPGRADING

In pursuance of the mandate assigned to the Centre, it has made concerted efforts towards modifying and improving the infrastructure and facilities of the Centre.

Upgrading/Automation of the RCICAL's rooms

In this regard the Centre has also made concerted efforts in equipping its hearing rooms with the state-of-the-art Ultra-Morden and conference equipment of international standard, making it easy in the recording of proceedings both audio and video and also production of transcript at the touch of button.

Upgrading/Automation of the RCICAL's Finance/ICT

The Centre over this period has upgraded it ICT to boost its presence in international/domestic online financial and other attrition activities by the development of a robust ICT package, a state-of-the-Art server room linked with hi- tech Network cables and routers to all offices within their administrative building.

Upgrading of the RCICAL's specialised Arbitration Library

The Centre, over this period has also constructed a state-of-the-art specialized arbitration library to serve both research students, also open to the public, staff and arbitrators at the Centre for proceedings. It further envisaged that the second phase of the library construction will be the E- library which is expected to run on the server room already provided. It is believed that this will benefit the international community of arbitrators and researchers in the field of international law and arbitration.

Upgrading/ Automation of the RCICAL's Security System

The Centre's security was formerly maned by security staff but over this period, the Centre has upgraded its security system by installation and deployment of hi-tech surveillance cameras providing 24/7 security of the diplomatic premises. It has also secured the premises by fencing the car park and the entire walls with a see- through iron fenced fortified with electric wire fence. it is envisaged that the phase two (2) of the work would be the deployment of the electronic doors and gate automation.

Improvement of power- supply

The Centre has acquired and installed two (2) generators, a 45 kVA and 11 kVA as alternative to power supply. These aimed at mitigating the incessant power supply disruption during arbitral proceedings.

Upgrading the RCICAL's furniture and fittings.

The Centre within the period under review has upgraded its seminar room furniture and fittings and also the air-conditioning of all the offices within the administrative block thereby achieving a more conducive working environment for both staff and users of the Centre.

Opening Of The New Dual Lounge

The lounge offers an ambient space for visitors, staff, arbitrators etc to rest, network, have some refreshments, breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

CASE LOAD FOR THE PERIOD OF SEPTEMBER 2024 TO AUGUST 2025

In the period under review, the Centre recorded upward surge of Forty-Two (42) matters, which were added to the existing dispute already registered at the Centre.

These additional cases registered at the Centre represents 30% increase and were a mixture of both institutional and ad hoc arbitration.

Twenty-nine (29) of the institutional references have the arbitration clause of the Centre in their contract agreement, nine (9) of the reference were ad hoc arbitration wherein the centre assisted the parties to ensure the smooth conduct of the proceedings, while the Centre act as appointing authority in three matters.

Most of these matters under review have been successfully resolved while few are at different stages of proceedings pending determination and relates to: -

- Construction
- Oil and gas

- Maritime
- leasing
- finance
- supply

The Centre is optimistic that with the renewed interest occasioned by the publication of the national arbitration policy and with the vigorously aggressive awareness campaign strategy, of organizing seminars, webinars, conferences and workshops across the country, more and better exploits will be achieved for the benefits of users, investors and indeed the ADR community at large.

COOPERATION, COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER SPECILIALIZED ORGANISATION

The Centre maintains a very cordial working relationship with many other professional, Legal/Arbitral bodies in the course of its operation and core mandate.

Such organizations include The Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), The Nigerian Shippers Council (NSE), The Nigerian export promotions Council (NEPC) School Of African Studies (SOAS), University of London, World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), United Nation's Commission On International Trade Law (UNCITAL), International Council of Commercial Arbitration (ICCA), International Centre for Settlement of Investment Dispute (ICSID) The China Law Society (CLS), Institute Of Arbitrators UK, International Dispute Resolution Institute, Maritime Arbitration Association, Istanbul Arbitration Centre, Asian institute of Alternative Dispute Resolution, Asian International Arbitration Centre, International Law Institute(ILI), to mention a few.

PARTICIPATION IN ARBITRAL EVENTS

UNCITRAL SESSION – SHAPING THE FUTURE-May 2025

The key outcomes and insights from the **UNCITRAL** session held on 27 May 2025 in Vienna Austria titled: “Shaping The future: The impact of Negotiable Cargo Documents on Trade Finance, Regional Connectivity and Digital Evolution”.

The session focused on the development of a new international convention on negotiable cargo documents, aiming to modernize and harmonize the legal framework governing the transport documents across all moods of transportation.

Development of the International Convention on Negotiable Cargo Documents **UNCITRAL working group VI** has been drafting an instrument to address the lack of negotiable transport documents in non-maritime modes. The proposed convention introduces:

- **Negotiable cargo document:** Physical document serving as titles across different transportation mode.
- **Negotiable electronic cargo records:** Digital equivalents providing a unified documentation approach.

These instruments aim to facilitate the buying and selling of goods doing transit, improve trade finance security, and provide flexible supply chain management for financial institutions.

Pilot projects have been conducted to test the practical application of the draft convention. Notably:

- A shipment from Kazakhstan to China utilized electronic cargo records to secure trade financing, demonstrating the effectiveness of digital negotiable documents in facilitating international trade.
- **Financial Institutions:** Banks, such as the Bank of China, have actively participated in pilot projects, showcasing the potential of electronic negotiable cargo records in securing trade finance.
- **Freight Forwarders and Carriers:** Organizations like FIATA have contributed to the development of the convention, ensuring that the practical aspects of issuing and handling negotiable documents are addressed.
- **Legal Experts and Observers:** Legal professionals have provided insights to ensure that the convention aligns with existing international liability regimes and addresses potential conflicts.
- **Finalization and Adoption:** The draft convention is expected to be finalized and presented to the UN General Assembly for adoption in late 2025.
- **Implementation:** Post-adoption, the convention will provide a voluntary legal framework for transport operators, allowing for flexible implementation across different jurisdictions.

Conclusion

The UNCITRAL session highlighted significant advancements in the development of a unified legal framework for negotiable cargo documents, promising to enhance trade finance, regional connectivity, and digital evolution in international trade.

ARBITRATION POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR NIGERIA.

In at least the past two decades, the rapidity of commercial and investment transactions including trans-border movements had increased momentum in terms of numbers and volume not only in Nigeria but also across the region of Africa and Asia.

This notable trend call for enhanced legal and commercial framework to meet the associated challenges of lack of a modernized legal framework, dearth of a well positioned national policy, weak arbitral institutions, inadequate patronage, low level of awareness, under- developed infrastructure, and general lack of confidence in the use of arbitration and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism to facilitate trade and investments.

The RCICAL since 2016 initiated the move to secure the approval of the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) to constitute a well coordinated national arbitration policy mechanism as a proactive strategy necessary to grapple with the internal national dynamics vis-à-vis the emerging trends in arbitration on the global stage.

This led to the cconstitution of a 19-member National Arbitration Policy Committee (NAPC) by FGN. The Director of RCICAL was a prime member and who even presided in most of the meetings and sub-committees on specific thematic aspects of the committee terms of reference.

This policy not only promotes the growth and practice of ADR in Nigeria, but also aligns with Nigeria international treaty obligations, particularly under the UNCITRAL Model Arbitration Law. The UNCITRAL Model Mediation Law and various International convention to which Nigeria is a signatory. By encouraging a judicial culture that supports arbitration and ADR, this policies seeks to reduce the burden on the domestic court system, expedite the resolution of commercial disputes, promotes ease of doing business and enhancing investor confidence.

It Further outlines clear guidelines for the selection of Arbitrators, engagement of Council, and the development of a comprehensive Code of Conduct for Arbitration and ADR practitioners. It also emphasizes the importance of capacity building, public awareness, and continuous review of the arbitration laws to ensure the remain responsive to the dynamic global arbitration ecosystem.

In International Commercial Arbitration involving Federal/State MDAs, the HAGF/HAG of the State may request the Director of RCICAL to appoint suitably qualified competent Nigerian arbitrator(s) for the Federal/State MDAs.

Where the parties fail to agree on the procedure of appointment and/or the appointing authority, the HAGF/HAG of the State shall request the RCICAL or other centre to appoint suitably qualified and competent Nigerian arbitrator(s) for the Federal/States MDAs. In all cases, any appointment in regard to a dispute with claims above the threshold of the sum of N50 million, shall only proceed with the approval of the HAGF/HAG.

STAKEHOLDERS/ CITIZEN'S ENGAGEMENT THEMED "ACCESS TO CRIMINAL JUSTICE" BY THE HONORABLE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE FEDERATION AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE

The Stakeholders/ Citizen's Engagement on ACCESS TO CRIMINAL JUSTICE was held at The Olusegun Obasanjo Auditorium on Thursday 8th May 2025.

The event was attended by distinguished guests, including The Honorable Attorney General Of the Federation and minister of Justice **LATEEF O. FAGBEMI SAN**, The Solicitor General Of The Federation And Permanent Secretary **MRS. BEATRICE JEDI-AGBA OON**, The special adviser to the president on Policy and Coordination and Head CRDCU, **HADIZA BALA USMAN**, Director of The Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration Lagos (RCICAL) Honorable Wilfred Ikatari, heads of relevant agencies and parastatals, and other stakeholders.

The Solicitor General Of The Federation And Permanent Secretary in her welcome address, highlighted that the ministry signed a performance bond two years ago, committing to deliverables and key indicators aligned with its vision, mission, and constitutional mandate. In February 2024, the ministry expanded its deliverables to reflect the mandate of its agencies and parastatals, focusing on citizens' most pressing concerns, inclusivity in governance, and public understanding of government policies. She also pointed out that the ministry has made significant progress in meeting its quarterly reporting obligations, complying with the expectations set out in the presidential priorities, emphasising the importance of measuring performance not just in metrics but in impact and lived realities of the people served.

Key takeaways centred on Strengthening access to criminal Justice with a focus on equality, inclusion, and the rule of law. In staying accountable to the people served, the Ministry stressed the inevitability of citizen engagement and feedback, recognizing its importance in refining processes, improving service delivery, and staying accountable to the people served. Collaboration with stakeholders to deepen reforms that reflect the aspirations of the people and fulfill the constitutional responsibility entrusted to the Justice sector was also emphasized.

In her conclusion, she pointed out that the quarterly stakeholder and citizen engagement provided a platform for the Ministry to present its progress, inform citizens of critical reforms, and solicit feedback.

The Honorable Attorney General Of the Federation and minister of Justice, **LATEEF O. FAGBEMI SAN**, while delivering his paper themed "Citizens' Engagement" plays a major role in informing the general public and stakeholders on its measures and achievements in advancing the administration of criminal justice.

The event aimed to appraise the government's initiatives, beneficial programs, and policies centred on enhancing the administration of criminal justice in Nigeria. Key highlights includes Improved Prosecution, which reflects substantial improvements in the prosecution of crimes, with a focus on capacity building for prosecutors, increasing synergy amongst prosecuting agencies, and developing policy frameworks. He mentioned that the ministry established a Joint Case Team (JCT) on cybercrime, comprising law enforcement agencies and the judiciary, to combat cybercrime effectively. The Minister also talked about Protection for Women, Children, and Vulnerable Persons, stating that the ministry had reviewed the “Violence Against Persons Prohibition” Act and developed a standard operating procedure for school-related gender-based violence. In rendering mutual legal assistance, the Ministry successfully extradited fugitives to the United States and Qatar, and is working with Finish authorities to extradite others. Among the notable gains recorded are assets recovery and management, including the repatriation of \$52.88 million from the USA.

The Ministry achieved notable success, securing 226 convictions for terrorism cases. They also made significant strides in addressing gender-based violence, with 6 convictions for Sex and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) offenses.

Some significant milestones achieved by the ministry includes the repatriation of \$52.88 million through an asset-sharing agreement with the US, while the Legal Aid Council provided critical support to citizens by handling 2,790 criminal cases, 1,021 civil matters, and conducting 760 visits to correctional facilities. The agencies made significant strides, with NDLEA developing SOPs for Administration of Criminal Justice Act (ACJA) implementation and conducting 2,490 anti-drug abuse campaigns, NAPTIP securing 37 convictions for human trafficking and compensation for 10 victims, and the Nigerian Copyright Commission confiscating infringing copies worth over N400 million through 120 monitoring visits.

The Ministry reaffirmed its commitment to upholding the rule of law, ensuring equitable access to justice, and building a justice system that is fair, transparent, and responsive to the needs of all citizens. The Ministry pledged to continue refining its procedures, investing in capacity building, and inter-agency collaboration to achieve its mandate.

AALCO ANNUAL ARBITRATION FORUM 2025 – EMPOWERING A RESILIENT ADR WORLD: REIGNITING REGIONAL ALLIANCE

The AALCO Annual Arbitration Forum 2025 was convened in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 20th to 21st February 2025, jointly organized by the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) and the Asian International Arbitration Centre (AIAC), On the theme **“Empowering a Resilient ADR World: Reigniting Regional Alliance”**. The forum gathered leading voices in arbitration

and dispute resolution from across Asia and Africa, promoting dialogue on institutional collaboration, technological innovation, and policy alignment in ADR.

The Welcome Remarks was taken by the Director, AIAC YBhg. Dato' Mary Lim Thiam Suan while Special Remarks was taken by the Minister in the Prime Minister's Department for Law and Institutional Reform, YB Dato' Sri Azalina Othman Said.

Plenary Session on Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) Explored reforms in ISDS frameworks, regional treaty alignment, and dispute avoidance strategies and Speakers were Prof. Yuka Fukunaga, Ms. Kitty Zheng, and Mr. Rajendra Navaratnam.

Panel Discussion on Multi-Tiered Dispute Resolution Clauses Which Examined regional challenges in drafting enforceable step clauses and navigating culturally diverse dispute systems. Contributors to the discussion were Ms. Caroline Thomas, Ms. Tan Swee Im, and Prof. Elijah Putlin.

Dialogue among heads of regional Centre's focused on institutional strengthening and unified ADR protocols, Panelists included representatives from the various Centre's: Lagos – Hon. Wilfred Ikatari, Nairobi – Ms. Joy Maina, and Hong Kong – Mr. Nick Chan.

The evening Networking Reception facilitated informal dialogue and cross-border networking opportunities.

Day 2 – 21 February 2025

Morning Roundtable on tech-driven ADR **featured** Discussions on AI integration, automation tools, and online arbitration platforms which emphasized ethics, data privacy, and equitable access.

Afternoon Workshops Sessions included capacity-building for arbitrators, institutional policy review, and harmonization of arbitration rules across AALCO Centre's, and Participant feedback underscored the value of hands-on training and inter-Centre learning.

Key Takeaways and Outcomes bordered on Regional Cooperation and under **scored** Strong emphasis on unifying regulatory frameworks and nurturing cross-border institutional partnerships. **Innovation in ADR gives** recognition of technology as a key enabler for enhanced efficiency, transparency, and accessibility in dispute resolution. **On Capacity Building, the** Shared commitment to training emerging ADR professionals and fostering exchange programs across regional centres and reaffirmed the need for policy dialogues among AALCO member states for harmonized arbitration frameworks.

In conclusion, the AALCO Annual Arbitration Forum 2025 served as a strategic platform for dialogue, knowledge exchange, and the reinforcement of regional alliances in the evolving ADR landscape. The Centre's participation reaffirmed its commitment to regional and international collaboration and provided valuable insights that can enhance our institutional initiatives. Continued engagement in such forums is highly recommended to strengthen our relevance and visibility within the global arbitration community.

Future Activities Of The Centre

The Centre is developing a work plan to organize international conferences, seminars, and workshop as soon as the host government facilitates her obligation.

The Centre is also looking forward to support, sponsor, collaborate and facilitate various domestic and international arbitration ADR related events.

The Centre is presently undertaking a thorough review of its Rules. The objective of this review is to provide greater clarity on areas that may be ambiguous within the RCICAL Rules, thereby enhancing their effectiveness.

In addition, the Centre has submitted a comprehensive plan to its host government for the upgrade of its existing infrastructure. The scope of this upgrade is designed to ensure that the Centre's physical and technological structures meet international standards, thereby enhancing its capacity to deliver world-class arbitration services.

Thank you all...

Hon. Wilfred Danola Ikatari

Director/Chief Executive of the Centre



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REPORT OF 2024 ACTIVITIES AND 2025 PERSPECTIVES

**FOR SUBMISSION TO THE SIXTY-THIRD ANNUAL SESSION OF ASIAN-
AFRICAN LEGAL CONSULTATIVE ORGANISATION (AALCO)**

July 2025



TEHRAN REGIONAL
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A. Introduction

This Report, comprising TRAC's 2024 Activities and 2025 Perspectives, hereinafter the "Report", is respectfully submitted to the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO).

B. 2024 Activities

In 2024, TRAC actively continued to maintain its function and productivity. TRAC is proud that in the past year, it has played independently, professionally, and efficiently under its mandate. As an established arbitration institution, it has gained valuable recognition for its smooth and professional conduct and promotion of international arbitration in the Region.

TRAC's major activities during 2024 are summarized as follows:

1. Providing institutional services for administering arbitration cases;
2. Conducting arbitrations that were referred to TRAC by Iranian courts;
3. Acting as the appointing authority when asked by parties;
4. Appointing the new members of the TRAC's International Arbitration Board;
5. Meeting with the former President of the Islamic Republic of Iran;
6. Enlarging TRAC's network;
 - 6.1. Meeting with the representatives of the Iran-Austria Joint Chamber of Commerce;
 - 6.2. Meeting with the Chairman and some members of the TRAC's International Arbitration Board;
 - 6.3. Meeting with the Chief of the Iranian Judiciary Research Institute;
 - 6.4. Meeting with the Head of the Banking Working Group of the Iranian Judiciary Research Institute;
7. Holding a session to review a decision made by the Iranian Administrative Court of Justice;
8. Sharing the TRAC's experiences of regulating the Rules of Mediation with the public sector;
9. Supporting students and internships for graduates.

1. Providing institutional services for administering arbitration cases

In 2024, in continuation with the previous year, TRAC's arbitration clause has been inserted in various types of international and domestic contracts involving both public and private sectors. To elaborate more, TRAC, by contacting sectors that play a significant role in Iran's industrial and commercial system, introduced itself to Iranian companies. These networking activities, along with TRAC's professional attitude in the conduct of arbitration cases, eventually resulted in more popularity of TRAC's services and efficiencies among public and private companies.



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Many of these companies eventually inserted and are now inserting the TRAC Arbitration Clause in their contracts.

Furthermore, in the meantime, TRAC effectively administrated its pending cases during the year 2024.

2. Conducting arbitrations that were referred to TRAC by Iranian courts

Following a dynamic participation in enhancing arbitration in Iran, TRAC is now conducting arbitrations that were referred to by courts. Being introduced by courts provides opportunities for TRAC to be recognized as a well-established arbitration center and therefore, to have more cases in the future.

3. Acting as the appointing authority when asked by parties

TRAC extends its participation even in ad hoc arbitrations. During 2024, TRAC acted as the appointing authority in some ad hoc arbitrations. It is firmly believed that acting as an appointing authority may prepare a basis for TRAC to develop its activities.

4. Appointing the new members of the TRAC's International Arbitration Board

According to the Internal Regulations of the TRAC, TRAC's International and Domestic Boards are in charge of conducting some vital tasks. The Boards bear the responsibility of handling the challenges against arbitrators as well as scrutinizing drafted awards. Therefore, it is important to appoint the members in a way that guarantees the proper function of the Boards.

According to Article 3 of the Internal Regulations of the Tehran Regional Arbitration Centre, the Centre shall have one International Arbitration Board, and the Board members are appointed by the Director after consultation with the Secretary General of the AALCO. Considering that the former members' term has ended, the TRAC's Director appointed the new members of the International Board according to Article 3 of the above-mentioned Regulations. The new Board consists of prominent scholars and practitioners with various expertise in the field of law including international arbitration and trade law. The names of the new International Board members were submitted to the AALCO on August 10, 2024, as follows:

1. Dr. Hamid Gharavi (Chairman)
2. Dr. Mir Hossein Abedian Kalkhoran
3. Dr. Parviz Ansari Moein



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4. Mr. Jae Baek
5. Dr. George A. Berman
6. Dr. Sébastien Besson
7. Dr. Seyed Nasrollah Ebrahimi
8. Dr. Moshkan Mashkour
9. Dr. Oveis Rezvanian

(The above-mentioned email contains the CVs of the members.)

5. Meeting with the former President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

In February 2024, the TRAC's Director met with Mr. Raisi, the former President of Iran. In this meeting, the Director presented a report and some explanation about the function of TRAC and its importance as an independent international arbitration center in domestic, regional, and international arbitrations to the President.

6. Enlarging TRAC's network

As in previous years, TRAC aims to develop its collaboration with other arbitration centers, chambers of commerce, research institutes, and reputable specialists in international arbitration.

6.1. Meeting with the representatives of the Iran-Austria Joint Chamber of Commerce

On April 22, 2024, TRAC hosted a meeting with representatives of the Iran-Austria Joint Chamber of Commerce (IAJCC). The Secretary-General of the Arbitration Centre of the Iran Chamber, the Secretary-General of the Arbitration Centre of Tehran Chamber, and the Chairman of the International Commission of the Iran Central Bar Association also attended this meeting. In this meeting, planning a seminar on international commercial arbitration issues was discussed.

6.2. Meeting with the Chairman and some members of the TRAC's International Arbitration Board

On January 10, 2024, Dr. Hamid Gharavi, the Chairman of the International Arbitration Board, visited TRAC and discussed the challenges associated with expanding TRAC's institutional arbitration in the international arena and the possible solutions with the Director.



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On July 23, 2024, the Director also had a meeting with some members of the International Arbitration Board (Dr. Ansari Moein, Dr. Ebrahimi, Dr. Mashkoor, and Dr. Rezvanian) in the TRAC.

6.3. Meeting with the Chief of the Iranian Judiciary Research Institute

On October 20, 2024, a meeting between the Director of the TRAC and the Chief of the Iranian Judiciary Research Institute was held, and further research cooperation and collaboration about arbitration and other alternative dispute resolutions (ADRs) were discussed.

6.4. Meeting with the Head of the Banking Working Group of the Iranian Judiciary Research Institute

On December 8, 2024, the Director of the TRAC met with the Head of the Banking Working Group of the Iranian Judiciary Research Institute. Representatives of both private and government-owned banks also attended the meeting to analyze the feasibility of utilizing alternative dispute resolutions (ADRs) in banking disputes.

7. Holding a session to review a decision made by the Iranian Administrative Court of Justice

On June 18, 2024, a session was held at TRAC to critically evaluate the decision made by the General Board of the Iranian Administrative Court of Justice regarding the annulment of the arbitration clause in the contract of the Iranian Industrial Estates Company. The event gathered students, judges, and professors for an in-depth discussion of the decision.

8. Sharing the TRAC's experiences of regulating the Rules of Mediation with the public sector

Considering the market's needs and requirements, the Iranian Judiciary Research Institute is drafting a mediation bill to be proposed and submitted to the Parliament of Iran for discussion. As TRAC pioneered the regulation of Mediation Rules, it tried to share its experiences with the public sector.

In this regard, on November 18, 2024, a session about the mediation was held in TRAC. The Director of the TRAC, some professors with different expertise in law, and some students



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attended this session. In this session, the aforementioned mediation bill was discussed and analyzed.

9. Supporting students and internships for graduates

In recent years, in addition to its administrative tasks, TRAC has always had an eye on the students and fresh graduates interested in arbitration. In line with its policies, TRAC welcomes students and fresh graduates who are keen on international arbitration. These students and graduates are assigned different tasks including administrative ones. The purpose of the internship is to train multi-tasked practitioners who are not only familiar with international arbitration but also know how to behave in an institution.

C. 2025 Perspectives

TRAC aims to continue offering its institutional support as a neutral, independent, and international organization for the conduct of domestic and international arbitration proceedings. To pursue this objective, the 2025 prospective plan of TRAC is as follows:

1. Amending the Arbitration Rules of the Tehran Regional Arbitration Centre

In response to the new requirements and developments, TRAC has commenced amending its Arbitration Rules. To facilitate the initiation of recourse to arbitration, TRAC has planned to revise Appendix II of its Arbitration Rules. This revision will include adding fees in Rials to the schedules for disputes whose claims or the amounts involved are indicated in Rials. The proposed changes are being drafted for submission to the Internal Board of Arbitration.

Furthermore, TRAC is considering reviewing its Arbitration Rules and making the necessary changes to align with the 2021 amendments to the UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules.

2. Exploring new areas

Analyzing the market's needs and requirements, the TRAC found that it needs to introduce new ways of dispute settlement. With this in mind, the TRAC is considering exploring new areas of activities and expanding its scope in various fields of alternative dispute resolution methods, such as expert determination and neutral evaluation, in addition to arbitration and mediation.



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3. Organizing training courses, workshops, and seminars and cooperating with arbitral institutes and academic centers

To fulfill its educational responsibilities, the TRAC envisages organizing several workshops, seminars, and training forums in the field of international arbitration and concluding a Memorandum of Understanding with different organizations and universities to create awareness about arbitration and motivate young practitioners to advise their clients to get benefits from a transnational safe environment for the settlement of international commercial disputes.

D. Concluding words

This is a brief rundown of TRAC activities in 2024. TRAC has gained valuable recognition in the field of international arbitration in the Region. TRAC looks forward to enlarging its activities in 2025 and is grateful for the support of AALCO and the Iranian government in achieving its goals.



REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE NAIROBI CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION (NCIA), 2024/2025

INTRODUCTION

The Nairobi Centre for International Arbitration (NCIA) continued to play a pivotal role in advancing Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms in Kenya and beyond during the 2024/2025 financial year. Through targeted initiatives, strategic partnerships, and impactful events, the Centre sustained its momentum in promoting arbitration, mediation, adjudication, and related processes in both domestic and international contexts.

STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENTS & ACTIVITIES

NCIA PARTNERS WITH HAMBURG CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND WOMEN IN ADR

The Centre partnered with the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce and Women in ADR to deliver a training programme aimed at empowering women in ADR practice. This initiative fostered capacity-building and created opportunities for African women practitioners in global ADR spaces, while reinforcing Africa-Germany business and dispute resolution ties.



DOMESTIC MOOT COMPETITION

The inaugural NCIA Domestic Moot Competition was held during the same week, bringing together students from fourteen universities. African Nazarene University emerged as the champion. Awards were awarded to outstanding teams, researchers, and orators. This initiative amplified the importance of homegrown arbitration frameworks and inspired the next generation of ADR professionals.

2ND NAIROBI ARBITRATION WEEK (NAW) 2025

Hosted at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Westlands, Nairobi from 17th to 21st March 2025, the 2nd edition of NAW was themed "Arbitrating in the Age of Sustainability." The event convened 112 speakers and over 270 participants across 31 insightful sessions, reinforcing Nairobi's positioning as a key arbitration hub.



THE CENTRE LAUNCHES 4TH EDITION OF NCIA JOURNAL

The Centre launched its 4th Journal edition on 18th December 2024. The publication addresses thematic issues including technology in ADR, ethical considerations, investor-state arbitration, ADR and human rights, diversity and inclusion, climate-related disputes, and enforcement of ADR mechanisms.



LAW SOCIETY OF KENYA REGIONAL WEBINAR

As part of the Centre's stakeholder's webinar sensitization programme, the Centre in partnership with the Law Society of Kenya, Coast Region hosted a Webinar on 21st August 2024 targeting members of the LSK Coast Region titled **"Drafting an effective Dispute Resolution Clause"**. The panelists and the moderator were alternative dispute resolution experts and professionals who included the following.

WEBINAR SPEAKERS

- e) Ms. Benette Nzamba (*Certified Mediator/Advocate of the High Court of Kenya*)-(Moderator)
- e) Ms. Mumtaz Khan (*Certified Mediator/Advocate of the High Court of Kenya*)-Moderator
- e) Ms. Eunice Lumallas (FCI Arb, Certified Mediator)-Panelist
- e) Mr. Calvin Nyachoti, Advocate of the High Court of Kenya and a Certified Corporate Secretary-Panelist
- e) Ms. Wanjiru Ngige – Mediator (*Partner - Ngige Aluvale Advocates LL*)-Panelist

The webinar attracted 282 registrations with 132 participants attending.

Nairobi Centre for International Arbitration @NCIA · Aug 21 Promote ...

Join us today for a great conversation.

TIME: 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

TOPICS:

- Key ingredients of a well written Arbitration agreement
- Multi-Tiered Dispute resolution clauses and common pitfalls of drafting
- Use of technology in Arbitration today

LSK COAST BRANCH

Theme: Drafting an effective Dispute Resolution Clause

Date: 21st August 2024 | 2-4 p.m. **Venue:** Virtual **Webinar ID:** 847 8790 0282

Speakers:

- Benette Nzamba**
Certified Mediator/Advocate of the High Court of Kenya
Moderator
- Mumtaz A. Khan**
Certified Mediator/Advocate of the High Court of Kenya
Moderator
- Calvin Nyachoti**
Advocate of the High Court of Kenya
Certified Corporate Secretary
Panelist
- Ms. Eunice Lumallas**
FCI Arb, Certified Mediator
Panelist
- Wanjiru Ngige**
Partner - Ngige Aluvale Advocates LL
Panelist

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LAW SOCIETY OF KENYA LEGAL AWARENESS WEEK

The Centre in collaboration with the Law Society of Kenya (LSK) celebrated the Legal Awareness Week 2024 at the Milimani Law Courts.

The event took place from Monday, October 28, 2024, to Friday, November 1, 2024, across all LSK branches nationwide. The theme of this year's event was "Laws for the People, By the People: Empowering Citizen Participation," and focused on enhancing legal literacy and awareness among the public.

The Legal Awareness Week provided a unique platform for the public to engage with the Centre to learn about the ADR options available when disputes arise as they explore pathways to justice. The Center had a booth and collaborated with other participants in the Justice system to empower civic participation and promote access to justice for all.



CO-BRANDING WITH ARBinBRIEF

The Centre collaborated with ARBinBRIEF season 4 Episodes 1 and 5 podcast series on 9th October and 4 December 2024. The first podcast was titled 'Building Your own Arbitrator Brand'. The panelists of the session were Ms. **Fatma Guney** – a Barrister and Solicitor (England and Wales) and **Aicha Brahma** – Attorney at Law (Casablanca) and was moderated by **Aseel Zimmo** a Commercial Arbitrator and Mediator (Bahrain).

The second podcast was titled 'Legal Professional Privilege in Arbitration' and the panelists of the session were Ms. **Noor Kadhim** – Founder and Principal (Kahdhims London) and **Nadia Ohlhoff-Smahi** - Senior Associate, Lens and Staehelin Geneva and was moderated by **Ipek Ince** an Associate at the firm Gedik and Eraskoy (Istanbul).

ARBinBRIEF is a practical video guide on handpicked arbitration issues that aims to provide concise and informative insights into arbitration-related topics to members of the arbitration community. The ARBinBRIEF series is divided into seasons consisting of 10 episodes with each episode recorded during a 15-minute live conversation between two stellar arbitrators and made available on ARBinBRIEF.



S4:E5

Legal Professional Privilege in Arbitration

LIVE

4 December 2024,
at 9.30 am CET/4.30 pm
SGT



Noor Kadhim

Founder and Principal, Kadhims (London)



Nadia Ohlhoff-Smahi

Senior Associate, Lenz & Staehelin (Geneva)



ipek ince (moderator)

LL.M Candidate, QMUL (London)

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NCIA/BOWMANS LAW LLP WEBINAR

As part of the Centre's webinar sensitization series on ADR, the Centre in partnership with the Bowmans Law hosted a free Webinar on 30th April 2024 "AI and Machine Learning in Arbitration: Ethical Considerations'.



VIRTUAL MEETING

Theme: AI and Machine Learning in Arbitration: Ethical Considerations

Date: 8th May, 2025

Time: 11:00a.m – 12:00 p.m.

Webinar ID:



Ariana Issales
Director, IP & Technology
Bowmans Kenya



Mabvuto Sakala
Managing Partner
Bowmans Zambia



Ottila Phiri
Principal Corporate Counsel, Africa Regional Cluster
Microsoft



Brian Kulira
Head of Strategy & Planning
Orange PLC

The panel discussion was moderated by Arianna Issaias, Director of Bowmans Kenya with panellists being Mabvuto Sakala, Managing Partner of Bowmans Zambia, Otilia Phiri, Principal Corporate Counsel, Microsoft; Brian Kuira: Head of Strategy and Planning, Oxygene MCL. The webinar focused on the ethical implications of integrating AI and machine learning in arbitration, exploring both opportunities and challenges.

The panel explored AI's growing role in the legal profession, highlighting its use in arbitration for tasks such as document and case management. They noted that AI should complement, not replace, human judgment. Key concerns included algorithmic bias, data privacy, and lack of transparency. Panelists noted that current governance frameworks are inadequate and called for robust regulation, clear accountability, and arbitrator disclosure of AI use. They observed that AI must be trustworthy, ethically managed, and aligned with legal reforms and institutional rules. The webinar attracted 242 registrations with 109 participating.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:

Through the African Landscape Restoration Initiative, which was launched on 22nd December 2022 by the President, the government has set a target of planting 15 billion trees by the year 2032 with the objective of reducing greenhouse emissions and reversing deforestation. The goal is to restore 5.1 million hectares of deforested and degraded landscapes.



To support this goal, the Centre collaborated with the Kakamega Forest Heritage Foundation by donating 1000 seedlings towards the restoration of Kakamega Forest. The activity was held on 6th June 2025



The Centre also collaborated with the Kenya Forest Service to plant 850 trees along the Nairobi- Naivasha highway in Kijabe. A total of 1850 trees were planted in the financial year.

ANNUAL CASEWORK REPORT 2024/2025

Case Filings and Caseload Value

The Centre recorded thirteen (13) new case filings in 2024/2025. Of these, 46.15% were under the NCIA Arbitration Rules, 38.46% under NCIA Mediation Rules, and 15.38% involved appointments of adjudicators or arbitrators. The caseload value reached over KES 38 billion (~USD 292 million), with KES 4.7 billion filed during the year under review alone.

Industry Sectors and Dispute Types

Disputes arose predominantly from the finance, construction, agriculture, commercial, education, and technology sectors. The most common dispute types included supply of commodities (58%), construction (25%), and service contracts (17%).

Agreement Types

Most disputes stemmed from supply and delivery agreements, construction contracts, and service-level agreements. Notably, supply and construction disputes accounted for 75% of all agreements.

Arbitration Duration and Efficiency

The average completion time for cases ranged between 95 to 217 days. Appointment of arbitrators was typically concluded within 7–10 days, while hearings spanned 5–7 days. Awards were completed within 1–1.5 months post-hearing.

Parties and Nationality Diversity

All new cases filed in 2024/2025 were domestic. Nevertheless, NCIA panels remain diverse, with arbitrators from Kenya, the UK, USA, Nigeria, India, Pakistan, and more. Kenyan nationals account for 75% of the panel.

Arbitrator and Mediator Appointments

- **Arbitrators:** 8 appointments made; 75% were first-time appointees. 5 were Centre-appointed and 3 by party nomination.
- **Mediators:** 2 appointments in 2024/2025; 3 new accreditations approved.

Arbitral Awards

Five arbitral awards were issued during the year. Others remain ongoing.

Gender and Inclusion

- 22% of arbitrators and 25% of mediators were women.
- NCIA continued promoting inclusion across gender, age, and nationality in appointments.

Seat of Arbitration and Applicable Law

All arbitrations designated Nairobi as the seat, governed by Kenyan law.

CONCLUSION

The 2024/2025 year marked another milestone in NCIA's journey toward advancing ADR practice and supporting justice access in Kenya and across borders. Through thought leadership, institutional collaboration, innovation, and an expanding caseload, the Centre continues to position Nairobi as a regional hub for arbitration and mediation.

The Centre remains committed to strengthening institutional capacity, promoting diversity, and scaling impact through efficient dispute resolution services and knowledge-sharing initiatives.



AALCO HONG KONG REGIONAL ARBITRATION CENTRE

亞非法協香港區域仲裁中心

AALCO Hong Kong Regional Arbitration Centre

Operational Report

(2024.8 – 2025.7)

A. Introduction

1. AALCO Hong Kong Regional Arbitration Centre (the “Centre”) is grateful to operate and forge ahead under the auspices and support of Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization, (“AALCO”) the host country, People's Republic of China, (“China”) and the Department of Justice of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (“Hong Kong”) since our inception three years ago.

2. The Centre is pleased to report on the remarkable headway it made over the past year, as we reaffirm our objectives, functions and duties promulgated in the Agreement between China and AALCO on the Establishment of the Centre in Hong Kong. (the “**Agreement**”) The Centre has steadfastly undertaken and continues to undertake, under Article I of the Agreement, to:

- a. Act as a coordinating agency in the AALCO dispute settlement system;
- b. Promote the growth and effective functioning of arbitration institutions and other alternative dispute resolution (“**ADR**”) services, including online dispute resolution services, in China (including Hong Kong);
- c. Promote the wider application of various ADR rules within the Asian and Pacific region;

- d. Provide facilities for ADR services including ad hoc arbitrations as well as arbitrations held under the auspices of the Centre and other arbitral institutions; and
 - e. Provide assistance in the enforcement of arbitral awards.
3. 2025 marks the 70th anniversary of the Bandung Conference which momentarily laid the foundation of the inauguration of AALCO to which the Centre belongs. The pioneering Bandung spirit of transnational peace and mutual prosperity is perpetuated to this day in legal institutions, including the Centre. This transnationality is especially remarkable at the Centre as it leverages Hong Kong's status as an international financial hub and strengths in the rule of law to expand Hong Kong's reputation as a leading international dispute resolution centre under "One Country, Two Systems."
4. Hong Kong's unique advantages as a dispute resolution hub include:
- An advanced, robust legal framework combining common law principles with modern arbitration legislation (Arbitration Ordinance Cap. 609)
 - Dual-language capabilities (English/Chinese) and internationally renowned judicial independence
 - New York Convention enforcement status covering 170+ jurisdictions
 - World-class infrastructure supporting virtual/hybrid hearings
 - Deep pool of legally qualified arbitrators and mediators across Asian, African, and Western jurisdictions
5. As the only common law jurisdiction in China, the Centre harnesses its unique position and status as an independent, impartial, nationality-neutral international arbitral institution, enjoying its immunities and privileges with goodwill under Article VII of the Agreement, to successfully align its various undertakings, with an emphasis on capacity-building and outreach, with its objectives.

The following report will extract the main activities and initiatives undertaken by the Centre in the past year.

B. Transnational Expansion

Act as a coordinating agency in the AALCO dispute settlement system; and

Promote the wider application of various ADR rules within the Asian and Pacific region

6. The Centre strives to sustain and enhance its reciprocal collaborative relationships with its five sister regional centres and develop its coordination capabilities among member states within the region.

7. The Centre is delighted to organize and conduct joint initiatives and events with its sister centres, all functioning under AALCO's auspices:

- a. Firstly, jointly co-organized with the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration, a two-session conference was successfully held in October 2024 on the unique advantageous positions of Egypt and Hong Kong as gateways to inter-regional hubs for deal-making and dispute resolution. A memorandum of understanding was signed between the two centres to reaffirm the mutual commitment to strengthen transnational connections and relationships. Additionally, the Centre's delegation has visited and exchanged with the Egyptian Ministry of Justice, thereby fostering bilateral discussions and cooperation.
- b. *Secondly*, as part of the above delegation, the Centre has organized networking conferences in Cape Town and Johannesburg, South Africa, respectively where distinguished attendees from WESGRO and South African government officials have attended, and conducted various visits and exchanges. The Centre has had fruitful discussions with officials from the South African Ministry of Justice, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *etc.*, to discuss the latest developments in mediation and arbitration and potential collaborative opportunities in the future. A post-trip seminar was organized in Hong Kong.
- c. *Thirdly*, in January 2025, the Centre's Director, Mr. Nick Chan, joined and spoke in a dynamic webinar, "Exploring the ADR Ecosystem in Hong Kong and Kenya" at the Nairobi Centre for International Arbitration. The centres have upheld the further development of cross-collaboration with capacity-building and market promotion activities in different jurisdictions.

d. *Fourthly*, the Centre has supported the Asian International Arbitration Centre's ("**AIAC**") Annual Arbitration Forum in February 2025, which brought leaders from AALCO member states for transformative dialogues on advancing ADR mechanisms. In summer 2024, the Centre also

- i. attended and supported AIAC's Asia ADR Summit, specifically moderating a panel on mediation as it explores its growth in APAC; and
- ii. welcomed delegations from Malaysia's Prime Minister's Department and AIAC as it builds on a 2023 MoU.

8. As an international gateway, Hong Kong aspires to leverage its potential as a super-connector and super value-adder along trade and service routes with AALCO member states, specifically those in the Belt and Road Initiative ("**BRI**"). A strong legal infrastructural support is essential as the Centre has made consistent efforts and progress in supporting BRI and global advocacy.

- a. *Firstly*, the Centre has actively supported two editions of China-AALCO Exchange and Research Programme on International Law in July 2024 and 2025 respectively, gathering jurists and professionals from public and private sectors of various AALCO member states in Hong Kong to share knowledge, develop Hong Kong narratives through exchanges and experiences.
- b. *Secondly*, the Centre's Director, Mr. Nick Chan, has moderated in two high-level BRI conferences in Hong Kong: the Belt and Road Cross-Professional Forum in February 2025 and the Second Instalment of the 7th Belt and Road Conference Hosted by The Law Society in April 2025, respectively, sparking new perspectives and exchanges on BRI development.
- c. *Thirdly*, the Centre regularly received visits from international delegations to facilitate cross-border knowledge exchanges and consensus-building. Delegations include Judge Peter Tomka, former president of the International Court of Justice, the South Korean Ministry of Justice, Tsinghua University, Renmin University of China, etc.

9. As the Centre believes in the importance of rapport-building in the regional coordination of dispute settlement systems, it would proactively continue to build, advance and deepen conducive relationships across regional markets and public sectors in various jurisdictions to facilitate peaceful international dispute settlement institutions.

C. National and Local Advocacy and Development

Promoting the growth and effective functioning of arbitration institutions and other ADR services in China, including Hong Kong.

10. With the steadfast support and encouragement from the host country and city governments, as the first arbitration institution established under international law by the Chinese government and AALCO, the Centre maintains and fosters close partnerships with businesses and professionals in Mainland China and fosters cross-border legal innovation.

- a. *Firstly, the Centre appreciates the regulatory support from the Department of Justice as to the expansion (since February 2025) of the measure of "allowing Hong Kong-invested enterprises to adopt Hong Kong law" initiative to cover Shenzhen and Zhuhai, as well as the extension of the measure of "allowing Hong Kong-invested enterprises to choose Hong Kong as the arbitration place" initiative to include all nine Mainland cities in the Greater Bay Area. The Centre is prepared to develop initiatives in the face of market acceleration.*
- b. *Secondly, in January 2025, the Centre signed an MoU with Hong Kong's International Pro Bono Legal Services Association to support the organization of Advanced Foreign-Related Legal Talent Training Program starting in the first quarter of 2025 for legal professionals in the Greater Bay Area.*
- c. *Thirdly, the Centre has received high-level delegations composed of representatives of government officials, practising lawyers, industry professionals, academia from the Public Legal Services Administration of the Chinese Ministry of Justice and Hong Kong International Legal Talent Training Academy, where delegates learnt about AALCO's unique standpoint and strengths and shared their BRI project experiences. Other*

delegations include the Justice Bureau of Guangzhou Municipality, Guangzhou Asset Management Association, etc.

- d. *Fourthly*, in May 2025, the Centre hosted a “Smart Construction” delegation in conjunction with Hong Kong’s landmark enactment of the Construction Industry Security of Payment Ordinance (“**SOPO**”) (Cap. 652), and the Centre’s 4-day inaugural adjudicator training programme in April 2025. The exchanges sparked discussions and aspirations for the Centre to establish a global benchmark in construction law as part of the AALCO dispute resolution system.
- e. *Fifthly*, in July 2025, Mr. Dennis Cai, the Centre’s Deputy Director, shared Hong Kong’s mediation expertise and ADR experiences, and how the Centre would serve as a strategic hub in BRI supply chains at the China International Supply Chain Expo.

D. Infrastructural and Practice Development

11. The Centre is actively promoting arbitration and mediation services to diverse users across the region, having administered multiple dispute cases and handled substantive inquiries in the reporting period. Notably, survey and feedback reveal that an increasing number of commercial contracts now incorporate AALCO-HKRAC dispute resolution clauses.

12. The Centre commits resolutely to capacity-building and advocacy efforts in various specialized fields of ADR:

- a. ***Sports dispute resolution*** - The Centre is delighted to launch the first-in-the-region “Sports Mediation Training Programme” in January 2025 at Hong Kong Baptist University. It aims to train accredited sports mediators and provide athletes with a second career path. It has drawn strong support from the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China. The Centre has signed MoUs with Hong Kong, China Olympic Academy and Hong Kong Baptist University to further promote education, training, and institutional cooperation. The next programme cycle is planned in September 2025. Additionally, on 2 July 2025, the Centre delivered a specialised masterclass on International Sports Arbitration featuring practical case simulations. The event was honored by the in-person participation of **AALCO**

Secretary-General, H.E. Dr. Kamalinne Pinitpuvadol, who delivered keynote remarks to senior practitioners from the regions.

- b. ***Construction adjudication*** - With the upcoming implementation of Construction Industry Security of Payment Ordinance (Cap. 652) (SOPO) on 28 August 2025 which introduces a robust adjudication mechanism, the Centre plays a role in the legislative journey and hosted the Construction Industry Adjudicator Training Programme co-organised by the Hong Kong Institute of Architects, the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers, and the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors, supported by the City University of Hong Kong School of Law, the Law Society of Hong Kong, and the Hong Kong Bar Association. This first-ever adjudicator certification programme in Hong Kong received overwhelmingly positive feedback from industry leaders, who formally endorsed AALCO-HKRAC's application to become a designated Adjudicator Nominating Body under the Ordinance.
- c. ***Domain name dispute resolution*** - In June 2025, the Centre signed an MoU with the Hong Kong Internet Registration Corporation Limited under which the Centre will serve as a designated dispute resolution service provider for .hk domain-related matters and strengthening brand protection, thereby incorporating Hong Kong domain name dispute resolution into ALLCO's dispute resolution regime. This initiative:
- Accelerates digital economy development by ensuring swift resolution of cyber-squatting and trademark conflicts
 - Realizes our mission of extending ADR to technology-driven sectors
 - Demonstrates the Centre's Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) expertise through streamlined online procedures
 - Showcases IP dispute resolution capabilities with specialized panelists handling brand protection cases
 - Thereby fully integrating Hong Kong's digital jurisdiction into AALCO's dispute resolution framework.

- d. ***Training and seminars*** - The Centre has organized and hosted six fireside chats **hosted by Director Nick Chan, BBS, MH, JP**, featuring renowned experts and leaders in their fields from and out of Hong Kong, with in-depth discussions of different areas of law. Furthermore, the AALCO International Arbitration Masterclass was successfully concluded in July 2025: a full day of advanced discussions, practical workshops by arbitration experts, and professional networking on the evolving field of international arbitration.
- e. ***Dispute Resolvers Empanelment*** - The Centre maintains specialized panels of over 300 neutrals from 35+ Asian and African jurisdictions, including:

- International arbitrators
- Accredited mediators
- SOPO-qualified adjudicators
- Domain name dispute panelists

This diverse talent pool ensures culturally-aware resolution across all service areas.

13. The Centre, as a full-spectrum dispute resolution service provider from arbitration, mediation, to adjudication and domain name dispute resolution, endeavours to deliver robust, professional ADR services with user-friendly rules and clauses, and well-established expert panels, while leveraging the Centre's in-house online dispute resolution platform for maximising efficiency. Launched in May 2024, the Centre's Mediation Rules are accompanied by an optional Mediation Clause that could be appended to arbitration clauses, reflecting the increasingly popular "Mediation First" approaches.

14. The Centre reaffirms its commitment to providing facilities for ADR services and assisting in the enforcement of arbitral awards as recognised in the New York Convention, while possessing special access to interim relief in Mainland China, thereby reducing time and financial costs.

E. Promotion of LawTech and ODR to Facilitate Access to Justice

15. The AALCO-HKRAC continues to spearhead initiatives to accelerate the integration of ODR and LawTech dispute resolution services across key regions. Recognizing the growing demand for accessible justice solutions, our efforts focus on:

- a. **Cross-Border Engagement:** Hosting virtual/in-person symposia with legal institutions in Hong Kong, Mainland China, Russia, and other places to exchange views on development on ODR.
- b. **Capacity Building:** Delivering ODR training programs for arbitrators, mediators, and adjudicators across Asia-Pacific, emphasizing cybersecurity and ODR procedural best practices.
- c. **Public Awareness:** Publishing articles (Chinese/English) demystifying ODR for SMEs and users, distributed via partnerships with trade bodies in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

16. To address evolving dispute resolution needs, the AALCO-HKRAC has deployed enhanced ODR infrastructure supporting:

- a. **Sports Dispute Resolution:** Developing dedicated platforms for Sports Mediation and Arbitration, featuring real-time video evidence sharing and AI-assisted case timeline tracking. These efficiently handle disputes, such as esports contract conflicts, for parties in Hong Kong, Mainland China, and other regions.
- b. **Domain Name Dispute Resolution:** Expanding ODR services to cover .hk domain name disputes, incorporating compliant modules aligned with HKIRC policies.
- c. **Adjudication Services:** actively promoting ODR in construction adjudication by establishing a dedicated platform for construction adjudication services in Hong Kong.

17. AALCO-HKRAC's ODR expansion directly supports our host country (the People's Republic of China) and its Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) in their respective legal tech roadmaps, while providing a globally scalable dispute resolution architecture. Continued investment in LawTech infrastructure positions the Centre as the nexus for digital justice innovation across Asia and beyond.

F. Strengthening Collaboration with MoU Partners

18. The Centre has dramatically broadened its influence and reach by forging strategic Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with key players across the legal and commercial landscape. This carefully cultivated network now includes prestigious legal associations like the Hong Kong Law Society and the Hong Kong Bar Association, leading regional arbitration institutions such as CIETAC, CMAC, and BAC, major chambers of commerce including the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce (HKGCC), and prominent sectoral bodies representing critical industries like Construction, Technology, and Shipping.

19. These vital partnerships have delivered significant, tangible benefits: They have elevated the visibility of the Centre's specialized services across diverse industries. Furthermore, they have facilitated practical collaboration, enabling the creation of joint training programs and the sharing of valuable resources. Crucially, these alliances serve as powerful platforms to promote AALCO's dispute resolution mechanisms on the global stage. Ultimately, this collective effort works to strengthen the foundations of peaceful commercial dispute resolution.

G. Conclusion

20. The Centre has made consistent endeavours and achieved significant milestones within each of the prescribed objectives, as we appreciate again the support received from AALCO, the host country, China, and the Department of Justice of Hong Kong. The Centre will continue to be dedicated to developing Hong Kong's international dispute resolution positioning and contributing to AALCO's dispute resolution system in coordination with other sister regional centres.

Nick Chan, BBS, MH,JP

Director of AALCO Hong Kong Regional Arbitration Centre

August 2025

ANNEX

SECRETARIAT'S DRAFT
AALCO/RES/DFT/63/ORG 3
12 SEPTEMBER 2025

REPORT ON THE AALCO'S REGIONAL ARBITRATION CENTRES

The Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization at its Sixty-Third Session,

Considering the Report on the AALCO's Regional Arbitration Centres contained in Document No. AALCO/63/KAMPALA/2025/ORG 3,

Noting with appreciation the introductory remarks made by the Secretariat and the report of the Directors of the Regional Arbitration Centres,

Reaffirming the commitment by the Governments of the Member States towards enhancing the role of the Regional Arbitration Centres,

Recalling decision relating to the Integrated Scheme for the Settlement of Disputes in Economic and Commercial Transactions adopted at its Doha Session in 1978,

Expressing satisfaction over the increasing use of the facilities and the opportunities offered for both domestic and international arbitrations under the auspices of its Regional Arbitration Centres,

Appreciating the efforts and contributions of the Governments of the Malaysia, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Kenya and the People's Republic of China for hosting the respective Regional Arbitration Centres,

Further appreciating the promotional activities undertaken by the Directors of the Centres, including organization of seminars and training programmes, to promote international commercial arbitration in the Asian and African regions,

Reiterating the earlier decision of the AALCO on the necessity for the Governments of the Member States to promote and support the use of the Regional Arbitration Centres,

Further reiterating its proposal, after consultation with the Directors of the respective Regional Arbitration Centres, for the holding of International Arbitration Conference biennially, by rotation in each of the Centres, with the support of the Member States,

1. **Requests** the Member States to continue their support to the Regional Arbitration Centres and use the AALCO's Regional Arbitration Centres for resolving their disputes and in particular to consider in their contracts, the inclusion of such Arbitration Clauses;

2. **Urges** the Regional Arbitration Centres to consider to the extent possible, among themselves, the formation of a common system both administratively and financially between the Centres and common standards for the qualification of arbitrators;
3. **Directs** the Regional Arbitration Centres to meet at every AALCO Annual Session to enable an exchange of ideas and to report the outcome to the Organization; and
4. **Decides** to place this item on the provisional agenda of the Sixty-Fourth Annual Session.