



REPORT OF THE CIARB LONDON BRANCH CHAIR

APRIL 2024 TO APRIL 2025

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The term “*Vuca World*” has been around for a while and it refers to a climate characterised by volatility, complexity and ambiguity. Much has transpired in the 12 months since we last gathered as a membership for our AGM that reinforces the view that we remain squarely in a time of rapid change and volatility. A *Vuca* period.

Around the world there have been multiple changes in government, with new administrations bringing with them a change in tone and emphasis that effects the business of ADR in one way or another. Some may argue there has been a lowering of the tone with the pushback in the US against initiatives aimed at fostering equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

For us in London, the Change in UK government has ushered in the Arbitration Act 2025. The new Act, while not introducing sweeping reform, has refreshed arbitration in the UK, modernising it and bringing it up to date. On 1 August 2024 the EU AI Act came into force. There has been rapid modernisation in the area of Artificial Intelligence (AI) with 2024 seeming to bring about notable advancements in its sophistication. AI has introduced efficiencies into the dispute resolution process, but also legal and ethical issues that we continue to grapple with.

London is back on top. Not a remarkable occurrence but an important one nonetheless and reflective of how the popularity of a seat is not guaranteed. In the recently released Queen Mary University of London Survey, London is recorded to have regained its position

as the most preferred seat for arbitration surpassing Singapore, which it had tied with in the last survey edition of 2021. No doubt the refresh of our Arbitration Act, the relative stability of the UK and the consistent quality of our legal infrastructure have contributed to this outcome. We have the top spot for now but in these volatile times, geopolitical tensions could pave the way for a further shift.

We have had to revisit the fundamentals of practice as ADR professionals and reflect on how we instil high standards. There have been frank conversations about ethics, with the community attempting to ensure that the menace that is corruption is not overstated but is nevertheless decisively addressed so that it does not damage irredeemably the real or perceived integrity of the ADR process.

At the Chartered Institute, things have also moved on, notably in senior management, with the Ciarb welcoming Dan MacIntyre as Chief Executive in the Interim. The institute also has a new President, Professor Dr Mohamed Abdel Wahab. On behalf of the London Branch Committee, I wish Mr MacIntyre and Dr Professor Wahab all the best in their roles.

As would be expected, the London Branch has kept pace with the range of developments and issues currently relevant to contemporary ADR Practice. We have had a stellar year. Our events have covered topics such as dispute resolution in the film, media and entertainment industry to aviation from the perspective of whether arbitration and mediation work for the resolution of such disputes. The latter event being novel as it is not common for the topic of Aviation in dispute resolution to be dealt with at all in the arbitration calendar, let alone so comprehensively. The London Branch was one of the first organisations, if not the first, to have the honour of hearing Mr Justice Robin Knowles CBE's views on the very topical issue of ethics and behavioural standards in International Arbitration during London International Disputes Week. We concluded our three-part series on the practice of arbitration, addressing the increasingly popular use of expedited modes of arbitration. We hosted events on assessing witness credibility and on improving the climate in arbitration to meet business needs. The Young Members Group put on a series of standout events which included a cross-examination masterclass and an evening on practical insights on issues around environmental, social and governance

(ESG) issues in arbitration. We hosted a popular professional development workshop on Arbitration Practice and Procedure and for the 21st year in a row we held our annual joint event with the London Court of International Arbitration (LCIA) on innovations in arbitration, with reference to what had worked and what hadn't. The inaugural London version of the highly successful "Applied Arbitration for Fellows" course took place last month. The event was sold out with a waiting list and the feedback received was extremely positive.

When I stood for re-election unto the London Branch Committee I pledged to focus on members and on working to ensure that they derive as much value as possible from their Ciarb membership. Much has been achieved in this regard and there is much still to do. A highlight of the past 12 months has been building relationships with members of the branch, and I am grateful to all those members who have contributed to the branch activities, be it through attendance, collaboration or feedback.

A further highlight of my 12 months has been working with the London Branch Committee. It has been a real honour and a pleasure to Chair the Committee over the last 12 months and to work with colleagues during this period. My thanks go to the branch Officers. I am very grateful to Gill Mansfield our Vice Chair for the depth of experience that she has brought to the Committee. Thank you also to Magdalena Prus, our Honorary Secretary who has worked consistently hard over the last 12 months. I personally have particularly valued her professionalism and good humour. Thank you to our Honorary Treasurer, Seamus O'Doherty for his extremely hard work and measured approach to everything and to our Public Relations Officer, Sue Kim who notably took up an Officer role in her first year on the London Branch Committee.

Many thanks to the remaining Committee members; Our Immediate Past Chair, Karina Albers, Carlos Carvalho, Shobana Iyer, Paul Kinninmont, Robert Price, who is also our Young Members Group Representative together with Elizabeth Montpetit. Thank you to Renato Nazzini, Glenda Vencatachellum and to our departing members, Jean – François Le Gal, Tunde Ogunseitan and Frederico Singarajah. A special thanks to Andrew Davis who will also be leaving the Committee having been co-opted this year. His consistent

contribution to the success of the branch is unique and really appreciated. Outside of the Committee, the Branch has benefitted from much support from Ciarb HQ. I am grateful to Ana Lopes for her consistent help with designing materials and to Laura Hamilton, who has joined us this evening, for her support in sharing the insights of our members.

I am really excited about the next 12 months and look forward to working with the new committee members, the names of which will be announced shortly. Many congratulations to you all. Undoubtedly over the next year we will witness more disruption, volatility, anguish and innovation. I believe we can thrive as professionals and meet the inevitable changes to come, through sharing ideas, fostering excellent practice in ADR and through driving and engaging in initiatives that will shape the future of the sector in the years to come. Thank you.

SCHEDULE

CIARB LONDON BRANCH EVENTS SINCE 2024 AGM

7 May 2024	<p>Seminar: ADR in Film and Media Landscape with WIPO</p> <p>Speakers: Chiara Accornero, Tom Darvill, Gill Mansfield (moderator), Jane Player and Richard Spearman.</p>
5 June 2024	<p>Seminar: Lawyer ethics/ misbehaviour in arbitration, LIDW</p> <p>Speakers: Dr Crina Baltag, Paul Kinninmont, Mr Justice Robin Knowles CBE and Frederico Singarajah.</p>
13 June 2024	<p>Seminar: Adjudication disputes, multi-tier dispute resolution clauses in complex construction and engineering projects</p> <p>Speakers: Matthew Molloy, Seamus O'Doherty (moderator), Rashda Rana SC and Jean – Francois Le Gal.</p>
3 July 2024	<p>Webinar: Navigating Enforcement Risks in Investor – State Arbitration</p> <p>Speakers: Tope Adeyemi, Tamar Katamadze, Cathryn Neo (co - moderator), Nick Moore (co- moderator), Mahesh Rai, Hannah van Roessel, Jonathan Tattersall and Joel Quek.</p>
17 July 2024	<p>Young Members Group Webinar: A conversation with Michael Hwang SC</p> <p>Speakers: Michael Hwang SC, Elizabeth Montpetit (co – moderator) and Robert Price (co – moderator).</p>
3 October 2024	<p>Seminar: Comparative discussion on enforcement of arbitral awards: Latin America and England and Wales.</p>

	<p>Speakers: Gloria Alvarez, Ernesto Félix De Jesús, Paul Kinninmont (moderator), Micaela Ossio Maguiña, Frederico Singarajah and José Gregorio Torrealba.</p>
16 October 2024	<p>Seminar: Ciarb and LCIA 21st Annual Joint Seminar with LCIA – “Innovation in International Arbitration – what has worked and what hasn’t”</p> <p>Speakers: Ricky Diwan KC, Jamie Harrison, Robert Price (moderator) and Kate Cervantes – Knox</p>
17 October 2024	<p>Young Members Group Seminar: Cross Examination Masterclass – Fact Witnesses</p> <p>Speakers: Shreya Aren, Phillipa Charles, Nora Fredstie, Makhdoom Ali Khan, Toby Landau KC and Elizabeth Montpetit (moderator).</p>
29 October 2024	<p>Workshop: Arbitration Practitioners Workshop</p> <p>Facilitators: Daniel Djanogly and Claire Ambrose</p>
5 November 2024	<p>Seminar: Expedited Arbitration</p> <p>Speakers: Dr Alan Anderson, James Clanchy, Tunde Ogunseitan (moderator), Sherina Petit, Colleen Parker Bacquet and Guy Pendell.</p>
18 November 2024	<p>Young Members Group Webinar: Challenges and trends in ESG arbitration disputes</p> <p>Speakers: Anna Hoffman (moderator) Veronika Korom, Suzanne Spears and Angelina Welsh KC</p>
21 November 2024	<p>Conference: Navigating Arbitration in Saudi Arabia: Best Practices and Insights</p> <p>Speakers: Tope Adeyemi, Christian P. Alberti, Dr. Ahmed Al-Khamees, James Anderson, Eng. Saoud Al Ahmadi, Abdullah Alsaeed (moderator), Ahmed Afifi, Fatima Balfageeh, Dr. Bader Al Busaiyes, Robert Price (moderator), Emman Geange, Dara Sahab, Georgina Munnik, Philip Clifford KC (moderator), Dr. Majed Al-Rasheed and Saad Al-Mansor.</p>

27 November 2024	<p>Seminar: Recent and Future Developments in English Arbitration Law</p> <p>Speakers: Lord Christopher Bellamy KC, Aleksander Godhe, Professor Renato Nazzini, Kwadwo Sarkodie and Miriam Schmelzer</p>
3 December 2024	<p>Seminar: Rethinking assessing credibility</p> <p>Speakers: Judge Clare Hockney, Akima Paul Lambert, Barry Leon, Debbie Simpson, Khawar Qureshi KC and Glenda Vencatachellum</p>
22 January 2025	<p>Seminar: Improving the climate in arbitration to meet business needs</p> <p>Speakers: Nouf Alfayez (moderator), Charlie Caher, Deborah Chukwuedo, Heidi Chu and Théophile Hiom II</p>
26 February 2025	<p>Seminar: Arbitration & Mediation in Aviation</p> <p>Speakers: Pedro Arcoverde, Ned Beale, Simon Dean McCarroll, Elizabeth Hichens, Rosalind Phelps KC, Richard Mumford and Glenda Vencatachellum (moderator).</p>
5 March 2025	<p>Seminar: Catalysts for Change: International Women's Day 2025</p> <p>Tope Adeyemi (moderator), Damion Burrows, Jennifer Carnegie, Greg Falkof and Marleen Krueger</p>
15 - 16 March 2025	<p>Course: Applied Arbitration for Fellows Course</p> <p>Faculty: Tope Adeyemi and Marion Smith KC (course directors), Steven Gee KC, Ben Giarretta and Michael Tonkin (Arbitrators), Seyilayo Ojo, SAN and Nicholas Peacock (counsel).</p>