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C H A M B E R S

ARBITRATOR

CYRUS BENSON



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Cyrus Benson is a “class act” and an “exceptional lawyer ... among the best-regarded practitioners in the market”

CHAMBERS & PARTNERS

Cyrus Benson is a New York and English qualified specialist in International Arbitration whose principal focus is sitting as arbitrator.

Prior to joining Chambers in June of this year, Cy served as the founding member, Chair and more recently Co-Chair of Gibson Dunn’s International Arbitration Practice Group, a practice that under his stewardship has been consistently ranked in Global Arbitration Review’s top 20 practices worldwide.

During his 34-plus years of practice, Cy has been involved in more than 100 international arbitration disputes and has served as arbitrator in over 20 of those. His international arbitration experience encompasses a wide variety of industry sectors and geographic regions, commercial disputes under both common and civil law and investment treaty disputes governed by public international law. He has particular experience in oil & gas, construction, telecoms, energy, mining, financial services, hospitality and infrastructure.

Cyrus has long been ranked as a leading lawyer for International Arbitration, most recently being placed in The Legal 500 UK 2024’s Hall of Fame (inclusive of Public International Law). He has been described as “superb [with] an excellent grasp of strategy”, “a formidable advocate”, “a class act” and “an exceptional lawyer and a first-rate advocate among the best-regarded practitioners in the market.” Other rankings include the 2007-2024 Chambers UK guides, 2014-2022 Chambers Global guides, 2021-2022 Chambers Europe guide and the 2009-2025 editions of Best Lawyers International in the UK.

Cy was a member of the IBA Arbitration Committee Task Force that drafted the IBA Guidelines on Party Representation and served as one of the UK members to the ICC Rules Revision Task Force. He has written and lectured on a wide variety of arbitration issues. He also championed a USAID-backed joint legal reform initiative (with the Mongolian Ministry of Justice) to design and teach a course on international arbitration law and practice (covering both commercial and investment treaty arbitration) to Mongolian lawyers and judges.

Representative Matters

Investor-State

- Related multi-billion-dollar UNCITRAL proceedings under the Energy Charter Treaty administered by the PCA and arising from Yukos Oil Company intercompany debt and equity transactions. The disputes involved jurisdictional issues of provisional application of the Treaty and qualifying investment, admissibility issues of denial of benefits and illegality and substantive claims of expropriation and unfair/inequitable treatment. Seat: Geneva; Toronto; London. Governing law: Public international; Russian.
- Parallel USD 1.7 billion ICSID and ICC proceedings arising from the divestment of an interest in a Kurdish telecommunications company directed by the Republic of Iraq and involving claims of bribery of officials of Iraq's telecommunications regulator. Claims were brought for violation of the Kuwait-Iraq BIT, various provisions of joint venture agreements and English common law. The cases also gave rise to issues of temporal jurisdiction under the BIT and standing to bring derivative claims under DIFC law. Seat: DC; DIFC. Governing law: Public international; English; DIFC; Iraqi.
- USD 1.5 billion ICSID arbitration arising from the judicial liquidation of Morocco's sole domestic refinery. The case involved claims of expropriation and unfair/inequitable treatment under the Sweden-Morocco BIT in connection with Morocco's transition from a regulated to competitive market for petroleum products and its conduct of the subject insolvency proceedings. Seat: DC. Governing laws: Public international; Moroccan.
- USD 100 million LCIA arbitration alleging breaches of a concession agreement for a port and terminal project in Djibouti. Seat: London. Governing law: English.
- USD 300 million ICSID arbitration arising from the termination of a geothermal concession by an East African State. Seat: DC. Governing law: Public international; Kenyan.
- LCIA arbitration in respect of termination by an Asian State of a joint operating agreement for an off-shore gas field. Seat: London. Governing law: English.
- ICC arbitration arising from the seizure/expropriation by a Central Asian state of an airport ground handling services company. The case involved claims under a concession agreement and foreign investment law. Seat: London. Governing law: Afghan.

Commercial/Other

- USD 2 billion LCIA arbitration arising from pricing and related disputes under a long-term contract for the purchase and sale of iron ore produced at a Brazilian mine. Seat: London. Governing law: English.
 - Multi-billion-dollar ICC proceedings under an EPCM contract arising from the planning, design and construction of an airport project in the Middle East. Seat: London. Governing law: Qatari.
 - ICC arbitration arising from an EPC contract for a low-density ammonium nitrate project in the Middle East. Seat: London. Governing law: English.
 - USD 100 million LCIA arbitration under Deeds of Suretyship made in respect of various financing instruments for a financing/retail business in Eastern Europe. Seat: London. Governing law: English.
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- Parallel UNCITRAL arbitrations involving disputes related to decommissioning under Technical Services, Development and Production Sharing Agreements for off-shore gas fields in the Middle East. Seat: Doha. Governing law: Qatari.
 - CZK 2.4 billion LCIA arbitration alleging breaches of representations and warranties under an SPA for a precious metals business in Eastern Europe. Seat: Vienna. Governing law: Czech.
 - UNCITRAL arbitration involving multiple claims under a Build, Lease and Transfer agreement for a rail system in Manila. Seat: Singapore. Governing law: Philippine.
 - LCIA arbitration arising from disputes under a hotel management agreement for a property in Saudi Arabia. Seat: London. Governing law: English.
 - USD 100 million ICC construction arbitration arising under an EPC contract for a polysilicon production plant in Saudi Arabia. Seat: London. Governing law: English.
 - Euro 200 million ICC arbitration arising from a long-term contract for supply of natural gas to a European power generation company and involving competition law claims in the context of the utility's insolvency. Seat: Paris. Governing law: French; EU.
 - USD150 million ICC arbitration for a price review under a long-term contract for supply of LNG to a European utility. Seat: London. Governing law: New York.
 - USD 1.5 billion ICC arbitration alleging material adverse effects under an SPA for a Lithuanian refinery and pipeline transit business and arising in the context of a fire damaging certain refining units and Russia cutting off the principal supply of crude oil. Seat: London. Governing law: English.
 - USD 1 billion ICC construction arbitration under an EPC contract for the expansion and upgrading of an oil refinery and crude oil pipelines owned by a Latin American government. Seat: Mexico City. Governing law: Mexican.
 - ICC proceedings involving representation/warranty claims under a multi-billion-euro M&A transaction relating to a West African telecommunications provider. Seat: Paris. Governing law: French.
 - Parallel USD 500 million LCIA arbitrations involving disputed ownership of a Moscow hotel development project in circumstances where it was alleged ownership had transferred pursuant to an illegal "corporate raid". Seat: London. Governing law: English; Russian.
 - LCIA arbitration in respect of trade financing extended for coal mining purchases/sales from a Russian mine. Seat: London. Governing law: English.
 - SIAC proceedings alleging breaches of agreements for development of multi-use hotel properties in India. Seat: Singapore. Governing law: Indian.
 - Ad hoc arbitration arising under contracts for power generation services in Tanzania. Seat: London. Governing law: UAE.
 - DIAC proceedings arising from a property development project in the UAE. Seat: Dubai. Governing law: UAE.
 - LMAA arbitration proceedings arising from a luxury yacht construction agreement. Seat: London. Governing law: English.
 - ICC arbitration arising from the termination of long-term contracts for a Brazilian mining conglomerate to purchase and ship iron ore. Seat: Paris. Governing law: French; New York.
 - ICC construction arbitration arising under an EPC agreement to upgrade a gas plant in Saudi Arabia. Seat: London. Governing law: Saudi.
 - DIFC-LCIA arbitration arising from telecommunications projects in Central Asia. Seat: DIFC. Governing law: English.
 - USD 150 million ICC arbitration arising out of a contract for the expansion and modernization of the telecommunications system in Saudi Arabia. Seat: London. Governing law: New York.
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- AAA/ICDR arbitration concerning the disputed sale of a holding company with interests in various Russian wireless ventures. Seat: New York. Governing law: New York.
 - ICC arbitration arising out of the termination of services and technology agreements for the establishment of a structured derivatives business by a European financial institution. Seat: New York. Governing law: New York.
 - USD 100 million arbitration arising from a refinery upgrade project in Saudi Arabia. Seat: New York. Governing law: New York.
 - USD 100 million AAA/ICDR arbitration arising out of the construction of an offshore natural gas pipeline in the United States. Seat: Boston. Governing law: New York.
 - USD 75 million ICC arbitration involving sub-contractor claims in connection with on-and off-shore pipeline construction on the Sakhalin Island project. Seat: New York. Governing law: New York.
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Accreditations

Chambers & Partners UK Guide 2025: International Arbitration

Chambers & Partners Global Guide 2025: International Arbitration

Chambers & Partners Global Guide 2025: Europe-Wide – Arbitration (International)

Legal 500 2025: International Arbitration – Hall of Fame

Legal 500 2025: Public International Law

Credentials

Education

- Syracuse University, Bachelor of Arts, Economics (1984)
- Syracuse University, Master of Arts, International Relations (1986)
- New York University School of Law, Juris Doctor (1991)

Employment History

- Gibson Dunn (Retired Partner): January-May 2025
- Gibson Dunn (Partner): February 2007-December 2024
- White & Case (Partner): January 1999-January 2007
- White & Case (Associate): September 1991-December 1998