



Karim J. Nassif

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Karim J. Nassif has more than 20 years' experience in arbitration, mediation, civil law, contract law, commercial and corporate law, banking and finance, real estate and construction law.

He acted as counsel, mediator, adjudicator and arbitrator in more than 200 complex disputes under the most leading international and regional arbitration rules, including the rules of the ICC, LCIA, DIAC, SCCA, DIFC-LCIA, BCDR, CRCICA, AAA-ICDR, GCCAC, UNCITRAL, IICRA and ADCCAC; in various cases seated in the UK, France, Belgium, USA, Switzerland and throughout the Middle East; and governed by a variety of national laws (Lebanon, UAE – including DIFC, KSA, France, England and Wales, Egypt, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, Libya, Kuwait, Syria, New York, OHADA ...) or sharia law.

He authored and co-authored several publications in English, French and Arabic and he has frequently been a speaker in international conferences and seminars on international arbitration, civil code, mediation, commercial contracts, property, family structuring and legislative reform matters; including ICC, LCIA, IBA, DIAC, Arab Forum, CRCICA, SCCA, EU-OECD, DIFC Academy of Law, Paris Bar, Society of Construction Law, Global Arbitration Review etc .. events.

He pleads in English, French and Arabic.

He has been awarded the Platinum Award for Sole Arbitrator – Dubai Awards – DIAC.

Finally, Karim is the current Vice-Chair of the ICC Commission on Arbitration and ADR, the Co-Chair of the Arab Regional Forum of the International Bar Association and Deputy Secretary General / Member of the Council of the International Bar Association.

PROFESSIONAL RANKINGS

Karim was cited as Global Leader in Arbitration by the GAR – Who’s Who Legal for the years 2020 to 2024 and previously to that as a Future leader for the years 2017 to 2019.

Karim was cited by Legal 500 in 2011, 2012 and 2013 as ‘*Leading Individual in Dispute Resolution*’.

Karim was cited in 2022 and 2023 in *The Legal 500’s Arbitration Private Practice Powerlist: Middle East region*.

Karim was included in Chambers Global’s Most in Demand Arbitrators for the UAE, in 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024.

Karim has been recommended by Legal 500 in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 for his ‘*attention to detail, in-depth knowledge of the applicable laws and their interpretation in the commercial environment of Dubai*’, ‘*has a good understanding of client needs*’ and ‘*is adaptable and very practical in his approach*’.

In 2020 he is cited in Legal 500 as ‘*frequently sitting among some of the world’s best known arbitrators*’, and clients described him as ‘*very hands-on, holds excellent knowledge of the UAE local laws and is super responsive*’; and in 2021, colleagues recommended that ‘*if you need a party-appointed arbitrator for a GCC dispute grab him before the other side do. If you are a wing arbitrator and need to choose a chairman, it will be a smoother road ahead of you if you agree with your fellow wing on using Mr. Nassif*’.

Karim entered Chambers Global ‘*after strong performances for clients, particularly on real estate and construction disputes*’ Chambers Global, 2011; lauded as ‘*an excellent practitioner; very good at advocacy*’ Chambers Global, 2012; cited as ‘*a very good technical lawyer - he blends the pure Arabic knowledge with a Western style*’ Chambers Global 2013; ‘*continues to attract extremely positive feedback from interviewees, who praise his technical abilities and local know-how*’ Chambers Global 2014; and ‘*his Arabic ability adds value for clients seeking counsel in the UAE*’, Chambers Global 2015; continued to be ranked in 2016; and described as ‘*an excellent arbitration lawyer*’ while further market commentators concur that he is a ‘*bright and affable*’ lawyer, Chambers Global 2017; noted in Chambers Global 2018 he ‘*for his broad experience in the regional arbitration centres. He advises on a wide range of arbitration matters, most recently in relation to construction and Islamic finance*’; and more recently in Chambers 2020, he is lauded to have ‘*a deft touch at moving matters on*’; described in Chambers 2021 as as a ‘*hard worker*’ who is ‘*always excellently prepared*’; yielded in Chambers 2022 as having the ‘*... ability to take in a significant amount of information in one go, process it on the spot, and get back to you with a preliminary solution or plan. He exudes legal knowledge and has a confident grip on the law and of dispute resolution in general; and that*’ ‘*He is very straight to the point on the issues*’; and in 2023, he is noticed as ‘*very knowledgeable and has very good technique. I have seen him tackle some challenging legal issues and I always enjoyed his analysis*’ and that he ‘*has excellent people skills*’. In 2024, he is noted ‘*both for his abilities as an advocate as well as for his strong sense of strategy*’.

PUBLICATIONS HIGHLIGHTS

a. Books

- Comparison of MENA International Arbitration Rules (ed. together with Dr. H. Al Mulla and G. Blanke), Juris Publishing, 2011
- Comparison of Gulf International Arbitration Rules (ed. together with Dr. H. Al Mulla and G. Blanke), Juris Publishing, 2010

b. Book Contributions

- Chapter 1 – “To arbitrate or not to arbitrate: the Mena’s take on arbitrability”, The MENA Leading Arbitrators’ Guide to International Arbitration, JurisNet LLC, 2023, p.1 (together with F. ElHajj-Purice)
- “UAE” Chapter in Arbitration World, Fourth Edition, 2012, European Lawyer – Thomson Reuters (together with Kristel Ferjane-Momdjian), pp. 843-859
- “UAE” Report in Global Legal Group: International Arbitration 2011 (together with G. Blanke), pp. 413-421
- “UAE” Chapter in Global Arbitration Review – The International Journal of Commercial and Treaty Arbitration 2010 (together with Dr. H. Al Mulla and G. Blanke); electronic version.
- “UAE” Report in Getting The Deal Through: Arbitration 2010 and 2011 (together with Dr. H. Al Mulla and G. Blanke), pp. 359-366
- “UAE” Report in Getting The Deal Through: Dispute Resolution 2010 and 2011 (together with Dr. H. Al Mulla and G. Blanke), pp. 240-246; Dispute Resolution 2011 (together with Dr. H. Al Mulla and G. Blanke), pp. 248-253;
- “Arbitrating in the UAE and the Middle East – Some Cultural Insights for the Unaware” in M. Kraham (ed.), Inside the Minds: ADR Client Strategies in the Middle East and Africa, Aspatore Books, Thomson Reuters, 2009 (together with G. Blanke), pp. 17-36.

c. Articles

- “*Recovery of Attorney’s Fees in Arbitration: The UAE Enigma?*”, in The International Journal of Arab Arbitration, Vol. 12, No. 2, 2020, p. 5 (together with F. ElHajj-Purice)
- “Enforcement of foreign judgments and foreign awards: the DIFC Conduit” in The International Journal of Arab Arbitration, Vol. 9, No. 1, 2017, p. 71 (together with F. ElHajj-Purice)
- “ADCCAC: New Rules ... a year later” in The International Journal of Arab Arbitration, Vol. 7, No. 1, 2015, p. 9
- “Arbitrability under UAE law” in The International Journal of Arab Arbitration, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2013, p. 5
- “Arbitration under UAE law: towards a modern legal framework?”, in The In-House Lawyer, Issue 183, September 2010, pp. 60-63 (together with G. Blanke and S. Corm-Bakhos)
- “Damages and contracts in the UAE”, in The In-House Lawyer, Issue 178, March 2010, pp. 65-67 (together with C. Kanakri)
- “Contractual misrepresentation under UAE law”, in The In-House Lawyer, Issue 190, May 2011, pp. 58-59
- “Litigating in the UAE: Initial Guidance”, in The In-House Lawyer, Issue 176, December/2009 – January 2010, pp. 1-5 (together with G. Blanke)
- “Arbitration in the UAE – is it winning the war on litigation?”, in the International Litigation News, IBA, September 2009, pp. 64-67

- “Overview of enforcement of domestic and foreign arbitral awards under UAE Law”, in Arbitration News, IBA, March 2010, Vol. 15, No. 1, pp. 77-81
- “Chronique de Jurisprudence Etrangère – Dubai”, in Revue de l’Arbitrage, 2010, No. 2 (together with Rana Chaaban).

d. Research Work

- ACRLI; “**Legal Framework of the Property Market in Dubai**”; 2010
- **University of Montpellier – France**; Research study in law of distribution: «Legal analysis of the cellular phone in France». Ref. Dr Philippe Grignon & Pr. D. Ferrier.
- **University of Montpellier – France**; Research study in business law: « The limited liability clause». Ref. Pr Jean-Louis Bilon.

PROFFESIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

- Member of the Beirut Bar Association and Registered Dubai Legal Consultant.
- Vice-Chair of the International Chamber of Commerce (‘ICC’) Commission on Arbitration and ADR - Paris.
- Co-Chair of the International Bar Association (‘IBA’) - Arab Regional Forum.
- Deputy Secretary General and Member of the Council of the IBA.
- Vice-chair of the ICC UAE Commission on Arbitration and ADR Steering Committee.
- Dubai Arbitration Week Organizing Committee Member.
- Member of the IBA Arbitration Committee and Real Estate Committee.
- Member of ICC Lebanon.
- Member of the LCIA.
- Member of the ‘Association Suisse de l’Arbitrage’ – ASA.
- Initiator of the Arab Arbitration Forum – Civil Law Focus Group.
- Former Vice-Chair of the IBA Mediation Committee.
- Qualified to appear before the Dubai International Financial Centre Courts (Formerly).
- Former Member of the Beirut Bar Information Technology Law Committee.
- Former Vice-President of the Lebanese Association for the Development of Information Technology Law.
- Member of the ICC Task Force on Expedited Procedure.
- Member of the ICC Task Force on Emergency Arbitration Proceedings.
- Member of the ICC Task Force on ADR and Arbitration.