



GEORGE BURN

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Partner & Global Co-leader, International Arbitration

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BIOGRAPHY

George Burn is the global co-leader of the firm's International Arbitration Practice and a leading specialist in both investor-state and international commercial arbitration. With over 25 years' experience of acting as arbitrator and counsel in complex high-stakes disputes, clients from across the world have come to rely on his strategic expertise and ingenuity to break new ground on important jurisdictional issues, among other questions of public as well as private international law.

George has a distinguished track-record of representing and advising clients across a broad-spectrum of disputes covering multiple sectors, including infrastructure, energy, banking and

finance, military and defence, mining, construction, trade and commerce. These disputes have been seated throughout Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Africa and the Americas and governed by the principal arbitral rules. These include the ICC, LCIA, ICSID, UNCITRAL, SIAC, SCC, HKIAC, AAA-ICDR and PCA, as well as lesser known rules, such as the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration, the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, the Investment Agreement of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and the Arbitration Foundation of Southern Africa.

George has received constant praise from the leading legal directories, having been featured in the Legal 500's 'Hall of Fame' since 2022 and recognised by Best Lawyers since 2020. He is also active on practice-related issues, from being a member of the ICC UK Arbitration Committee and the ICC Commission, to being a regular speaker at international conferences such as the Investment Treaty Forum's Public Conference, the CDR Arbitration Symposium, the Swiss Arbitration Summit and the LCIA Tylney Hall Symposium.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- London Court of International Arbitration
- International Chamber of Commerce UK National Committee
- International Chamber of Commerce Commission on Arbitration and ADR
- Chartered Institute of Arbitrators
- Singapore International Arbitration Centre Users Council

ADMISSIONS

- England and Wales

RELATED CAPABILITIES

- International Arbitration
- Energy Transition
- Banking & Finance Disputes
- Anti-Bribery & Corruption

- Betting & Gaming
- Finance
- Litigation & Dispute Resolution
- Regulation, Compliance & Advisory
- Licensing
- Anti-Money Laundering Compliance
- Funds Finance
- Financial Institutions
- Oil, Gas & Sustainable Fuels
- Mining
- Power
- Renewables & Storage
- Nuclear
- Business & Commercial Disputes

EXPERIENCE

- Successfully represented a joint venture of Korean and Japanese construction companies in back-to-back ICC arbitrations arising out of a major project in Kuwait. One arbitration was brought against a regional bank, which refused to pay on various bonds issued in relation to work on the project. The bank's counsel raised a wide range of legal theories in their attempt to avoid liability. Successfully addressed all of those theories, resulting in them all being dismissed by the tribunal. The second arbitration was brought against the clients by the main contractor. Successfully defended all of those claims and prevailed on most of the counterclaims presented.
- Successfully represented a Pakistan gas pipeline operator, Sui Natural Gas Pipelines Limited, in defending an LCIA award issued in its favour against a power company, Quaid e Azam Thermal Power (Private) Limited. The challenge was brought under section 68 of the Arbitration Act 1996, and included a range of assertions of unfairness and procedural impropriety in the underlying arbitration. The Commercial Court judge dismissed all of those arguments, confirming that the award against the opposing party was binding.
- Successfully represented a British oil exploration company in an ICC arbitration against the Republic of Southern Sudan and its state-owned oil company following the termination of agreements relating to upstream oil and gas projects. The contracts in question predated South Sudan's secession from Sudan, raising a range of complex legal issues under local law and international law. Having successfully navigated those issues, substantial compensation was recovered for the client.

- Successfully represented Mr. Hesham al-Warraq in a landmark arbitration before an arbitral panel constituted under the Investment Agreement of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), arising out of the Republic of Indonesia's prosecution and criminal conviction of Mr. Al-Warraq. The OIC tribunal's ruling on jurisdiction was ground-breaking as it established that investors could, for the first time, sue States that have ratified the Investment Agreement of the OIC. The tribunal subsequently found that Indonesia had breached its fair and equitable treatment standard, thus negating the legal basis for the criminal conviction of Mr. al-Warraq.
- Bringing a second novel arbitration, against INTERPOL, in the name of Mr. al-Warraq, alongside his business partner, Mr. Rafat Rizvi. This required overcoming the institution's immunity from suit and establishing a freestanding legal right for individuals to bring legal actions against INTERPOL. Having established prima facie jurisdiction, it was possible to embark on intensive negotiations with INTERPOL, culminating in the cancellation of the Red Notices issued against Mr. al-Warraq and Mr. Rizvi, and an agreement to an array of unprecedented conditions.
- Successfully represented a bank in an LCIA arbitration brought against a defaulting borrower, overcoming a range of defences and counterclaims based on the authenticity of signatures and doctrines of ostensible and actual authority.

RELATED INSIGHTS

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BCLP recognized in Global Arbitration Review 100 2025

Insights

Feb 25, 2025

The Arbitration Act 2025: State of the Art or a Missed Opportunity?

The Arbitration Act 2025 has become law in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The new Act is largely based on the recommendations made in the Law Commission's Final Report, published following a public consultation seeking views on potential areas for reform. The new Act doesn't represent a dramatic change to the arbitration framework in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Feedback from the Law Commission's consultation was that the Arbitration Act 1996 works well and that significant reform was neither needed nor wanted. As a result, the new Act makes a series of discrete amendments to the 1996 Act, delivering incremental improvement as opposed to root and branch reform.

Insights

Dec 13, 2024

BCLP International Arbitration Survey 2024

Awards

Oct 17, 2024

Chambers 2025 UK guide ranks BCLP in 34 practice areas and recognises 74 individual lawyers

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News

Oct 02, 2024

The Legal 500 UK ranks BCLP in 52 practice areas and recognizes 69 lawyers as “leading individuals”

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Jun 20, 2024

33 BCLP lawyers recognized in Best Lawyers in the UK ranking 2025

News

Apr 25, 2024

International Arbitration team author article on the Reform of the English Arbitration Act