

Philippa Charles

CALL: 2002 (SOLICITOR-ADVOCATE, HIGHER COURTS OF ENGLAND & WALES); 1999 (SOLICITOR, ENGLAND & WALES)

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Languages: French (proficient) German (conversational); Spanish (conversational); Italian (conversational)



Overview

Philippa has accepted appointments as arbitrator for over ten years and has sat as sole, chair and party-appointee in ICC, LCIA, SIAC, DIAC, SCC, FAI, CI-MAC, BVI-IAC, AAA-ICDR and ad-hoc arbitration. She has particular experience as arbitrator in energy, technology, sports and general commercial disputes.

She specialises in complex, high-value cross-border arbitration disputes, and has 24 years' experience of proceedings before the major arbitral institutions. As solicitor/solicitor-advocate she has acted for clients including sovereigns, state owned entities, major global corporations in the aviation, pharmaceutical, power, sports and oil and gas industries, and high net worth individuals.

Before joining Twenty Essex in February 2023, Philippa was the Head of International Arbitration at Stewarts in London; the UK's largest disputes-only practice. She was a law firm partner for 15 years.

Philippa has experience in mediation and other ADR formats as well as arbitration, High Court and appellate proceedings in jurisdictions including England, the United States, France, Sweden, the UAE, and Nigeria.

Philippa holds Irish nationality.

Accreditations and memberships

- Solicitor, England & Wales (admitted 1999)
- Solicitor-Advocate of the Higher Courts of England and Wales (2002)
- CEDR-accredited mediator (2007)
- Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (2013)
- Member, ICC Court (2024-date); Member, ICC UK Committee on Arbitration (2015-2024) and of the ICC Commission on Arbitration and ADR (2017-date)
- Member, BHA Judicial Panel (2023-date)
- Legal Member, Sport Resolutions National Panel (2024-date)

Education

- Oxford Institute of Legal Practice, Diploma in Legal Practice, Law, Distinction (1996)
- University of Oxford, Jurisprudence (1995)

Arbitrator experience

Philippa's current / recent experience as arbitrator includes:

- Appointment as chair (by the institution) in LCIA arbitration proceedings between an English Premier League football club and a sponsor (parties English/Singaporean, seat London, applicable law English).
- Appointment as co-arbitrator (by party nomination) in an LCIA arbitration between two banks concerning the settlement of trades (parties Russian/US, seat London, applicable law English).
- Appointment as sole arbitrator (by joint party nomination) in a BVI IAC arbitration between parties involved in the gaming and crypto-currency industries (parties US/Taiwan, seat BVI, applicable law English).
- Appointment as sole arbitrator (by joint party nomination) in an ICC arbitration concerning the supply of cladding materials for an oil pipeline project (parties UK/Azerbaijan, seat London, applicable law English).
- Appointment as chair (by co-arbitrator nomination) in an ICC proceeding concerning a commodities supply agreement (parties Swiss/Chinese, seat Zurich, applicable law English).
- Appointment as co-arbitrator (by party nomination) in ad hoc arbitration proceedings concerning four contracts for the supply of petroleum products (parties Danish/Senegalese, applicable law English).
- Appointment as sole arbitrator (by the institution) in an ICC arbitration between a defence contractor and a construction company concerning a service agreement (parties Omani/Qatari/Italian, seat Paris, applicable law English).
- Appointment as chair (by the institution) in a DIAC arbitration between the shareholders in a joint venture entity in Saudi Arabia (parties Saudi/English, seat DIFC, applicable law Saudi).
- Appointment as chair (by co-arbitrator nomination) in an LCIA arbitration concerning a banking transaction and related payments (parties Nigerian/Kenyan, seat London, applicable law English).
- Appointment as sole arbitrator (by the institution) in an ICC proceeding concerning payment for equipment supplied by the Claimant to the Respondent where the payment had been diverted to a third party (parties Spanish/Egyptian, seat London, applicable law English).
- Appointment as co-arbitrator (by party nomination) in a Cayman Islands Mediation and Arbitration Centre arbitration relating to cryptocurrency trading contracts (parties Cayman entities, governing law Cayman Islands).
- Appointment as co-arbitrator (by the institution) in an LCIA arbitration between a shareholder and the entity in which they are a shareholder (parties Italian/UK, seat London, governing law English).
- Appointment as sole arbitrator (by the institution) in an ICC arbitration concerning the termination of a franchise arrangement for car rental operations in Russia (parties Latvian/US).
- Appointment as Emergency Arbitrator (by the institution) in an ICC Emergency Arbitration proceeding concerning disputes relating to construction of a chemicals plant in Russia and the termination of contracts relating to that project (parties Italian/Russian; applicable law English).
- Appointment as co-arbitrator (by party nomination) in an LCIA arbitration concerning sales of petroleum products from Ukraine to a trader based in Switzerland (parties Ukrainian/Swiss; applicable law English).
- Appointment as sole arbitrator (by joint party nomination) in an ICC proceeding concerning a contract for the distribution of solar panels in the Middle East (parties Israeli/Chinese, governing law English).
- Appointment as chair (by co-arbitrator nomination) in an ad hoc proceeding under English law concerning a West African Fintech project (parties English/Togolese, governing law English).

Counsel experience

Notable experience as counsel includes:

- Representing a cryptocurrency services provider in relation to a settlement dispute relating to a loan and investment in a crypto currency trust instrument, in ad hoc London arbitration proceedings.
- Representing an EU state in proceedings in London arising out of the proposed enforcement in London of an intra-EU Bilateral Investment Treaty award in excess of £100 million, which is subject to challenge proceedings at the seat (Sweden) by reason of the CJEU decision in *Achmea*.
- Representing an Asian government in proceedings in London arising out of a challenge to the jurisdiction award of an

ISDS tribunal in a claim under a BIT relating to a port development project.

- Representing an EU state government in Swiss arbitration proceedings for recovery of c.\$10 million in subrogated damages for steel supplied but not paid for to a buyer in India.
- Representing a Nigerian oil and gas services operator in challenge proceedings arising out of 32 arbitration awards against it in the English Courts, and working with co-counsel in BVI, Singapore and Nigeria in related proceedings.
- Representing a Nigerian oil and gas entity in related proceedings in arbitration and in English Court proceedings for anti-suit relief, arising out of contracts worth c. \$900 million concerning the funding of participation in certain exploration and production activities in Nigeria.
- Representing the company in shareholders' disputes:
 - concerning issues of unfair prejudice, under LCIA Arbitration Rules, relating to a Russian retail business and advising in connected court proceedings in BVI and Cyprus.
 - concerning shareholder funding and related party transactions in the telecoms industry in West Africa (also LCIA).
- Representing the claimant in on-shore Dubai-seated ICC arbitration proceedings arising out of agreements concerning the allocation and valuation of assets in the UAE, India and the UK.
- Representing the respondent in proceedings concerning the repayment of a loan allegedly denominated in cryptocurrency (parties English/American).
- Representing a number of entities engaged in investment and development in power projects in Africa (in Mauritius, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Zambia) in respect of various disputes arising with local shareholders, state bodies, lenders, and others.
- Industries: automotive, forestry, paper and pulp manufacture, power projects, oil and gas production, ship-owning, charters, ferry operations, defence manufacturing and procurement contracts, mining, aviation IT supply, cable internet/TV/telephony, retail.

Recommendations

Philippa Charles was extremely well prepared and handled the procedural issues and hearing with aplomb, calmness and authority. [Chambers UK Bar 2026](#)

Philippa brings huge experience of the international arbitration world to bear in her practice. There seems to be nothing that she has not seen before and so nothing fazes her. [The Legal 500 UK Bar 2026](#)

Ms Charles is a very impressive arbitrator, well prepared, responsive and truly impartial. [Chambers UK Bar 2025](#)

Philippa Charles is efficient and excellent in all respects in chairing arbitrations. [Chambers UK Bar 2024](#)

International Arbitration Powerlist UK [The Legal 500 2019, 2022, 2023](#)

A real breath of fresh air. Dynamic, charismatic and an excellent lawyer. Knows her subject inside out. [The Legal 500 Hall of Fame 2021](#)

Philippa provides great insight and overall leadership. She is truly one of the greats in international arbitration. [Chambers UK & Chambers Global 2021](#)

Global Thought Leader [Who's Who Legal Arbitration](#)

She is extremely knowledgeable about international arbitration and is very impressive. [Chambers UK & Chambers Global 2021](#)

Stands out in the team – she is a technically astute lawyer who is also highly personable and pragmatic, with great leadership qualities and an excellent work ethic. [The Legal 500 Hall of Fame 2021](#)

A popular choice as counsel and arbitrator. [Chambers UK & Chambers Global 2021](#)

... organised, calm and cool under pressure. [Chambers UK 2022](#)

Intrinsic arbitration knowledge. [The Legal 500 Hall of Fame 2021](#)