



### **UAB-ICC Joint Forum**

## **ICC DRS – UAB Forum on Financial Dispute Resolution: Arbitration in the Evolving MENA Banking Landscape**

*Thursday June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025*

*Venue: Institut du Monde Arab - Paris*

*Paris-France*

### **Agenda & timetable**

**Thursday 19 June 2025**

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*8.30– 09.00 Registration and welcome coffee*

**9.00 – 09.30 Welcome address**

- **Dr. Wissam Fattouh**, Secretary General, Union of Arab Banks
- **Mr. Sherif Akl**, Director Arbitration & ADR Middle East, ICC International Court of Arbitration

**9.30 – 10.00 Opening keynote**

- **Ms. Mona Zulficar**, Founding Partner and Chair of Executive Committee, Zulficar & Partners Law Firm

**10.00 – 11.30 Panel 1: The Changing Landscape of the Banking Sector and Emerging Financial Disputes**

The financial services sector is undergoing a profound transformation. This panel will present how different stakeholders in the financial sector like, private equity funds, investment funds, insurance companies and alternative investment vehicles are reshaping the traditional banking ecosystem by integrating financial technology and digital banking processes. Panelists will examine how these developments have given rise to novel types of disputes, involving not just banks but also investment funds, fintech platforms, insurers, and regulators. From smart contracts and blockchain-based transactions to cross-border financing and restructuring, this session will explore recent international

arbitration cases to assess how arbitration can provide solutions adapted to the evolving complexities of financial disputes.

**Panelists:**

- **Dr. Jalal El Ahdab**, Partner, Dispute Resolution, **Bird & Bird**, Paris
- **Ms. Aïcha BRAHMA**, Attorney at law, Casablanca Bar
- **Mr. Hazim Rizkana**, Managing Partner, Rizkana & Partners is an Egyptian professional entity.
- **Ms. Yousr Khalil**, Partner, Forensic Risk Alliance

**Moderator:**

- **Dr. Antoine Sfeir**, Advisor to the President of the Lebanese Republic, Lawyer at the Paris Bars. Affiliated Partner in Montreal & Washington D.C, and Lecturer in International Law

*11.30 – 12.00 Coffee break*

**12.00 – 13.30 Panel 2: The Role of International Arbitration in addressing Corruption in the Banking Sector**

The banking and financial sectors are vulnerable to corruption, fraud, and money laundering risks that undermine financial stability and investor trust and in some instances destabilize economies. The current political and military turbulences have impacted the influx of cross border capital, sovereign wealth and the construction industry in the MENA region. A part of said capital has been transferred from Russia and Iran businesses which has added complexity to the compliance and regulatory landscapes. This panel will explore the increasing role of international arbitration in addressing these issues. Experts will examine how arbitral tribunals approach cases involving allegations of bribery and corruption, the evidentiary tools available to uncover illicit practices, and the consequences of proven misconduct on the validity and enforceability of Awards. The session will also cover recent arbitral awards where allegations of corruption played a central role, for example if an element of the transaction is allegedly fraudulent, how can the tribunal detect such. The session will also discuss procedural innovations aimed at detecting and addressing misconduct without turning into criminal courts.

**Panelists:**

**Dr. Tarek Riad**, Harvard Law School - LLM, SJD, Member of New York Bar, Managing Partner, Kosheri, Rashed & Riad - Legal Consultants & Attorneys at Law, Member of the Supreme Council of Arbitration, Mediation and Arbitration Center at the Union of Arab Banks

- **Ms. Salma KHALED**, ICC Tunisia
- **Mr. Raëd FATHALLAH**, Avocat à la Cour, Solicitor of England and Wales - Avocat au Barreau du Québec

**Moderator:**

- **Ms. Ziva Filipic**, Managing Counsel · ICC Arbitration

**13.30 – 14.00 Closing remarks: Arbitration and Mediation in the modern banking era: safeguarding trust in a globalized and digitally-driven financial landscape**

The objective of this session is to enhance awareness around the appropriateness and suitability of using arbitration in the rapidly evolving and increasingly diversified world of banking and finance. It aims to increase the understanding among Arab banks and financial institutions of the utility and effectiveness of arbitration as a preferred method for dispute resolution.

This session will explore these developments, providing insights into how arbitration can effectively serve the dynamic needs of today's banking and financial sectors.

**Mr. Chahdan Jebeyli**, Former Judge, Arbitrator, Chairman Beirut Law Firm, LLM International Banking & Finance, New York Bar

**14.00 – 15.30 *Lunch***