

19 January 2023

## Registrar's Report

### SIAC Adds Deputy Registrar and Expands International Secretariat Team

SIAC is very pleased to welcome back Vivekananda Neelakantan who has been appointed as Deputy Registrar of the Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC) with effect from 16 January 2023.

Vivek and I worked together in the SIAC Secretariat from 2012 to 2014 where he served as Counsel and Deputy Registrar and founded SIAC's first overseas office in Mumbai. Building on this institutional experience, Vivek has distinguished himself in private practice as counsel and arbitrator and he is widely regarded as a leading lawyer for Indian disputes. He is recommended as a *'name to note'* by the Legal 500 Asia Pacific and *'praised for his knowledge of cases and law'* by GAR100.

Vivek joins our SIAC Secretariat team, recently expanded and strengthened to ensure that parties are served with timeliness, precision, and *'gold standard'* case management. Over the course of the past year, we added eight Deputy Counsel and promoted Wu Qian to Counsel (Team Lead), and Thea Elyssa Vega and Lynnette Lee to Counsel. The Secretariat is now at full strength and comprises 16 experienced arbitration lawyers who are qualified in 13 jurisdictions:

Singapore	Canada	Ecuador	Georgia	India
Indonesia	Mainland China	Malaysia	Nepal	Philippines
Sri Lanka	United States	Vietnam		

Working alongside the President and SIAC Court and the Chairman, CEO and SIAC Board, the Secretariat looks forward to assisting its users in the resolution of their disputes and remaining the place *'where the world arbitrates'*. The profiles of the SIAC Secretariat Team are set out below:



Mr Kevin Nash  
Registrar

As Registrar of the Singapore International Arbitration Centre, Kevin leads the SIAC Secretariat in the provision of case management services. Over the course of the past decade, Kevin has overseen the administration of thousands of international cases under all versions of the SIAC Rules and the UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules. Under the Singapore International Arbitration Act 1994, Kevin is the statutory taxation authority and he is empowered to authenticate and certify awards and arbitration agreements.

Kevin worked closely on the revisions to the SIAC Rules 2013, SIAC Rules 2016, SIAC Investment Arbitration Rules 2017, and leads the SIAC Secretariat on the drafting of the seventh edition of the SIAC Rules. He is an active participant at UNCITRAL Working Group II (Dispute Settlement) and UNCITRAL Working Group III (ISDS) and frequently speaks, lectures and conducts training on contemporary issues in arbitration.

Kevin is listed by *Who's Who Legal* as a Global Leader and National Leader (Southeast Asia) in international arbitration. Peers and clients say that he is *'without equal in the region, in terms of institutional knowledge and expertise in international arbitration'* and *'no one knows more about arbitration in Singapore'*.

Kevin is qualified as a Barrister and Solicitor with the Law Society of Upper Canada. He speaks English and French.






Mr Vivekananda  
Neelakantan  
Deputy Registrar

Vivek is Deputy Registrar of the Singapore International Arbitration Centre.

Vivek has over 15 years' experience in international dispute resolution and arbitration. Prior to joining SIAC, as partner at a leading law firm in Singapore, Vivek regularly acted as counsel on international arbitrations conducted in Singapore under various institutional rules. He has considerable experience acting on emergency arbitrator proceedings, expedited procedure arbitrations, and advising on arbitral award challenge and enforcement actions in Singapore. Vivek has also acted as an arbitrator and has been appointed as emergency arbitrator, and to three-member and sole arbitrator tribunals.

Vivek was previously part of the SIAC Secretariat, involved in the establishment of SIAC's first overseas office in Mumbai, India and spent time in private practice in India. He is recommended as a *'name to note'* by The Legal 500 Asia Pacific, listed by *Who's Who Legal* as a *'Future Leader'* and is *'praised for his knowledge of cases and law'* by GAR100. Vivek graduated from the National Law School of India

	<p>University, Bangalore and was admitted to the Bar Council of Delhi in 2006.</p>
 <p><i>Ms Qian Wu Counsel (Team Lead)</i></p>	<p>Qian is a graduate of Sichuan University (Bachelor’s degree in law), Xiamen University (Master’s degree in law) and the Geneva LL.M. in International Dispute Settlement (MIDS). Qian is also the Assistant Editor of Asian International Arbitration Journal.</p> <p>Qualified in China, Qian practiced litigation and arbitration in Beijing with a Chinese law firm prior to joining SIAC.</p> <p>Qian is fluent in Mandarin and English.</p>
 <p><i>Ms Pauline Low Counsel</i></p>	<p>Pauline is a Malaysian-qualified lawyer with a background in litigation and arbitration. Prior to joining SIAC, Pauline practiced at a top-tier law firm in Malaysia. She read law at the University of Malaya under a full scholarship from an international oil &amp; gas company and was placed on the Dean’s List. During her time in law school, Pauline was active in moot court competitions and represented Malaysia in international competitions.</p> <p>Pauline is fluent in English and Bahasa Malaysia and a competent speaker of Cantonese and Mandarin. She also has a good understanding of Bahasa Indonesia.</p>
 <p><i>Ms Thea Elyssa Vega Counsel</i></p>	<p>Prior to joining the SIAC, Thea was an Associate Solicitor at the Office of the Solicitor General in the Philippines where she handled criminal, civil, international commercial, and investor-state arbitration cases. She has also handled cases across various sectors such as public-private partnerships, gaming, and competition law, among others. She was also part of the Philippine delegation in the UNCITRAL Working Group III on Investor-State Dispute Settlement Reform. She also worked as legal intern at the Philippine Supreme Court.</p> <p>Thea earned her Juris Doctor Degree (J.D.) from the Ateneo de Manila University School of Law in the Philippines in 2016 and was admitted to the Philippine Bar in 2017.</p> <p>Thea speaks Filipino (Cebuano and Tagalog) and English.</p>



*Ms Lynnette Lee  
Counsel*

Lynnette graduated with an LL.B. (Hons) from Monash Law School, Melbourne, Australia and holds a Bachelor of Communication Studies (Hons) from the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. She is admitted to practice as an Advocate & Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Singapore. During law school, Lynnette participated in moot court competitions, which included representing Monash at the FDI Moot.

Prior to joining SIAC, Lynnette practiced with Singapore law firms and worked at the chambers of a leading international arbitrator. She also worked with the Legal Aid Bureau in Singapore as a legal executive.



*Ms Duong Hoang  
Deputy Counsel*

Duong is qualified to practice law in Vietnam. Prior to joining SIAC, Duong worked as a counsel at a leading international arbitration centre in Vietnam where she administered domestic and international arbitration matters conducted under the auspice of the arbitration law of Vietnam and UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules. She thereafter practiced international arbitration with the Singapore office of a leading Vietnam-based law firm where she focused on Vietnam-related matters in construction and petroleum sectors.

Duong speaks Vietnamese and English.



*Mr Pranav Budihal  
Deputy Counsel*

Pranav graduated with an LL.M (International Arbitration and Dispute Resolution) from the National University of Singapore. He also holds a B.B.A.LL.B (Hons) degree from National Law University Odisha, India. During his time at NLUO, he represented the university in various moot court competitions, including the Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot, Vienna.

He is admitted as an Advocate with the Bar Council of India. Prior to joining SIAC, Pranav worked with a boutique dispute resolution firm in India where his practice focussed on commercial litigation and arbitrations across the construction, energy and trade sectors.



Pranav is fluent in English and can speak Hindi and Kannada. He also has a good understanding of Telugu.



*Mr Rishabh Malaviya  
Deputy Counsel*

Rishabh is qualified to practice law in India and holds an LL.M degree in International Arbitration & Dispute Resolution from the National University of Singapore.

Prior to joining SIAC, Rishabh was based in Mumbai and worked in the disputes team at one of India's largest law firms. His practice in India focused on commercial arbitration (domestic and international) and litigation across various industries and fora. He regularly writes for law journals and blogs, and he frequently delivers lectures at law schools in India.

	<p>Rishabh is fluent in English and Hindi. He also has a working understanding of Marathi.</p>
 <p><i>Ms Sherly Gunawan Deputy Counsel</i></p>	<p>Prior to joining SIAC, Sherly practiced law at the Jakarta office of international law firms, where she primarily focussed on litigation and arbitration in the construction, mining, and plantation sectors, and had an array of experience in assisting and representing state-owned enterprises and multinational companies.</p> <p>Sherly read law at the University of Surabaya, Indonesia with full scholarships and graduated summa cum laude. She also obtained an MSc in Construction Law &amp; Dispute Resolution at King’s College London as a Chevening scholar, in which she passed with Distinction and received the Society of Construction Law award for the best dissertation.</p> <p>Sherly is admitted to the Indonesian bar (PERADI) and is also a Member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, Young ICCA, and the Association of Indonesian Privacy Data Professionals.</p> <p>Sherly speaks English and Bahasa Indonesia.</p>
 <p><i>Mr Vakhtangi Giogadze Deputy Counsel</i></p>	<p>Vakhtangi (Vakho) is a qualified lawyer, admitted to the bar in Georgia, and a Singapore International Mediation Institute (SIMI) accredited mediator.</p> <p>Prior to joining SIAC, Vakho was a research associate at the Singapore International Dispute Resolution Academy where he published and contributed to the publication of peer-reviewed papers, reports, and books. In his role, he co-authored the 2nd edition of the book “<i>The Singapore Convention on Mediation – A Commentary</i>”. Vakho’s experience includes working for the legal affairs division of the World Trade Organization where he advised a panel on the resolution of an international trade dispute between two states. He also worked for a tier-one law firm in Georgia and for the Ministry of Justice of Georgia where he contributed to the implementation of the Association Agreement between the European Union and Georgia in Georgian legislation.</p> <p>Vakho holds an LL.B. from the Free University of Tbilisi and an LL.M. from the MIDS – Master in International Dispute Settlement, a joint programme of the University of Geneva and the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies.</p> <p>Vakho speaks English and Georgian.</p>





*Ms Wang Xuanzhong  
Deputy Counsel*

Xuanzhong is licensed to practice law in the State of Michigan, USA. She holds an LLM degree in International Arbitration and Dispute Resolution from the National University of Singapore and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Chicago Law School.

Prior to joining SIAC, Xuanzhong was an associate with an international law firm in Michigan. Her practice focused on renewable energy projects, P3 projects, construction and cross-border transactions involving Chinese parties.

Xuanzhong is fluent in English and Chinese.



*Ms Snigdha Bhatta  
Deputy Counsel*

Snigdha is a Nepal-qualified lawyer with a specialisation in Intellectual Property and Technology Law from the National University of Singapore. She also holds a B.A.LL.B (Hons) degree from the West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences (NUJS), Kolkata, India. During her time at NUS, she worked for the Centre for Technology, Robotics, Artificial Intelligence & the Law (TRAIL) and Harvard Law School's Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society.

Prior to joining SIAC, she practiced litigation and arbitration at a top-tier law firm in Kathmandu. She regularly writes for the Nepal Council of Arbitration (NEPCA).

Snigdha is fluent in English, Nepali and Hindi.



*Mr Andres Larrea  
Deputy Counsel*

Andres is an Ecuadorian-qualified lawyer. Prior to joining SIAC, Andres worked as a Senior Associate at an Ecuadorian law firm for twelve years where he represented parties in commercial and investment arbitrations across a range of sectors, including natural resources, mining, insurance, telecommunications and construction. Andres has been appointed as an arbitral secretary in over 60 arbitration cases administered by the most important arbitration centres in Ecuador.

Andres holds an LL.M. from McGill University. While he was at McGill he served as an associate editor for the McGill Journal of Dispute Resolution. He is a member of the LATAM Subcommittee of the Campaign for Greener Arbitrations, CyberArb, Rising Arbitrators Initiative and the Club of Arbitration of Spain.

Andres is fluent in English and Spanish.



Mr Muhammed Nusry  
Ghazali Hussain  
Deputy Counsel

Nusry obtained a LL.B (Hons) from the University of London and after completing a period of legal apprenticeship at the Attorney General's Department of Sri Lanka, he was called to the Bar as an Attorney-at-Law of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka.

Prior to joining SIAC, Nusry worked at a top-tier law firm in Colombo, where his practice focussed on litigation and arbitration in the construction, banking, and energy sectors. He is also specialised in acquisitions and mergers, and was involved in several large foreign direct investment projects locally and internationally. He also has an array of experience in assisting and representing state-owned enterprises and advising key stakeholders of multinational companies.

Nusry has successfully completed the Islamic Financial Qualification from the Chartered Institute of Securities and Investments and has also completed several international and local courses in relation to arbitration, construction, intellectual property, and international law. Nusry is fluent in English and Sinhalese.



Dr Zhao Yue  
Deputy Counsel

Yue Zhao is a PhD *summa cum laude* at University of Geneva (Université de Genève), where she conducted research on investor-State arbitration. She also holds an LLM in International and European Law from University of Geneva and a Mphil in Civil and Commercial Law from Renmin University of China.

Before joining SIAC, Yue was a visiting scholar at the Danish National Research Foundation's Centre of Excellence for International Courts (iCourts). She interned at the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT)\* and law firms in Beijing and Taipei. As a contributor to ICCA publications, She finalised *ICCA Report No. 5: Compendium of Chinese Commercial Arbitration Laws* and contributed to *ICCA Yearbook Commercial Arbitration 2021 and 2022*. Yue is an assistant editor for East and Central Asia at Kluwer Arbitration Blog.

Qualified to practice law in the People's Republic of China, she can work in English, Chinese (Mandarin) and French.

Kevin Nash  
Registrar

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