



3 April 2023

Registrar's Report

SIAC Adds Supervising Counsel and Publishes Award Checklist

Update to the SIAC Secretariat

SIAC is very pleased to welcome back Samuel Leong who has been appointed as Supervising Counsel of the Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC) with effect from 1 March 2023. Samuel is the latest alumni to re-join SIAC following the return of Vivekananda Neelakantan as Deputy Registrar and Adriana Uson as Director and Head of SIAC Americas. Samuel is described as ‘*one of the leaders of the next generation*’ and is praised for having a ‘*deep knowledge of the practices and procedures of arbitral institutions*’.

Samuel, Vivek, and I worked together in the SIAC Secretariat from 2011 to 2014 at a time when SIAC made many procedural innovations and moved from being a regional player to a truly global institution. These distinguished alumni connect SIAC with its history of efficient and effective case management and provide us with experienced and trusted hands to administer the complex disputes of tomorrow.

Award Checklist

Under the SIAC Rules, every award must run through the scrutiny process and be approved by the Registrar prior to issuance. The nuance and rigour of SIAC's review has resulted in a proven track record of enforcement with SIAC awards being enforced in jurisdictions around the world. Building off the experience of the President and Members of the SIAC Court of Arbitration, the SIAC Secretariat has published an ‘*Award Checklist*’ to assist tribunals and the Secretariat with a view to improving the quality of draft awards and expediting the scrutiny timelines. The SIAC Award Checklist is effective as of 31 March 2023 and available at the following [hyperlink](#).

The profiles of the SIAC Secretariat Team are set out below and available on the [SIAC website](#):

SIAC Secretariat



*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.

Recognised for being *'truly exceptional in his passion for, and knowledge of, international arbitration'*, Kevin is listed by *Who's Who Legal* as a Global Leader and National Leader for Southeast Asia in international arbitration. Described as a *'rock star of arbitration'* and *'a calm presence and a safe pair of hands for the most complex matters'*, peers and clients say that he is *'without equal in the region, in terms of institutional knowledge and expertise in international arbitration'* and that *'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.

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*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 for his *'remarkable command over legal nuances'* and as a *'name to note for India-related disputes'* by The Legal 500 Asia Pacific, is listed by *Who's Who Legal* as a *'Future Leader'* and *'praised for his knowledge of cases and law'* by GAR100. Vivek graduated from the National Law School of India University, Bangalore and was admitted to the Bar Council of Delhi in 2006.

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*Samuel Leong
Supervising
Counsel*

Samuel is Supervising Counsel of the Singapore International Arbitration Centre.

With over a decade of specialist international arbitration experience, Samuel has acted as both arbitrator and arbitration counsel in international arbitrations. Prior to re-joining SIAC, Samuel was a Senior Associate in the international arbitration team of a global law firm.

Samuel has been recognised by *Who's Who Legal* as a *"most highly regarded" Future Leader* in Arbitration; by *The Legal 500* in its *International Arbitration Powerlist* for Southeast Asia; and as a *Thomson Reuters Stand-out Lawyer*. He also serves on the YSIAC Committee and the Tutors Panel of the Asian International Arbitration Centre (AIAC) Academy.

Described as *"one of the leaders of the next generation"*, he has been commended for his *"impeccable knowledge of arbitration"*, for having a *"deep knowledge of the practices and procedures of arbitral institutions"* and as *"a persuasive advocate, with a bold and creative writing style."*

Samuel graduated with an LL.B. from the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur and an LL.M. from Columbia University School of Law, New York (as a Fulbright and Harlan Fiske Stone scholar). Samuel is admitted to the Malaysian Bar, and is fluent in Bahasa Melayu and conversant in Mandarin Chinese.

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*Qian Wu
Counsel (Team
Lead)*

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.

Qualified in China, Qian practiced litigation and arbitration in Beijing with a Chinese law firm prior to joining SIAC.

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*Thea Elyssa Vega
Counsel*

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.

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.

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*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.

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*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.

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*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.

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*Rishabh Malaviya
Deputy Counsel*

Rishabh is qualified to practice law in India and holds an LLM 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.



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*Sherly Gunawan
Deputy Counsel*

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.

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 & 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

	<p>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>Email: sherlygunawan@siac.org.sg</p>
 <p><i>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>Email: vakhtangigiogadze@siac.org.sg</p>
 <p><i>Wang Xuanzhong Deputy Counsel</i></p>	<p>Xuanzhong is licensed to practice law in the State of Michigan, USA. She holds an LL.M 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Email: xuanzhongwang@siac.org.sg</p>



*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).

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*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.

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*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

	<p>arbitration, construction, intellectual property, and international law. Nusry is fluent in English and Sinhalese.</p> <p>Email: nusryhussain@siac.org.sg</p>
 <p><i>Zhao Yue</i> <i>Deputy Counsel</i></p>	<p>Yue Zhao is a PhD <i>summa cum laude</i> 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.</p> <p>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 <i>ICCA Report No. 5: Compendium of Chinese Commercial Arbitration Laws</i> and contributed to <i>ICCA Yearbook Commercial Arbitration 2021 and 2022</i>. Yue is an assistant editor for East and Central Asia at Kluwer Arbitration Blog.</p> <p>Qualified to practice law in the People's Republic of China, she can work in English, Chinese (Mandarin) and French.</p> <p>Email: yuezhao@siac.org.sg</p>

Kevin Nash
Registrar

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