

Dentons hosts roundtable on international arbitration in the Middle East

August 7, 2017

Dentons' Middle East Dispute Resolution team gathered a group of experts in New York to discuss recent developments and challenges in international arbitration in the Middle East. Participants joined the discussion by video conference from Dentons' offices in Abu Dhabi, Doha, Dubai, Jeddah, Muscat and Washington, DC, as well as from the offices of the Saudi Center for Commercial Arbitration in Riyadh.

Delegates at the event discussed the adoption of arbitration legislation across the Arabian Gulf and broader Middle East, and recent court decisions upholding and recognising foreign arbitral awards. The discussion also focused on how recent court decisions and legislation have fostered an environment of predictability and legal certainty for foreign investors doing business in the region.

Lawyers, judges and arbitrators joining the panel from Dubai, Riyadh and New York commented on the deep roots of arbitration within Middle Eastern culture and Islamic law, which encourages parties to peacefully resolve their disputes through mediation. Panelists further discussed legislation throughout the region and cases in Saudi Arabia, where courts in recent years have upheld arbitration clauses and recognised foreign arbitral awards. Panelists emphasised that recent case law in the region indicates a positive shift for foreign investors wishing to resolve disputes by arbitration and thereby avoid the costs and uncertainty of litigation.

Dentons' Head of Dispute Resolution in the Middle East, Alastair Young, presented an overview of dispute resolution and arbitration in the Middle East, while Judge Mostafa Abdulhafar, Majed Al-Rasheed and James MacPherson from the Saudi Center for Commercial Arbitration provided a more in-depth analysis of international arbitration in Saudi Arabia. The roundtable discussion was moderated by Dentons Riyadh associate John Balouziyeh.

Dentons' top-rated Middle East Arbitration team has an in-depth understanding of the nuances of each local market, stemming from more than 50 years of experience advising on major disputes in the region. The team advises across the full industry spectrum, from preparation for commencement of arbitration proceedings, to enforcement of arbitral awards in local jurisdictions, claims settlement and dispute resolution.

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