

Soraya CORM-BAKHOS, FCIArb

Nationalities: French and Lebanese

Contact details:

CORM-BAKHOS FZ LLE

PO Box 915009

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Tel: +971 (0)5 0950 6334

E-mail: soraya@cormbakhos-arbitration.com

Website: Cormbakhos Arbitration



I am an independent arbitrator based in Dubai. After 20 years of experience in private practice first in Paris and since 2008 in Dubai, I am now fully dedicated to my practice as arbitrator.

Prior to that, I was a Counsel at Watson Farley & Williams (Middle East) LLP and practised in the Dispute Resolution teams of Baker McKenzie Habib Al Mulla and DWF (Middle East) LLP. Before coming to the UAE, I trained in Paris in the law firm of J.P. Karsenty & Associés where I gained experience advising on all types of civil, commercial, and corporate transactions and representing clients before the French Courts in a variety of commercial disputes.

During my career in private practice, I have represented clients in all types of international arbitrations seated in Europe and the Middle East under major institutional arbitration rules in relation to a wide variety of industry sectors including energy, transport, and infrastructure.

I am listed as arbitrator with all major institutions. Since 2011, I have served as sole arbitrator, co-arbitrator and chair in numerous arbitrations ad hoc and institutional under the auspices of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the Dubai International Arbitration Centre (DIAC), the London Court of International Arbitration (LCIA), the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC-LCIA), the Bahrain Chamber of Dispute Resolution (BCDR), and the Abu Dhabi International Arbitration Centre (arbitrateAD) in disputes mainly related to construction, real estate, sale and purchase agreements, joint venture agreements and general commercial disputes.

I have been recognized by The Legal 500 as “*exceptionally hard working, bright and will go the extra mile to ensure the best possible service for their clients*”. I have also been included in the Legal 500’s Arbitration Powerlist: Middle East 2023.

I have been appointed to serve as a member of the ICC Commission on Arbitration and ADR. I am also a member of the LCIA Arab Users’ Council. I regularly speak at major conferences including GAR and have authored numerous publications in the field of arbitration.

Experience as arbitrator includes:

DIAC proceedings

- **DIAC A250102** as chair in a construction dispute arising out of a subcontract agreement for the provision of ID theming works for a themed park hotel in Dubai (Dubai seat, UAE law)
- **DIAC 240189** as chair in a commercial real estate dispute arising out of three reservation agreements for residential units (Dubai seat; UAE law)
- **DIAC A250002** as sole arbitrator in a commercial dispute arising out of a services contract (software) (Dubai seat; UAE law)
- **DIAC 230177** as co-arbitrator in a commercial real estate dispute (Dubai seat; UAE law)
- **DIAC 240029** as chair in a construction dispute arising out of a contract for fit-out works (Dubai seat; UAE law)
- **DIAC 227/2021** as sole arbitrator in a construction dispute for a project in Sudan (DIFC seat; UAE law)

- **DIAC 174/2021** as co-arbitrator in a construction dispute arising out of a subcontract agreement for the execution of works in relation to a highway project in Qatar (Dubai seat; laws of Qatar)
- **DIAC 13/2020** as sole arbitrator in a real estate dispute arising out of a sale and purchase agreements for residential units (Dubai seat; UAE law)
- **DIAC 14/2020** as sole arbitrator in a real estate dispute arising out of a sale and purchase agreements for residential units (Dubai seat; UAE law)
- **DIAC 125/2019** as chair in a dispute regarding multiple lease agreements for equipment and construction tools (Dubai seat; UAE law)
- **DIAC 15/2018** as sole arbitrator in a dispute regarding a business recruitment services agreement (Abu Dhabi seat; UAE law)
- **DIAC 185/2017** as sole arbitrator in a construction dispute regarding a subcontract for vibro-compaction works (Dubai seat; UAE law)
- **DIAC 19/2017** as chair in a dispute regarding a hotel sale and purchase agreement (Dubai seat; UAE law)
- **DIAC 35/2017** as co-arbitrator in a dispute regarding a property sale and purchase agreement (Dubai seat; UAE law)
- **DIAC 145/2015** as sole arbitrator in a dispute regarding a commercial leasing agreement (Dubai seat; UAE law)
- **DIAC 283/2013** as sole arbitrator in a real estate dispute (Dubai seat; UAE law)
- **DIAC 173/2013** as sole arbitrator in a real estate dispute (Dubai seat; UAE law)
- **DIAC 375/2012** as sole arbitrator in a real estate dispute (Dubai seat; UAE law)
- **DIAC 237/2011** as co-arbitrator in a real estate dispute (Dubai seat; UAE law)
- **DIAC 333/2011** as co-arbitrator in a real estate dispute (Dubai seat; UAE law)

DIFC-LCIA / LCIA proceedings

- **LCIA 25648** as sole arbitrator in a telecommunication dispute regarding a license rental agreement (London seat; law of Algeria)
- **LCIA 235848** as co-arbitrator in a dispute regarding a contract for professional engineering services (Dubai seat; English law)
- **DIFC-LCIA DL 21413** as co-arbitrator in a dispute regarding the termination of a sale and purchase agreement for several hotel apartment units (Dubai seat; UAE law)
- **DIFC-LCIA DL18192** as co-arbitrator in a dispute regarding a distribution agreement (DIFC seat; UAE law)

ICC, other institutions and ad hoc

- **PCA case AA989** as co-arbitrator (PCA appointed) in UNICTRAL proceedings in a dispute arising out of a construction contract for works of a pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai (Dubai seat; UAE law)
- **ICC 2910/KFH** as chair in a construction dispute arising out of three contracts for the construction of a meat production facility in Oman (Oman seat; Omani laws)
- **DIAC AA240022** as sole arbitrator in an *ad hoc* arbitration in a dispute regarding an aircraft lease agreement (Dubai seat; UAE law)
- **abitateAD 2024-006** as chair case in a dispute regarding a hotel operating and management agreement (ADGM seat; UAE law)
- **ICC 28097** as sole arbitrator in a dispute regarding a warehouse agreement (Dubai seat; UAE law)
- **BCDR ARB/23/03** as sole arbitrator in a joint-venture dispute related to construction works in Bahrain (Bahrain seat; Bahraini laws)
- **ICC 28097/KFH** as sole arbitrator in a dispute regarding a rental agreement for a crushing plant (ADGM seat; UAE law)

Selective experience as counsel

Construction

- Representing a Chinese contractor against a subcontractor in a dispute arising out of various settlement and closing agreements regarding the completion of a project in Kuwait (seat in the ADGM; UAE law)
- Representing a Chinese contractor in a multi-million USD construction dispute against the employer arising out of the construction of a shopping mall in the UAE under the DIAC Rules (seat in the DIFC; UAE law)
- Representing a UAE-based subcontractor specialised in fireproofing works in a dispute arising from the performance of a subcontract in relation to the construction of Abu Dhabi Airport Midfield Terminal under the DIFC-LCIA Rules (seat in DIFC; UAE law)
- Representing a US contractor in relation to a multi-million AED construction dispute in relation to works provided for the Dubai Airport expansion project under the ICC Rules (seat in Paris; UAE and French law)
- Representing a US contractor in relation to a multi-million AED construction dispute in relation to works provided for a Dubai-based racecourse (Meydan Racecourse) under the DIAC Rules (seat in Dubai; UAE law)

Oil & Gas, Energy

- Advising a Korean construction company in relation to various construction claims against the employer in a dispute arising out of an EPC contract for the construction of a power plant in Vietnam
- Representing a UAE based leading provider of subsea services to the oil and gas industry in a dispute arising out of a contract for the provisions of services in connection with a pipeline project in the Gulf of Suez under the CRCICA Rules (seat in Cairo; Egyptian law)
- Representing a Pakistani gas company in a USD 80 million plus dispute arising from the performance of a long-term gas supply agreement under the ICC Rules (seat in Singapore; English law)
- Representing a UAE-based subsidiary of a UK contractor in a \$US 90 million dispute with a UAE-based subcontractor in relation to the construction of an oilfield in Abu Dhabi under the ICC Rules (seat in Abu Dhabi; UAE law)

Project development, real estate, and engineering

- Representing a Bulgarian company in a USD multi-million dispute arising from the sale and purchase of a hotel complex in Greece under the LCIA Rules (seat in London; English law)
- Representing a leading international energy service provider in a dispute arising from the performance of an engineering and project management contract for a biofuels facility to be constructed in the Emirate of Fujairah under the LCIA Rules (seat in London; English law)
- Representing several real estate developers in disputes under the DIAC Rules arising out of contracts for the sale of properties in the Emirate of Dubai (seat in Dubai, UAE law)

Corporate and commercial (including banking & finance, transport)

- Representing two UAE high-net worth individuals in a dispute arising out of the termination of joint-venture agreement for the establishment of a company to operate various restaurants in the UAE under UAE law (seat in Dubai; UAE law)
- Representing a major US bank in a dispute arising from the sale and purchase of a vessel against a private buyer under the LMAA Rules (seat in London; English law)
- Representing a global aircraft leasing company in a dispute arising from the termination of an Airbus lease agreement because of sanctions against a Russian operator under the LCIA Rules (seat in London; English law)

- Representing a leading Saudi cement manufacturing company in a dispute arising from the performance of a contract for the supply of cement under the LCIA Rules (seat in London; English law)
- Representing a UAE-based investment company in a dispute arising out of the performance of a Murabaha financing agreement under the DIFC-LCIA Rules (seat in Dubai; English law)
- Representing a UAE-based company against a German manufacturer in a dispute arising from the performance of an agreement for the supply and installation of wood cutting equipment and industrial plant under the LCIA Rules (seat in London; English law)
- Representing a world leading IT services provider in a dispute arising from the performance of an IT services agreement in relation to the design, development, and installation of a forensic evidence warehouse for Abu Dhabi Police under the ICC Rules (seat in Abu Dhabi; UAE law)
- Representing a UAE-based company in a dispute against a Chinese telecommunication giant in a commercial dispute under the SCC Rules (seat in Stockholm; Swedish law)
- Advising on a multi-billion AED worth international partnership dispute between a Canadian and a Saudi national under the DIAC Rules (seat in Dubai; UAE law)
- Advising a UAE investment advisor in a multi-million US\$ dispute against a Saudi investor under an investment services agreement governed by UAE law in an ad hoc arbitration with seat in Dubai

Education/Qualification

- 2003 Admitted to the Paris Bar
- 2002 Ecole de Formation du Barreau (Paris Bar School)
- 2000 DEA (Master II) Private International Law and International Trade Law, Université Paris-Panthéon-Assas, France (with honours)
- 1999 Maîtrise in Private law, Université Paris-Panthéon-Assas, France (with honours)
- 1998 University College London, European exchange programme, third year of law studies

Languages

- French (native)
- English (fluent)
- Arabic (proficient)
- Spanish (basic)

Publications (full list available upon request)

- “Unilateral option to arbitrate: valid in the UAE?” in CIArb UAE Branch Newsletter/July 2025
- “US Court Refuses to Enforce a DIFC-LCIA Arbitration Clause due to Abolishment of the DIFC-LCA Arbitration Clause”, in Kluwer Arbitration Blog, 2 February 2024, available online at <https://arbitrationblog.kluwerarbitration.com/2024/02/02/us-court-refuses-to-enforce-a-difc-lcia-arbitration-clause-due-to-abolishment-of-the-difc-lcia-arbitration-centre/>
- The MENA Leading Arbitrators’ Guide to International Arbitration (ed. together with Dr, Gordon Blanke): authored the chapter on “Recognition, enforcement, and nullification of awards” and co-authored with Prof. Affaki the chapter on “Arbitration in banking and financial disputes,” Juris Publishing 2023
- “Dubai Court of Cassation’s Recent Decision on Enforcement of Foreign Awards”, in Kluwer Arbitration Blog, 3 May 2023, available at [Dubai Court of Cassation's Recent Decision on Enforcement of Foreign Awards | Kluwer Arbitration Blog](#)
- “The signing of arbitral awards under UAE law,” in CIArb UAE Branch Newsletter, November 2022
- “Dubai Decree No. 34 of 2021 and the DIAC 2022 Rules of Arbitration: A New Era for Arbitration in Dubai”, in International Journal of Arab Arbitration, Volume 14 (2002), issue 1, pp. 6-18.

- “Enforcement of UK rulings in the UAE,” in The Oath, Issue 115, September 2022, pp.12-14
- “Recoverability of parties’ costs in DIAC arbitrations. Guidance from 2020 cases on the recoverability of arbitration costs”, in The UAE Arbitration Yearbook 2020, Lexis Nexis, 29 April 2022, pp. 97-100
- “DIAC 2022 Rules of Arbitration: A modernised Set of Rules for a New Era”, in Kluwer Arbitration Blog, 21 March 2022, available online at [DIAC 2022 Rules of Arbitration: A Modernised Set of Rules for a New Era | Kluwer Arbitration Blog](#)
- “Recoverability of parties’ costs: a persistent issue in DIAC arbitration,” in CIArb UAE Branch Newsletter, February 2022
- “Dubai boosts its disputes presence with Decree 34”, in New Law Journal, Lexis Nexis, 10 December 2021, pp. 18-19
- “Conflicting Dispute Resolution Clauses in Related Contracts in the UAE: which forum?”, Kluwer Arbitration Blog, 14 October 2021, available online at [Conflicting Dispute Resolution Clauses in Related Contracts in the UAE: Which Forum? | Kluwer Arbitration Blog](#)
- “Dubai decree changes the dispute resolution landscape” in Thomson Reuters Regulatory Intelligence, 4 October 2021
- “Recent case law under the UAE Federal Arbitration Law,” in CIArb UAE Branch Newsletter/July 2021
- “UAE Federal Arbitration Law: improvements and uncertainties”, in the UAE Arbitration Yearbook 2019, Lexis Nexis, February 2020, pp. 86-90
- "Expedited Enforcement of Foreign Awards: A New Favourable Regime for the Enforcement of Foreign Awards in the UAE", Kluwer Arbitration Blog, 25 May 2019, available online at <http://arbitrationblog.kluwerarbitration.com/2019/05/26/expedited-enforcement-of-foreign-awards-a-new-favourable-regime-for-the-enforcement-of-foreign-awards-in-the-uae/>
- "The UAE Federal Arbitration Law: welcome improvements and remaining uncertainties" in IBA Arbitration Committee e-newsletter, May 2019
- "Joinder of Third Parties: A Welcome Novelty under the UAE Federal Arbitration Law", KluwerArbitration Blog, 15 February 2019, available online at <http://arbitrationblog.kluwerarbitration.com/2019/02/15/joinder-of-third-parties-a-welcome-novelty-under-the-uae-federal-arbitration-law/>

Speaking engagements (full list available upon request)

- November 2025: GAR Live Dubai – GAR Live Debate – debater against the motion: “This house believes that standards POIs and other procedural documents constitute bad case management techniques”
- November 2025: Dubai Arbitration Week – Panel discussion hosted by Lexster Law & Agarwal Law Associate: “Navigating multiparty and cross-border disputes in mega project arbitration”
- November 2025: Dubai Arbitration Week – Panel discussion hosted by ControlRisks: “Evasive counterparties in arbitration: navigating fraud, fronts, and shells”
- November 2025: FIRE Middle East Conference – Panel discussion: “Onshore v Offshore – Legal framework and dispute resolution”
- May 2025: Beirut Arbitration Days – Organised by LIAC BBA in Beirut, Lebanon – Arbitrator in Panel 10: Mock Arbitration Proceedings
- April 2025: UAE: 10th International Arbitration & ADR Summit – Dubai – Moderator 4th Grand Panel: “Energy Charter Treaty, ESG, LNG, Pricing and Compliance: Avoiding Inevitable Disputes and Understanding Changes of Circumstances”
- April 2025: IBA Young Lawyer Training Course: The Fundamentals of International Legal Practice, ADGM, Abu Dhabi – Panel discussion on “Career development – how to succeed in a changing world”
- April 2025: Paris Arbitration Week – Panel discussion hosted by Jus Mondi, Habib Al Mulla & Partners, and ArbitrateAD: “Shifting sands: Arbitrators in the Middle East”
- February 2025: DIAC training, Stage 1 – Panel discussion on “Substantive and procedural law applicable to the arbitration”

- January 2025: CIArb UAE Branch & YMG Joint Seminar – Moderator for a panel discussion on “Arbitrating in the MENA: Lessons from Practice”
- January 2025: GAR Live Abu Dhabi – Moderator for the panel discussion on “Disclosures and conflict of interest: trends and challenges”
- November 2024: LCIA Symposium in Riyadh – Panel discussion on market trends and global developments in international arbitration
- May 2024: TBH Sundowner Conversations – Moderator for the panel discussion on “Managing risks and disputes in complex construction projects”
- May 2024: ARBInBRIEF – Live video conversation: “Can’t Pay? Won’t Pay! How to deal with Non-Paying Claimants and Respondents”
- March 2024: Riyadh International Disputes Week - HKA & WFW Co-hosted panel discussion: “Victory in conflict – strategies and tactics for achieving success in complex disputes”
- June 2023: Society of Construction Law (SCL) Gulf Event – Talk on “Renewables Contracting: A Transaction and Disputes Perspective”
- February 2023: GAR Live: Abu Dhabi – GAR Live Debate, debater against the Motion: “This house believes that post-Covid in person main hearings will again become the norm”
- October 2022: ICC UAE & CIArb Joint Event – Investment Arbitration and Energy Projects in the UAE and beyond – Panel 1: “International challenges in Investment Arbitration”
- June 2022: Conference organised by Al Tamimi & Co. and ALG International Lawyers “The Culture of International Arbitration: Lessons from Practice” – Panel 2: “Lessons from practice: Beyond the Civil-Common Law divide”
- February 2022: GAR Live: Abu Dhabi – lead moderator for the GAR Live Debate – Motion: “This house believes that Decree 34 will promote arbitration in Dubai, the UAE and the region”
- January 2022: 11th World Litigation Forum 2022 Dubai: 2022 and Beyond: A new Era for Dispute Resolution? – Panel discussion: “Recent developments in international arbitration”
- November 2021: WFW and Horizons & Co joint seminar (part of Dubai Arbitration Week) – “Navigating the current challenges of arbitration in the UAE” – Panel discussion
- November 2019: DWF Breakfast Seminar (part of Dubai Arbitration Week) - "Practical insight and tips for ensuring effective third-party funding of arbitration in the UAE" – Panel discussion
- October 2019: ICC Institute of Advance Training – Drafting Enforceable Awards – ADGM Abu Dhabi – Panel 2: "Spotlight on specific issues: Jurisdiction and Applicable Law"

Memberships, appointments, and panels

- Fellow member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators London (FCIArb)
- Committee Member, Honorary Secretary of the CIArb UAE Branch
- LCIA Arab Users’ Council
- Member of the legal faculty for Delos ROAP Middle East
- International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Global Commission on Arbitration and ADR
- ICC UAE
- ICC Lebanon
- ArbitralWomen
- Saudi Center for Commercial Arbitration (SCCA)
- International Arbitration Centre (DIAC)
- Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA)
- ArbitrateAD
- ADGM Arbitration Centre Arbitrators Panel
- SIAC Panel of Arbitrators
- HKIAC List of Arbitrators