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INTERNATIONAL BAR ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE 2025

A conference presented by the Employment and Industrial Relations Law Committee
and the Diversity and Equality Law Committee

Annual IBA Employment and Diversity Law Conference 2025: Braving the uncertainties of this new world of work

2–4 April 2025, Marrakech, Morocco

Working programme and list of participants

Headline conference sponsor



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All speaker materials and biographies can be found at www.ibanet.org/conference-details/conf2590

Conference Co-Chairs

Caroline Andre-Hesse *Jeantet, Paris; Co-Chair, IBA Employment and Industrial Relations Law Committee*

Karine Audouze *Watson Farley & Williams, Paris; Co-Chair, IBA Diversity and Equality Law Committee*

Björn Gaul *CMS, Cologne, Co-Chair, IBA Employment and Industrial Relations Law Committee*

Pål Kvernaas *Haavind, Oslo, Co-Chair, IBA Diversity and Equality Law Committee*

Wednesday 2 April

1800 – 1900 **Gathering with new members and first-time participants**

Jamra Pool, Mövenpick Hotel Mansour Eddahbi, Bd Mohamed VI, Marrakech 40000, Morocco

1900 – 2100 **Welcome reception**

Jamra Pool, Mövenpick Hotel Mansour Eddahbi, Bd Mohamed VI, Marrakech 40000, Morocco

Join fellow delegates and speakers before the Conference to network at the welcome reception.

All registered delegates are welcome to attend.

Thursday 3 April

Coffee /tea breaks and lunch will be held in the -1 level
Plenary sessions will take place in Auditorium des Ambassadeurs
Breakout sessions will take place in both Auditorium des Ambassadeurs and Fes 1

0800 – 1715 **Registration**

0800 – 0845 **Welcome coffee/tea**

0845 – 0900 **Welcome remarks**

0900 – 1000 **Keynote speakers**

Abdellatif Ouahbi *Minister of Justice, Rabat*

Hicham Sabiry *Secretary of State for Employment, Rabat*

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1000 – 1115 **Legal implications of remote work in information technology: remote work policies, data privacy concerns and cybersecurity measures in IT and digital sectors**

This panel will explore the legal implications of remote work, focusing on remote work policies, data privacy concerns and cybersecurity measures. As remote work continues to grow, understanding the legal and security implications is crucial for organisations aiming to balance flexibility, compliance and protection in the digital age. Experts will address the challenges that organisations and HR managers face in designing compliant remote work policies that align with international labour and employment laws. Additionally, legal considerations regarding data protection regulations, such as the GDPR, will be examined in relation to the remote workforce's handling of sensitive information. The session will also cover the evolving cybersecurity risks in remote work environments and strategies to mitigate these risks while ensuring compliance. Participants will gain valuable insights into balancing legal requirements with practical solutions and best practices in managing a decentralised, global work environment.

Session Co-Chairs

Veena Gopalakrishnan *Trilegal, Bangalore, Karnataka; Newsletter Editor, Employment and Industrial Relations Law Committee*

John Sander *Jackson Lewis, New York*

Speakers

Zineb Hamzi *DS-HLF, Casablanca*

Nicolai Hesgaard *Accura, Copenhagen*

Veronica Raffo *Ferrere, Montevideo*

Gordon Williams *MinterEllison, Sydney, New South Wales*

1115 – 1145 **Coffee/tea break**

1145 – 1300 **BREAKOUT SESSION ONE** *Auditorium des Ambassadeurs*

Reputation management – managing employee activism and broader commentary (eg, Glassdoor reviews); dealing with peer, market and press interest in litigation and internal investigations

The discussion on this panel will address the complexities of managing a company's reputation amidst employee activism and public commentary, including Glassdoor reviews. The panellists will explore strategies for handling peer, market and media interest when it comes to sensitive matters like litigation and internal investigations. The session will offer insights on maintaining a positive employer brand while navigating legal and ethical challenges. Additionally, they will discuss the role of HR managers and labour lawyers in protecting both the organisation's reputation and employee rights during times of crisis or controversy. Finally, panellists will delve into best practices for balancing transparency with confidentiality in these situations.

Session Co-Chairs

Els de Wind *Els de Wind Law, Amsterdam*

Bart Raczkowski *Raczkowski, Warsaw*

Speakers

Carolina Avellaneda *Vice President and Global Counsel Emerson College, Boston, Massachusetts*

Nicolas Grandi *Allende & Brea, Buenos Aires*

Moria Tam-Harshoshanim *Herzog Fox & Neeman, Tel Aviv*

Emily Schultz *Law Options Inc, Orinda, California*

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1145 – 1300 **BREAKOUT SESSION TWO** *Fes 1*

Is DEI officially dead?

In 2024, diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) programmes at some of the world's largest companies began to unravel one by one. At the beginning of 2025, both Meta and Amazon announced that they too would scale back their DEI programmes. But, in what is perceived by many as a further assault on the DEI initiative, Meta went further, by introducing new hate speech guidelines as part of a broader shift in its moderation policies. In Meta's own words 'We're getting rid of a number of restrictions on topics like immigration, gender identity and gender that are the subject of frequent political discourse and debate', thereby freeing billions of social media users to post a wide array of derogatory remarks on subjects such as race, nationality, ethnic groups, sexual orientation and gender identity. It seems that the term 'DEI' has become 'charged', with many perceiving it as an approval of 'preferential treatment for certain groups over others'. Others maintain that DEI compliance has been reduced to a checkbox exercise, lacking a genuine commitment to foster real equity in the workplace. So, what is the future for DEI? Together with a panel of experts, we will attempt to explore and hopefully answer some of these questions, including the role of lawyers in navigating this evolving DEI landscape.

Session Co-Chairs

Patrizio Bernardo *ADVANT Nctm, Milan*

Astrid Helstone *Stibbe, Amsterdam*

Speakers

Alicia Adefarasin *Dentons Acas-Law, Lagos*

Gary Clarke *Stikeman Elliott, Calgary, Alberta*

Carolyn Knox *Ogletree Deakins, San Francisco, California*

Tobias Normann *Mannheimer Swartling, Stockholm*

1300 – 1400 **Lunch**

1400 – 1500 **BREAKOUT SESSION THREE** *Auditorium des Ambassadeurs*

Strategic insights into dismissal practices: legal frameworks governing termination, procedural fairness and equitable severance packages.

This panel discussion will explore the legal frameworks surrounding dismissal practices, focusing on how different jurisdictions regulate termination procedures. Experts will examine the principles of procedural fairness, ensuring that dismissals are conducted in a transparent and just manner. The conversation will also cover best practices for providing equitable severance packages, addressing both legal obligations and ethical considerations. Attendees will gain insights into navigating complex legal environments while minimising potential risks for both employers and employees. Finally, the panel will highlight recent trends and developments in dismissal laws that HR managers and employment lawyers should be aware of globally.

Session Co-Chairs

Valérie Blandeau *Pinsent Masons, Paris*

Anthony Oncidi *Proskauer Rose, Los Angeles, California*

Speakers

Carolina Camacho Solana *Garrigues, Bogota*

Burkard Goepfert *Kliemt HR Lawyers, Munich*

Rashel Ann Pomoy *Villaraza & Angangco, Taguig*

Alison Weatherhead *Dentons, Glasgow*

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Conference dinner sponsors



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1400 – 1500 **BREAKOUT SESSION FOUR** *Fes 1*

Ethical best practices in labour law advocacy: upholding integrity and confidentiality, and navigating ethical and legal dilemmas in looking for the ‘best’ advice in client representation

The panellists will explore ethical challenges and best practices in labour law advocacy, emphasising the importance of integrity and confidentiality in client representation. Experts will address how to navigate complex ethical and legal dilemmas when providing advice, particularly when seeking the most effective and economic solutions for clients. The conversation will focus on balancing the interests of employers and employees while adhering to professional standards and legal obligations. Attendees will gain practical insights into maintaining ethical conduct in the face of pressure or conflicting interests, ensuring the highest level of service whilst observing legal or moral principles. In this context, the panel will discuss strategies for enabling trust and transparency in client relationships, essential components of successful legal practice in labour law.

Moderators

Hans-Christian Ackermann *Luther, Düsseldorf*

Lucy Gordon *Walker Morris, Leeds*

Speakers

Alvaro Galli *Beccar Varela, Buenos Aires*

Gerald Manoharan *JSA, Bangalore, Karnataka*

Orla McCabe *Wuersch & Gering, New York*

Anna Mertinz *KWP Karasek Wietrzyk Rechtsanwälte, Vienna*

1500 – 1530 **Coffee/tea break**

1530 – 1645 **Limits of employer criticism – the delicate boundaries of employer and employee speech and criticism**

We have seen it all... George Floyd, the US Supreme Court abortion decision, 7 October 2023 and Israel's reaction, the Russia/Ukraine conflict, terrorist attacks by Islamists, deportation of immigrants, employee criticism of employer's business, attacks on transgender people, regression in women's rights – the list can go on and on and unfortunately gets longer and longer. In this panel, we will explore freedom of expression, its implications and its limits for both employers and employees. This discussion will include global, legal and cultural perspectives on employer public expressions of views; employer imposition of those points of views on employees (and tolerance for difference); the rights and limits of employee freedom of expression in the workplace; rights and limits of employee expression on social media. What are best practices in different regions of the world? Is it possible to have a company-wide, global approach?

Moderators

Sean Nesbitt *Taylor Wessing, London*

Roselyn Sands *RoselynSandsLaw, Paris*

Speakers

Mohamed Oulkhair *Chassany Watrelot & Associes, Tetouan*

Renzo Parodi Guastavino *Associate General Counsel and Head of LATAM Legal Organisation, TATA Consultancy Services, Santiago*

Franck Raimbault *Senior Vice President HR Legal, Air France, Paris*

Michele Stutz *MME Legal, Zürich*

1930 – 2300 **Conference reception and dinner**

Four Seasons Marrakech, 1 Boulevard de la Menara, Marrakech, 40000

Join your fellow delegates and speakers for a standing networking dinner.

Ticket price: €170, Transport will not be provided.

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Conference opening reception sponsors



Friday 4 April

Coffee /tea breaks and lunch will be held in the -1 level
Plenary sessions will take place in Auditorium des Ambassadeurs
Breakout sessions will take place in both Auditorium des Ambassadeurs and Fes 1

0900 – 1500 **Registration**

0900 – 0930 **Welcome coffee/tea**

0930 – 0945 **Keynote speaker**

Naam Miyara *former President of the Moroccan Senate, Rabat*

0945 – 1100 **International workforce mobility and legal implications: managing cross-border employment regulations, immigration policies and the rights of migrant workers**

This panel discussion will focus on the complexities of international workforce mobility and the legal implications for cross-border employment. Experts will explore how varying immigration policies and employment regulations across different countries impact the management of a global workforce. The session will delve into the rights of migrant workers, addressing issues such as work permits, social security and anti-discrimination laws. Attendees will gain insights into navigating the legal challenges of relocating employees, ensuring compliance with both home and host country laws. Additionally, the panel will examine strategies for minimising legal risks and optimising the mobility of talent in an increasingly globalised labour market.

Moderators

Mercedes Balado Bevilacqua *MBB Balado Bevilacqua Abogados, Buenos Aires*

Philippe de Wulf *Altius, Brussels*

Speakers

Francisca Corti *Carey, Santiago*

Ghiyta Iraqi *I&I Law Firm, Casablanca*

Michael Royal *Little Mendelson, Dallas, Texas*

Elena Ryolo *Cappelli RCCD Studio Legale, Milan*

1100 – 1130 **Coffee/tea break**

1130 – 1245 **BREAKOUT SESSION FIVE** *Auditorium des Ambassadeurs*

Employment law trends in North Africa

This panel will provide an overview of the latest trends in employment law across North Africa, highlighting key legal reforms and shifts in labour regulations. Experts will explore the evolving landscape of workers' rights, employer obligations and the impact of regional economic changes on employment practices. The discussion will also cover the challenges and opportunities for multinational companies operating in North African countries, with a focus on compliance, dispute resolution and workforce management. Attendees will gain practical insights into navigating legal complexities and maintaining fair labour practices in this dynamic region. Lastly, the panel will examine the influence of international labour standards and their integration into national laws in North African countries.

Session Co-Chairs

Juan Bonilla Blasco *Cuatrecasas, Madrid*

Nesrine Roudane *Roudane & Partners Law Firm, Casablanca; Diversity and Inclusion Officer, IBA Arab Regional Forum*

Speakers

Ammar ElBanna *Incept Legal, Dubai*

Omar Fatemi *FLF, Casablanca*

Boumiya Maham *BHM Legal, Nouakchott*

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Conference refreshment break sponsors

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1130 – 1245 **BREAKOUT SESSION SIX** *Fes 1*

The war for talent, labour shortages and demographic changes: catalyst for workplace diversity and inclusion?

A diverse workforce fosters creativity and innovation and enhances employee performance. However, in many sectors, addressing DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) is not only the right thing to do but essential for business survival to deal with labour shortages, demographic changes, changing employee expectations and winning the war for talent. What strategies are countries and companies taking to attract and to retain a diverse workforce to address labour market changes? What are the challenges and opportunities?

Moderators

Professor Linda Greene *Michigan State University College of Law, East Lansing, Michigan*

Richard Harvey *Pierson Ferdinand, London*

Speakers

Jill Albrecht Clark *Director Employment Legal Americas, PayPal, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*

Etienne Pujol *BerryLaw, Paris*

Nikki Samant-Jones *Chief Revenue Officer, Country Navigator, London*

Petteri Uoti *Dittmar & Indrenius, Helsinki*

1245 – 1345 **Lunch**

1345 – 1500 **Communicating across cultures: the power and risks of communication across different cultures**

Communicating across cultures involves recognising and bridging differences in communication styles, values and behaviours shaped by diverse cultural backgrounds. Effective cross-cultural communication is essential in today's globalised world, offering both significant benefits and potential challenges. The power of cross-cultural communication includes enhanced collaboration and teamwork, broader perspectives being introduced to enrich the decision-making process and market expansion for businesses. The risks and challenges of cross-cultural communication includes misunderstandings and conflict, stereotyping and oversimplification of cultural issues, and language barriers. By acknowledging the complexities of cross-cultural communication and actively working towards understanding and adaptation, employers can leverage the strengths of cultural diversity while mitigating potential pitfalls. Our speakers will discuss how we can assist employers in developing strategies for effective cross-cultural communication both internally and externally, and how we can enhance diversity and equality in the workplace.

Moderators

Christopher Jordan *CMS Germany, Cologne*

Yusra Siddiquee *Little Mendelson, Toronto, Ontario*

Speakers

Selvamalar Alagaratnam *Skrine, Kuala Lumpur*

Asmaa Qachah *AQ Law Firm, Casablanca*

Marie-Stephanie Schweizer *Employment Advisory Manager, MONDI Group, Vienna*

Todd Solomon *McDermott Will & Emery, Chicago, Illinois*

1900 – 2200 **Closing reception**

Terrasse des épices, Sidi Abdel Aziz 15 souk cherifia, Marrakech 40000

The closing reception is open to all registered delegates to attend.

The IBA, its officers and staff accept no responsibility for any views expressed, presentations or materials produced by delegates or speakers at the Conference.

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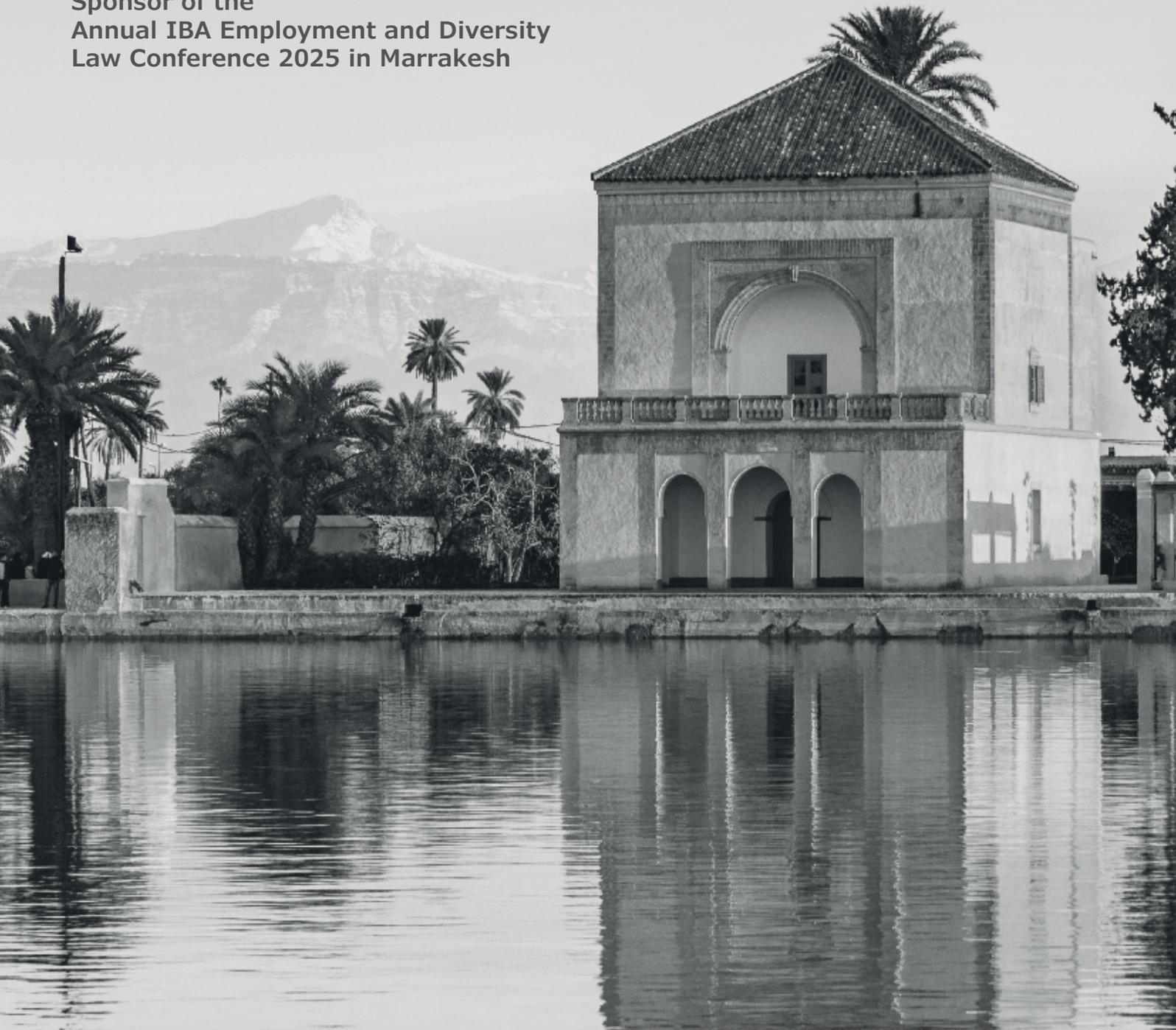
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