A conference presented by the IBA Law Firm Management Committee, supported by the IBA Arab Regional Forum

IBA Middle East Conference: Law firms and clients working together

27–28 February 2024, Palace Hotel Downtown, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

TOPICS INCLUDE:

- The clients speak – a panel of leading regional GCs provide their views on law firms and changes they would like to suggest or see;
- Working with legal departments at corporate clients;
- Developing the law firm of the future;
- What is happening in global legal markets? How does this affect the Middle East?
- Creating a culture to look after and develop our people;
- The place of technology and artificial intelligence now and in the future; and
- Opportunities for law firms, and lawyers, in the Middle East and the ‘rush’ to Saudi Arabia.

For more information and to book online visit
https://registration.infosalons.ae/IBA24DU/Delegate/Registration/Welcome
Programme

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Stephen Revell Singapore; Senior Co-Chair, IBA Law Firm Management Committee

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Christian Tuddenham Jenner & Block, London

The IBA, its officers and staff accept no responsibility for any views expressed, presentations or materials produced by delegates or speakers at the Conference.
**Tuesday 27 February**

1900 – 2230  **Evening/dinner reception/networking**

**Pre-Conference Dinner**
The Viewing Deck, Palace Hotel Downtown, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Blvd, Downtown Dubai

Directions: [https://maps.app.goo.gl/k7zCs952patTLnsQ6](https://maps.app.goo.gl/k7zCs952patTLnsQ6)

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**Wednesday 28 February**

0830 – 0930  **Registration and buffet breakfast on arrival**

Royale Ballroom, Palace Hotel Downtown, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Blvd, Downtown Dubai

0930 – 0940  **Welcome remarks**

Sadiq Jafar  Hadef & Partners, Dubai; Member, Arab Regional Forum Advisory Board

0930 – 0940  **Opening remarks**

Stephen Revell  Singapore; Senior Co-Chair, IBA Law Firm Management Committee

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0940 – 1025  **Session One**

**Working with legal departments at corporate clients**

General counsel often comment on how many law firms ‘work the way they work’ rather than seeking to adapt to the way the client works. This is a potential frustration for General Counsel and others within legal departments at corporate clients. Similarly, lawyers in law firms – especially associates – sometimes get frustrated with demands for immediate responses with little or no explanation or prioritisation from corporate legal departments. Surely, we all simply need to talk more!

**Moderator**

Sadiq Jafar  Hadef & Partners, Dubai; Member, Arab Regional Forum Advisory Board

**Panellists**

David Bligh-Smith  Al Shaya Group, Kuwait City
James Donald  Accor, Dubai
Vera Kolesnik  Nestle Middle East, Dubai
Paul Taylor  Eversheds Sutherland, Dubai

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1025 – 1110  **Session two**

**The clients speak – a panel of leading regional GCs provide their views on law firms and changes they would like to suggest or see**

**Moderator**

Sheila Shadmand  Jones Day, Dubai

**Panellists**

Nabil Azar  National Bank of Kuwait, Dubai
Filippo Cossalter  Johnson & Johnson, Dubai
Khalid Khan  Seddiqi Holding, Dubai
Ramzi Modad  Chalhoub Group, Dubai

1110 – 1140  **Refreshment break**

1140 – 1230  **Session three**

**What is happening in global legal markets? How does this affect the Middle East?**

This session will summarise some of the key opportunities and challenges firms all over the world are focused on, followed by a discussion with senior law firm partners regarding how they believe global trends will impact law firms and corporations in the Middle East.

**Moderator**

William Howard  Travers Smith, London

**Panellists**

Jimmy Haoula  BSA Ahmad Bin Hezeem & Associates, Dubai
Tahan (Tom) Thraya  Mayer Brown, Dubai
Christian Tuddenham  Jenner & Block, London
Samer Qudah  Al Tamimi, Dubai

1900 – 2230  **Evening/dinner reception/networking**

Pre-Conference Dinner
The Viewing Deck, Palace Hotel Downtown, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Blvd, Downtown Dubai

Directions: [https://maps.app.goo.gl/k7zCs952patTLnsQ6](https://maps.app.goo.gl/k7zCs952patTLnsQ6)
Legal recruitment opportunities and challenges – how to attract and retain the best lawyers during 2024, in private practice and within corporations

Attracting and retaining the best talent is an ongoing challenge for law firms and legal departments. The rapidly moving situation naturally provides opportunities for the prime performers. The panel will address salaries, benefits, flexibility, and career progression. This conversation should be of interest to all entities seeking to recruit or grow during the coming year.

Moderator
Jonathan Berry  Robert Walters, Dubai

Panellists
Kevin Cooper  Hadef & Partners, Dubai
Yosr Hamza  Gartner, Dubai

1300 – 1400  Lunch

Creating a culture to look after and develop our people

Many older lawyers talk about the challenges of working with the ‘new generation’. However, this is a reality to which everyone must adapt rather than complain. This may mean we need more people to ensure we are developing our talent in the way they expect to be developed, both with substantive legal skills and (equally importantly) a wide range of soft skills. We must stop assuming young lawyers will at some point ‘wake up and get on with it’; it’s the law firms and legal departments that must change. Those that adapt will be much more successful in retaining talent and clients.

Moderator
Stephen Revell  Singapore; Senior Co-Chair, IBA Law Firm Management Committee

Panellists
Melissa Davis  MD Communications Ltd, London
Patrick Gearon  Charles Russell Speechlys, Dubai
Keith Hutchison  Clyde & Co, Dubai
Kiersten Lucas  Stephenson Hanwood, Dubai

1430 – 1445  Ted Talk

Following COP28 in Dubai, what does the Middle East legal sector need to know and do?

Speaker
Layla El-Wafi  Standard Chartered Bank, Dubai

1445 – 1525  Session six

The place of technology and artificial intelligence now and in the future

For many years, there has been discussion about the need to choose the right technology, and then the challenge of implementation and ‘buy in’. Some law firms and legal departments have struggles with selection and adoption. Then along came AI. This has made the lives of law firm leaders even more confusing. Now we have AI, do we still need ‘technology’? Is AI simply a fad or is it truly the dramatic change some suggest? This session provides practical advice about how law firm leaders can tackle decisions around technology and AI.

Moderator
Lucy Ryland  Thomson Reuters, London

Panellists
Jamie Goldrich  SYKE, Leeds
Chris Knuckey  Thomson Reuters, London

1525 – 1545  Refreshment break

Opportunities for law firms, and lawyers, in the Middle East and the ‘rush’ to Saudi Arabia

There is significant activity in the Middle East, especially given the apparent opening up of the legal market in Saudi Arabia. How do law firm leaders make the right decisions about growth in the Middle East? Where do they open or grow offices? Should they flock to Saudi Arabia? What are the other opportunities that may be ‘overshadowed’ by the focus on Saudi Arabia?

Moderator
Tim Casben  Gowling WLG, Dubai

Panellists
Dr Ahmad Alkhamees  Harasani & Alkhamees Law Firm, Riyadh
Ahmed Barakat  ASAR – Al Ruwayeh & Partners, Kuwait City
Dr Ghada Darwish Karbon  Dr Ghada M Darwish Karbon Law Firm, Doha; Vice Chair, Arab Regional Forum
Dr Zeyad Khoshaim  Khoshaim & Associates, Riyadh
Wednesday continued

1630 – 1730 Session eight

Developing the law firm of the future
Senior management of law firms need to raise their attention from the day-to-day routine and towards the future to ensure their law firms are sustainable. The future is both unclear and becoming increasingly complicated. We will discuss with various managing partners the things they focus on to be ‘future ready’.

Moderator
Jan Dernestam  Mannheimer Swartling, Stockholm

Panellists
Emily Beirne  Kobre & Kim, Dubai
Mahmoud (Mac) Fadlallah  Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, Dubai
Dr Mahmood Hussain  M&CO Legal, Dubai
Paul Marmor  Sherrards, London
Stephen Revell  Singapore; Senior Co-Chair, IBA Law Firm Management Committee

1730  Closing remarks
**Information**

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| Venue | **IBA Middle East Conference: Law firms and clients working together**  
Conference Room: Royale Ballroom  
Location: Palace Hotel Downtown, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Blvd, Downtown Dubai, Dubai, United Arab Emirates  
Directions: [https://maps.app.goo.gl/k7Cs952patSLnsQ6](https://maps.app.goo.gl/k7Cs952patSLnsQ6) |
| Language | All working sessions and Conference materials will be in English |
| Fees | The registration for the IBA Middle East Conference will be available at [registration.infosalons.ae/IBA24DU/Delegate/Registration/Welcome](https://registration.infosalons.ae/IBA24DU/Delegate/Registration/Welcome)  
Conference Registration: US$250, plus VAT  
Optional pre-conference dinner at the Viewing Deck, Palace Hotel Downtown on 27 February: US$220, plus VAT  
Full payment must be received in order to obtain your Conference documentation. |
| Registration confirmation | Upon receipt of your payment for the Conference a confirmation email will be sent. Registration confirmation will not be distributed by post. |
| Travel arrangements and visas | Participants are responsible for making their own travel arrangements. It is recommended that you check your visa requirements with your local embassy or consulate.  
Please apply for your visa in good time. |
| Hotel Accommodation | The Palace Hotel Downtown, Dubai  
Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Boulevard, Downtown Dubai, Dubai, United Arab Emirates  
+971 4 4287888  
Location: [https://maps.app.goo.gl/AbvYhj0YrJ5YMpZA8](https://maps.app.goo.gl/AbvYhj0YrJ5YMpZA8)  
Delegates are responsible for making their accommodation reservations directly with the hotel as well as entering into an agreement with the hotel regarding credit card guarantees, cancellation terms and conditions, and room rates. We cannot accept responsibility for hotel accommodation disputes between a delegate and the hotel. |
| Promotional literature at venue hotel | Please note that no individual or organisation may display or distribute publicity material or other printed material during the conference, unless by prior arrangement with us. Organisations and companies wishing to discuss promotional opportunities should contact: s.jafa@hadefpartners.com |
| Cancellation of registration or social functions | Cancellation: In the case of cancellation of a registration to attend the conference or pre-conference dinner (each an ‘event’), provided that written notice of cancellation is received by the organisers no later than 21 February 2024, the fees related to the event(s) shall be refunded as soon as practicable, less a 25 per cent administration charge. Except in the case of cancellation of the event by the organisers, no refund shall be made in respect of any registration/payment made later than 21 February 2024. Whereas, in the case of cancellation of the event by the organisers, the fees paid to attend such event shall be refunded in full. The organisers shall use all reasonable efforts to pay refunds to the account from which payment had been made, or such other account of the registered person (or their employer, company or law firm) specified by the registered person by written notice, provided that the said reasonable efforts shall only be used for 30 days following receipt of the notice; and any monies that the organisers are unable to refund by the end of such period shall be treated as conference revenues. For the avoidance of doubt, any right to a refund only applies to persons who have registered and paid to attend an event. Without limitation to the generality of the foregoing, refund rights shall not apply if a person is unable to attend an event for any reason other than cancellation in accordance with this paragraph. The organisers are solely responsible for any refunds and should be contacted via the following email address: m.morante@hadefpartners.com. |

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**Continuing Professional Development/Continuing Legal Education**  
For Conference delegates from jurisdictions where CPD/CLE is mandatory, the IBA will provide a Certificate of Attendance for the Conference. Subject to CPD/CLE requirements, Conference delegates can use this to obtain the relevant number of hours' accreditation. The number of CPD/CLE hours available may vary depending on the rules applied by the members’ bar association/law society on time recording criteria.  
A Certificate of Attendance is available to Conference delegates on request. Please ask at the IBA Conference registration desk for information on how to obtain the certificate.

**IBA Harassment Policy**  
IBA conferences provide unrivalled professional development and network-building opportunities for international legal practitioners and their professional associates. The IBA values the participation of every delegate and member of the IBA and wants all attendees to have an enjoyable and fulfilling experience. Accordingly, all Conference attendees are expected to show respect and courtesy to other attendees, IBA staff and those involved with hosting the events throughout the Conference and at all Conference events, receptions, and parties, whether officially organised by the IBA or others. All delegates, guests, attendees, speakers, exhibitors, staff and volunteers at any IBA event are required to conform to the IBA Harassment Policy.

See [www.ibanet.org/iba-harassment-policy](http://www.ibanet.org/iba-harassment-policy)
**Law Firm Management Committee**

The Committee’s diverse membership is drawn from the profession around the world and from firms of all sizes and areas of practice. The Committee pursues its mission through a number of activities including the annual IBA conference at which the Committee regularly offers a wide range of sessions addressing current top-of-mind issues; regional conferences, generally in coordination with the IBAs regional fora, which address current law firm management issues of regional interest; webinar programs; e-bulletins; and our publications and other material accessible to members on our website.

Once you join the Committee, you may actively contribute to its work by:

- Joining one of the Committee’s five subcommittees: Strategy and Finance; Business Development and Marketing; Talent and Leadership; Knowledge Management and IT; or Small and Medium Firms;
- Contributing to Law Firm Management publications including the e-bulletins; and
- More generally, sharing your own know-how while learning from others and participating actively at IBA conferences and the committee events and initiatives including its webinars.

For more information please visit the **Law Firm Management Committee home page**.

**Arab Regional Forum**

The Arab Regional Forum provides lawyers active in, or with an interest in the region, with a means to establish contact and exchange information with each other. A particular focus of interest is the continuing economic importance of the region, including reconstruction and investment projects following peace initiatives.

For more information please visit the **Arab Regional Forum home page**.