

Nikolai Lazarev

Year of Call: 2010

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Overview

Nikolai Lazarev specialises in international commercial litigation, arbitration, corporate finance, capital markets and sovereign wealth, offering a broad range of specialist legal and transactional advice. He advises leading enterprises and financial institutions as well as ultra-high-net-worth individuals and family offices on complex, often high-value, multi-jurisdictional and culturally sensitive disputes, projects and transactions.

His diverse commercial litigation practice encompasses contractual and tortious disputes, joint ventures, partnership and shareholder conflicts as well as matters involving trusts, supply of goods and services, jurisdictional and conflict of laws issues, international crime and civil fraud. He is experienced in worldwide asset tracing and recovery in multi-jurisdictional commercial disputes, urgent procedural applications (including stays of proceedings, anti-suit injunctions and worldwide freezing orders) and the enforcement of foreign judgments and arbitral awards.

Nikolai is an experienced corporate finance and capital markets lawyer (solicitor) who, before joining the Commercial Bar, honed his expertise at a leading global law firm based in the City of London. Nikolai's practice is driven by his clients' priorities and integrates both contentious and corporate advisory work—covering commercial negotiations, dispute prevention, transactional matters and regulatory compliance—across a range of sectors. His areas of expertise include M&A, pre-IPO restructurings, IPOs, rights issues, private placements, follow-on offerings, bond issuances, tailored capital markets strategies and special situations. He is also skilled in advising on pioneering technologies such as blockchain and AI, alongside renewable energy, media, banking, real estate, infrastructure and natural resources. Throughout his career, Nikolai has advised on and coordinated substantial debt and equity capital-raising initiatives across various industries and jurisdictions.

Nikolai is passionate about finding innovative solutions to his clients' complex legal and business challenges. He has extensive experience coordinating and leading multidisciplinary legal and consulting teams worldwide, requiring creative strategic vision and an in-depth understanding of the jurisdictions where cases may be won or lost. In complex cross-border matters, solicitors and clients value Nikolai's astute commercial pragmatism, practical judgement and his appreciation of strategic (and cultural) nuances. He combines technical legal knowledge with lateral thinking to achieve his clients' business objectives. Clients also appreciate his personable nature, responsiveness, versatility and ability to distil complex legal concepts into clear and accessible language.

International Arbitration

Nikolai is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (FCIArb). He has advised and acted for clients across multiple industries and jurisdictions in matters requiring a high degree of commercial awareness in culturally sensitive environments. He accepts instructions to sit as arbitrator in commercial arbitrations or to act as arbitration counsel in ad hoc and institutional arbitrations (e.g. ICC, LCIA, SCC, SIAC) under the principal arbitral rules.

Selected Experience

- Acting for a co-defendant in a \$6bn dispute involving a state-owned Central Asian Bank.
- Advising Kazakh and Chinese state oil firms on the acquisition of one of the largest Kazakh upstream enterprises in a deal valued at \$2.6bn.
- Advising a multinational renewable energy enterprise on a \$1bn IPO with a private placement and subsequent rights issue.
- Advising the government of Turkey on its sovereign note issuance programme.
- Advising a prominent billionaire investor on the takeover of a leading European football club.
- Advising a leading international bank on a €400m Sukuk issuance.
- Advising an art dealer on the acquisition of several Old Masters, raising complex issues around Nazi-looted art, provenance and title.
- Advising the ex-wife of a prominent billionaire in connection with obtaining (an additional) financial remedy by 're-opening' her foreign divorce under Part III of the Matrimonial and Family Proceedings Act 1984.
- Advising numerous ultra-high-net-worth individuals worldwide on various 'private client' matters, including wealth management, trusts, taxation, investments and philanthropy.

Public Engagements

A regular public speaker and media commentator, Nikolai often addresses audiences at leading international forums. He is available for interview via his chambers.

Publications

Nikolai has authored articles on corporate governance, international arbitration, human rights and legal ethics that have been published in and cited by prominent legal journals including the International Company and Commercial Law Review, the Journal of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, Harvard International Law Journal, Oxford Journal of Legal Studies and the Society of Legal Scholars.

Interests

Nikolai's leisure interests include running (he is known as 'the fastest barrister' and was the winner of the 100m Chariots of Fire Sprint hosted by the Inner Temple to celebrate Harold Abrahams' iconic win at the 1924 Paris Olympics), travelling, hiking, mountain climbing, speed skating as well as the English countryside, oriental ceramics, music and art.

Direct Access

Nikolai Lazarev is qualified to accept instructions directly from members of the public, corporations, financial institutions and professional clients under the Direct Access scheme.

Academic qualifications

- 2001-2004: LLB (Hons) (UCL, London) with First Class in final dissertation
- 2004-2005: LLM (UCL, London) with Distinctions in two final dissertations
- 2006-2007: LPC (BPP Law School, London) with Commendation

Professional qualifications & appointments

- Called to the Bar in 2010 (England & Wales)
- Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (FCIArb)
- Solicitor (England & Wales)

Professional bodies

- Inner Temple
- Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CIArb); Fellow (FCIArb)
- Commercial Bar Association (COMBAR)
- Technology & Construction Bar Association (TECBAR)
- Chancery Bar Association (ChBA)
- Bar European Group (BEG)
- Law Society of England & Wales
- Law Society (International Division)

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