



Gaurav Sharma

Called: 2006

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Gaurav is a highly accomplished advocate having appeared as lead counsel in disputes throughout his career. He was named in the Legal 500 as a "Future Leader" and "Next Generation Lawyer" in 2018 and 2019 and is recommended as a leading barrister in 2021.

Gaurav has acted in many leading international disputes over the last decade or so, ranging from commercial and investment arbitration disputes for and against states and state-parties, to group litigation matters in the English courts of wide public importance concerning jurisdictional and policy issues of a transnational nature.

Before joining Quadrant, he spent several years as a senior litigator in Shell's Global Litigation group. In that role, in addition to his counsel work, he worked in close collaboration with managers and reported to senior executives within the Shell group of companies. As such, he developed an acute understanding of an organisation's priorities, including the potential impact of high-profile disputes relationally and reputationally, and how to handle these risks to meet the demands of the various stakeholders involved.

Gaurav acts as sole counsel, together with other barristers or as part of a team with lawyers from instructing companies and law firms (whether internationally or UK-based). Having previously worked as a senior lawyer at the leading disputes firms Debevoise & Plimpton and 3C, he is perfectly comfortable handling the day to day conduct of cases, including managing in-house teams and law firm associates on work streams in complex matters. He has a track record of success acting in disputes across all sectors of the energy industry, notably including:

- Upstream oil and gas production disputes (including operational and economic issues).
- Liquefied natural gas (LNG) and natural gas disputes arising under long-term contracts (including price reviews and reopeners, transportation and shortfall disputes, and force majeure issues affecting LNG production).
- Renewable energy disputes (including in the wind, hydro and solar energy sectors).

In addition to his work in the energy industry, Gaurav has substantial experience acting in commercial litigation and arbitration matters in other industry sectors, notably including banking and financial disputes, as well as corporate disputes between shareholders arising from M&A transactions and joint ventures.

Gaurav's recent and ongoing litigation mandates include:

- *Major international energy company* in proceedings in the English commercial court relating to the delivery of cargoes of crude oil to Singapore.
- *Leading UK renewable power provider*. Advising in a dispute in the English commercial court with a technology contractor.
- *Okpabi and others v Royal Dutch Shell Plc and Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Ltd* [2017] EWHC 89 (TCC): Acting for the defendants in this group litigation matter dealing, amongst other things, with the complex issue of the existence of a duty of care owed by parent companies in relation to the conduct of foreign affiliates.

His recent international arbitration matters include:

- **ICC arbitration:** Successfully representing a consortium of energy companies in an US\$850 million arbitration brought by a Middle-Eastern state government concerning well design and processing facility construction issues.
- **ICC arbitration:** Successfully representing the Greek state-owned gas company in its major “landmark” gas price review with its Turkish counterpart, BOTAS. The arbitration involved complex issues of res judicata and issue estoppel in light of an earlier award under the same contract, and the value at stake was several hundred million US\$.
- **ICSID arbitration** (ongoing): Acting for Shell in its investment treaty arbitration with the Philippines over tax bills of US\$1.1 billion that were retrospectively imposed on the Contractor at the end of its natural gas production sharing contract by the state’s Commission on Audit.
- **UNCITRAL arbitration:** Acting in confidential international arbitration proceedings relating to the production of power in the wind turbine sector. Involved highly technical issues relating to the design, construction and life-span of the turbines and their moving components.
- **ICSID arbitration** (ongoing): Acting for the Sultanate of Oman in investment treaty proceedings brought by Turkish former contractor in relation to a suite of oilfield services contracts.
- **SCC arbitration:** Successfully securing an Emergency Arbitrator award to prevent the government of Benin from taking further steps to expropriate the assets of Puma Energy in its petroleum operations business. The matter was settled shortly thereafter.
- **DIS arbitration:** Successfully representing a major international energy company in a US\$2 billion arbitration against a European state party.
- **ICC arbitration:** Successfully representing a major international energy company in a US\$250 million LNG price review against a European buyer of LNG for delivery to Spain and France.

He currently serves on the ICC UK Selections Subcommittee, and accepts institutional and ad-hoc arbitrator appointments. He was previously a member of the IBA’s Investment Arbitration Subcommittee from 2014-2016.

What the directories say

- *“Gaurav Sharma is at the top of his game. He is an absolutely first-rate arbitration expert.”*(Chambers UK, 2024)
- *“Gaurav is a pleasure to work with and goes above and beyond the call of duty.”*(Chambers UK, 2024)
- *“He has an immense knowledge of the industry unparalleled in junior counsel.”*(Chambers UK, 2024)
- *“Gaurav has shown excellent legal skill and ability to speak the same language as clients.”*(Chambers UK, 2024)
- *“Gaurav is first class, an outstanding junior counsel and a pleasure to work with. He produces clear written and skilful oral advocacy.”*(Legal 500, 2024)
- *“Gaurav has a great ability of grasping the industry perspective while providing clear and incisive advice on how best to lead the case. A hugely impressive all-rounder.”*(Legal 500, 2024)
- *“Gaurav is an incredibly clever barrister. He is a strategic thinker and leaves no stone unturned!”* (Legal 500, 2023)
- *“He has encyclopaedic knowledge of the oil and gas sector, and is exceptionally bright, excellent at strategizing, and speaks the language of the industry.”*(Legal 500, 2023)
- *“Very user-friendly, positive, bright and commercial, you know you are getting a specialist in the entire energy space, not just on the contractor side.”*(Legal 500, 2022)
- *“User-friendly, thoughtful and measured in everything he does, he brings invaluable commercial experience and insight to the table.”*(Legal 500, 2021)

Academic

Gaurav is a guest lecturer at the King’s College School of Law (International Investment Law LLM)

Awards

Gerald Moody Major Scholar; GDL Major Scholar (Gray’s Inn)

Ranking



Publications

Gaurav Sharma with Chantal du Toit of Shell have contributed the chapter: 'Efficiency in International Commercial Arbitration in England: Three Innovations for Future Proceedings' in 'International Arbitration in England: Perspectives in Times of Change' (Wolter Kluwer, 2022)

Presentations

Gaurav is frequently invited to speak at arbitration events, with recent appointments including chairing conferences or panels at the C5 Long Term Gas Contracts conference in Berlin (2018); the Institute for Transnational Arbitration London conference on Environmental Issues in Investment Arbitration (2019); and the Legal Business International Arbitration Summit (2019).

In-house Experience

Gaurav spent a number of years as a Senior Legal Counsel at Shell.

Languages

French (fluent); German (fluent); Dutch (basic)