



**Ayesha Zia**  
Senior Associate

1. Master of Laws (LLM) in International Dispute Resolution – Queen Mary University of London
2. Bar Professional Training Course (BPTC) Graduate – Called to the Bar of England and Wales in 2016
3. Bachelor of Laws (LLB) – University of London
4. Registered as a Legal Consultant with the Dubai Legal Affairs Department
5. Admitted Advocate of the Courts of Pakistan

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## Areas of Practice

- Arbitration and DIFC Courts
- Construction and Real Estate Disputes
- Agency and Franchising Disputes
- Shareholders Disputes
- Insurance Disputes
- General Commercial Disputes

## Summary Profile

Ayesha is a Senior Associate in the Arbitration and DIFC Courts department at M&CO Legal. During her employment with the firm, Ayesha has been actively involved in various aspects of the Firm's practice and is a key member of the team as evidenced by her involvement in matters/ disputes pertaining to the Construction, Real Estate, Insurance, Franchise, and Agency, Tenancy Employment, Shareholders' disputes, general commercial disputes, etc.

During her employment in Malaysia, Ayesha honed her Legal Skills by working under the umbrella of some well-established names in the Legal Sector. She undertook various roles ranging from a Legal Researcher to a Legal Associate rendering her services in exchange for some valuable mentorship.

Ayesha attained her Bar Qualification from Cardiff University in 2016 where she received comprehensive training in Civil and Criminal Advocacy, Legal Drafting, Legal Opinion Writing, and the like. In addition to her Bar Qualification, in 2024, Ayesha also earned her Master of Laws from the Queen Mary University in International Dispute Resolution and two Postgraduate Certificates i.e., a Diploma in International Arbitration (2015) and a Postgraduate Certificate in Oil & Gas (2014).

## Education

- Master of Laws (LLM) – International Dispute Resolution – Queen

Mary University of London (October, 2024)

- Bar Professional Training Course – Cardiff University, United Kingdom (August, 2016)
- Diploma in International Arbitration – Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (June 2015)
- Certificate in Oil & Gas Law – Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (December 2014)
- Bachelors in Law – University of London (External Programme) – (November, 2013)

## Languages

- English
- Urdu
- Hindi

## Experience

Ayesha has obtained ample knowledge and experience in various fields of UAE Law, with a focus on matters/ disputes concerning construction and real estate, insurance employment, agency and franchising, shareholders disputes, etc.

Ayesha actively represents clients before the Courts of the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) and various international and domestic arbitrations before the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), Dubai International Arbitration Centre (DIAC) etc.

In addition to being a member of the Arbitration Department at M&CO Legal, Ayesha also works closely with the Corporate and Litigation team of the firm and regularly advises clients on disputes pertaining to the above-mentioned areas of law.

## Focus Area

Ayesha has experience in a wide range of fields of UAE Law, with a specific focus on matters concerning construction, real estate, insurance and shareholder disputes following her to regularly advise clients on the same. The key cases wherein Ayesha provided her legal services are as follows:

1. Representing a Developer (Defendant) in a Dubai seated Arbitration, in respect of a claim initiated by the Engineer (Claimant) against the Developer, whereby the Engineer seeks its due entitlements arising out of the engineering consultancy agreement executed between them. The Arbitration is administered by the Dubai International Arbitration Centre and the approximate amount of the dispute is AED 12,800,000.
2. Representing a Claimant (Subcontractor) against the Defendant (Main Contractor) in a claim whereby the Claimant seeks from the Main Contractor, its due entitlements arising out of the Conditions of Subcontract for Construction – FIDIC First Edition 2011 (as amended). The Arbitration is administered by the Dubai International Arbitration Centre and the approximate amount of the dispute is AED 9,830,000.
3. Representing the Contractor (Defendant) in a claim from the Employer (Claimant), in respect of a project located in Jumeirah Village Circle, Dubai, UAE. The claim arises out of an amended standard form FIDIC 1987 (4<sup>th</sup> Edition) Conditions of Contract for Works of Civil Engineering Construction, whereby the Employer seeks monetary compensation from the Contractor, alleging that (i) the Contractor did not perform works on time and (ii) the Employer is entitled to claim compensation from the Contractor as per the terms of the contract. The Arbitration is administered by the Dubai International Arbitration Centre and the approximate amount of the dispute is AED 8,885,000.
4. Representing the Claimant (a Purchaser) against the Defendant (the Seller), in respect of a claim whereby the Claimant seeks a refund from the Defendant of 75% of the amount paid by the Claimant pursuant to three separate sale and purchase agreements executed between

them. The Arbitration is administered by the Dubai International Arbitration Centre and the approximate amount of the dispute is AED 5,000,000.

5. Successfully represented the Claimant in an Oman seated Arbitration administered by the International Chamber of Commerce. The matter concerned a claim initiated by the Claimant against the Defendant in respect of its due entitlements arising out of the Refractory Services Agreement, executed between them, pursuant to which, the Claimant provided certain services to the Defendant but remained unpaid for the same. The approximate amount of the dispute is USD 4,400,000.
6. Resenting the Claimant (Subcontractor) against the Defendant (Main Contractor), in respect of a claim initiated by the Claimant to claim its entitlements from the Defendant, arising out of the subcontract executed between the parties. The Arbitration is administered by the Dubai International Arbitration Centre and the approximate amount of the dispute is AED 348,000.
7. Appointed as the Tribunal Secretary in a Dubai seated Arbitration. The claim concerns a tenancy dispute, in respect of which, the parties rejected the jurisdiction of the Rental Disputes Committee and opted for Arbitration. The Claimant (Landlord) seeks the eviction of the Defendant (Tenant) from the premises and the payment of the rent by the Tenant for the entire duration of the tenancy up until the date of eviction. The Arbitration was administered by the Dubai International Arbitration Centre and the approximate amount of the dispute was AED 55,000.
8. Representing a Contractor against the Employer in a claim whereby the Claimant seeks from the Employer, its due entitlements for (i) Extension of Time and Prolongation Costs (ii) Variation Orders (iii) Value of Executed but Unpaid Works and (iv) Materials on Site, arising out of the Conditions of Contract Part I (FIDIC 1987) reprinted in 1992, as amended. The agreement between the parties provides for a DIAC Arbitration Clause. The arbitration has not been initiated as the Claimant is in the process of satisfying the pre-conditions to arbitrate. The approximate amount of the dispute is AED 46,200,000.
9. Representing a Contractor against the Employer in a claim whereby the Claimant seeks from the Employer, its due entitlements for (i) Extension of Time and Prolongation Costs (ii) Variation Orders (iii) Value of Executed but Unpaid Works and (iv) Materials on Site, arising out of the Conditions of Contract Part I (FIDIC 1987) reprinted in 1992, as amended. The agreement between the parties provides for a DIAC Arbitration Clause. The arbitration has not been initiated as the Claimant is in the process of satisfying the pre-conditions to arbitrate. The approximate amount of the dispute is AED 38,000,000.
10. Negotiated, drafted and finalized a settlement agreement between our client (a developer) and its financier, to the tune of AED 129,386,554.

11. Negotiated, drafted and finalized a settlement agreement between our client (a developer) and its contractor, to the tune of AED 40,000,000.
12. Legal opinion to an international law firm based in the DIFC, on various legal issues, including laws pertaining to foreign ownership of the UAE companies, the arbitrability of disputes, the applicability of the New York Convention and the relevant grounds thereunder to resist the enforcement of a foreign award in the UAE, given the mutual enforcement framework between DIFC and UAE, the recognition and enforcement of a foreign award in Dubai (mainland) through DIFC, etc.
13. Lending assistance in respect of an expert opinion provided to the High Court of Singapore in relation to the enforcement of an interim award issued by a tribunal in DIAC arbitration proceedings. In particular, the Expert Opinion dealt with the applicability of Decree No. 34/2021 in circumstances where the parties had agreed to the application of the DIFC-LCIA arbitration rules, however, the Decree required that proceedings be conducted in accordance with the DIAC arbitration rules.
14. Lending assistance in respect of an expert opinion on Back-to-Back Clauses under UAE Law in an ICC Arbitration instructed by a Contractor, the Claimant for an arbitration proceeding who entered into an agreement with a Sub-Contractor, the Respondent for works of a Project in UAE.
15. Lending assistance in respect of an expert opinion under UAE Law with respect to the validity and effectiveness of pathological arbitration clauses before for an arbitration under the DIFC-LCIA rules.

## **Publications**

1. UAE Labour Law: My work contract is different from my offer letter, what action can I take? - <https://gulfnews.com/living-in-uae/ask-us/uae-labour-law-my-work-contract-is-different-from-my-offer-letter-what-action-can-i-take-1.1654006562001>
2. Payment of Wages through the Wages Protection System – 4 January 2023 – Payment of Wages through the Wages Protection System – M and Co
3. Bank Guarantees and Employee’s Protection Insurance Schemes – 10 October 2022 - published in Legal 500 - L500 | M&CO Legal > United Arab Emirates | Legal 500 law firm profiles | News and developments
4. The Applicability and Enforceability of Conditional Clauses in the Construction Contracts under the UAE Laws – published in Legal 500 - L500 | M&CO Legal > United Arab Emirates | Legal 500 law firm profiles | News and developments

5. [Regulations Concerning Fintech Companies – 17 December 2019 – published in Legal 500 – L500 | M&CO Legal > United Arab Emirates | Legal 500 law firm profiles | News and developments](#)