
London Office Hosts Two-Day Conference on Integration and International Dispute Resolution in Small States

MAY 23, 2016

The London office of Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP welcomed more than 70 guests and speakers from around the world to a two-day conference to discuss the particular issues small states face in regard to international dispute resolution and regional integration.

Small states (with a population of 1.5 million or less) provide a fascinating microcosm, which enables certain legal phenomena to be studied more easily. They also face specific issues due to the size of their populations, landmass and economies. The conference explored these issues, in particular the commercial relations between large economies and small states, the role of small states as financial centres, and business-to-business and state-to-state dispute resolution involving small states.

The conference brought together representatives of small states, academics and lawyers from the Pacific, the Caribbean, Europe, the United States and the Middle East, as well as the United Nations and the Commonwealth Secretariat, to present on a series of themes, including: the WTO and free trade, anti-dumping and competition policy, intellectual property, energy, financial regulation, tax, international arbitration (state-to-state, investor-state and commercial arbitration) and mediation.

[Gary Born](#), Chair of the [International Arbitration Practice Group](#), delivered the keynote address on “International Commercial Arbitration: Law for Small States?”, which considered, among other subjects, the impact of his proposed Bilateral Arbitration Treaty (BAT) on small states.

Partner [Steven Finizio](#) opened the conference and chaired a session on the subject “Integration in Small States”, which included representatives from the Pacific, the West Indies, Liechtenstein and Iceland. New Zealand Senior Associate, [Desley Horton](#), presented on international commercial arbitration in Pacific island states.

The conference was organised by Dr. Petra Butler—Associate Professor at the Victoria University of Wellington School of Law and former scholar-in-residence at Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr—in conjunction with the British Institute of Institutional and Comparative Law (BIICL), the Centre for Small States at Queen Mary University of London and the Open University.

View the conference's [full agenda](#) and read the [speakers' biographies and presentation abstracts](#).



(Partner Steven Finizio (right) chairs the opening session.)



(Partner Gary Born delivers the keynote address.)