Curriculum Vitae

Vahid Dashti

Cross-border Disputes & Arbitration Specialist
International Commercial Transactions

MIDS (2017/2018) - Lloyd's Certificate in International Maritime Law & Shipping Contracts

Geneva | +41 78 752 61 40 - vd@smbclaw.ch, dashti.v@gmail.com
LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/vahid-dashti
Website: www.smbclaw.ch/our-people/vahid-dashti

Profile Summary

International disputes lawyer with over two decades of practice combining complex commercial transactions and cross-border dispute resolution. Holds a specialist postgraduate degree in international dispute settlement (MIDS, Geneva, 2018) and has served as counsel in proceedings before the ICC, LCIA, and ICSID, as well as courts in Switzerland, England, and China. Dispute matters handled as counsel carry an aggregate value exceeding USD 650 million.

Sector expertise spans offshore oil and gas up/mid-stream projects, EPC and industrial construction, maritime and shipping, commodities trading, automotive and metals industries. Deep transactional background — EPC, cross-border high-value asset acquisition, trade finance, consortiums and joint venture, and supply structures — provides the commercial and factual literacy that rigorous case management in arbitration requires. Prior roles as in-house disputes team leader (IOEC, Tehran) and senior legal counsel and board secretary at a major international energy company (NICO, Lausanne) ground this in real institutional and commercial practice.

Current research addresses admissibility of criminally obtained evidence in international arbitration, reflecting active engagement with arbitration scholarship alongside practice.

Working languages: English (C1), Persian (native), French (B2, progressing), Arabic (functional).

Core Competencies

A. Cross-Border Disputes & International Arbitration

- Claim construction and evidence analysis in fact-intensive disputes
- Transactional and sectoral depth supporting dispute practice
- Multi-jurisdictional and cross-cultural practice
- Governance, procedural discipline, and institutional awareness
- Counsel experience in ICC, LCIA, and ICSID proceedings, as well as Swiss, English, and Chinese court litigation; familiarity with procedural architecture reinforced by MIDS training

B. Maritime, Shipping, Commodities & Trade Operations

- Contractual and documentary workflow design across trading, shipping, logistics, storage, and delivery chains
- Pre-dispute identification and resolution of documentary gaps, execution failures, and performance mismatches
- Payment-security and trade-finance structuring using guarantees, promissory notes, and credits in sanctions-sensitive settings
- Dispute exposure in maritime and commodities claims before LCIA and Chinese maritime courts

C. Complex Cross-border Contracts, Petroleum/Industry Projects & Strategic Transactions

- Full contract lifecycle management: drafting, negotiation, variation, and termination across EPC, offshore, and energy projects
- Risk allocation architecture covering liability, payment, performance, warranty, and remedy mechanisms
- Claim and dispute framing arising from complex project documentation and execution failures
- Transaction structuring and documentation in vessel acquisitions, M&A, and strategic energy asset deals

D. Board Advisory, Corporate Governance & Group Legal Coordination

- Legal advice and decision support to boards and senior management on risk-sensitive and dispute-relevant matters
- Governance and corporate approval process management requiring procedural discipline and independent judgment
- Multi-entity legal coordination across subsidiaries and stakeholders in complex group structures

Professional Profile

1- Of Counsel, Cross-border Disputes and International Commercial Transactions

SMBC Law (SIASSI McCUNN BUSSARD CAMPBELL Avocats & Solicitors), Geneva, May 2024 – Present

- Advise on complex international commercial contracts, cross-border projects, oil and commodity trade, maritime and shipping & storage arrangements, strategic asset acquisitions, and dispute-sensitive transaction structures across multiple jurisdictions.
- Draft, review, and negotiate transaction, logistics, partnership, and acquisition documentation, aligning commercial terms with legal risk allocation and execution realities.
- Provide strategic legal support on commercial arbitration, multi-jurisdictional disputes, enforcement exposure, and settlement-sensitive case positioning.

2- Senior Legal Counsel and Secretary of Board of Directors *(Hybrid In-House & Board Governance Role)*

NAFTIRAN INTERTRADE CO Ltd. (NICO), Lausanne, November 2018 – April 2024

- Served as key corporate officer supporting board and general assembly governance, corporate formalities, and legal coordination for the parent company and 8 main subsidiaries across multiple jurisdictions.
- Provided comprehensive legal support in international litigation and arbitration cases with a combined value exceeding USD 400 million.
- Supported senior management decision-making on high-value international transactions by identifying contractual exposure, governance implications, and commercially workable risk mitigation options.
- Advised business and operations teams on international commercial transactions, shipping and maritime operations, trade-support documentation, and sanctions-sensitive financial and logistical arrangements.
- Drafted, reviewed, and negotiated documentation relating to shipment, storage, trade finance, guarantees, promissory notes, open credits, and cross-border transaction structures.
- Managed contract performance, documentary compliance, payment-security, and execution-risk issues arising from storage, shipment, and cross-border delivery arrangements.
- Advised on U.S. and EU sanctions risk in connection with trade, shipping, financial transactions, and related cross-border commercial operations.
- Structured, drafted, and negotiated six separate vessel acquisitions totaling approximately USD 450 million.
- Led out-of-court settlement negotiations with a combined value of approximately USD 100 million.

3- Independent Counsel, Commercial Transaction and Cross-border Disputes

Tehran, May 2013 – August 2017

- Represented clients in the oil & gas, metals, and automotive sectors in cross-border commercial transactions, joint ventures, and strategic supply arrangements.
- Drafted and negotiated high-value international commercial contracts, including transaction, supply, and project documentation, and advised on sanctions-sensitive commercial structuring.
- Advised clients on contractual risk allocation, performance obligations, and cross-border enforcement exposure in complex commercial dealings.

4- Head of International Contracts & Disputes, Legal Expert (In-house Role)

IRANIAN OFFSHORE ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION CO. (IOEC), Tehran, January 2008 – May 2013

- Led the International Contracts and Disputes section, managing a team of 6 lawyers.
- Led high-stakes cross-border contractual litigation with favorable outcomes totaling approximately USD 250 million.
- Negotiated and finalized 14 EPC contracts for offshore gas extraction platforms and subsea oil and gas transfer pipelines, with an aggregate value of approximately USD 1.8 billion.
- Managed full contract life cycle for major offshore energy projects, including tender processes, claims and variations, delays and disruptions, termination, novation, and contract transfer.
- Drafted and negotiated project provisions on performance obligations, liability allocation, warranties, indemnities, and documentary compliance in complex cross-border energy and construction matters.
- Developed contract management templates, review processes, and internal controls to improve consistency and reduce contractual exposure.
- Standardized contracting workflows and documentation practices across major project teams.
- Advised on UN, U.S., and EU sanctions risks affecting offshore oil construction megaprojects and related banking and sectoral restrictions.
- Supported strategic investments, cross-border partnerships, M&A initiatives, and asset acquisitions linked to energy and infrastructure projects.

5- Selected Involvements, 2013 - Present

A. International Dispute Settlement

2023-2025	*LCIA Arbitration & Chinese Litigation (Co-Counsel)*	Representing a commodities trader in parallel disputes involving proceedings before the LCIA (London) and the Qingdao Maritime Court
2022-2024	*UK High Court Litigation (In-House Counsel)*	Acted in recovery of contractual receivables and enforcement of trade finance securities against a Cypriot-Ukrainian entity
2018-2024	*Swiss Litigation (In-House Counsel)*	Acted in litigation against a Swiss commodity group before the Cantonal Court of Zug and Swiss Supreme Court
2025-2026	*ICC Arbitration (Co-Counsel)*	Representing a car manufacturer in a dispute involving supply of defective automotive paint by a European supplier
2024-ongoing	*ICC Arbitration (Co-Counsel)*	Representing an automotive group in a high-stakes contractual dispute and parallel settlement negotiations
2020-2024	*ICSID Arbitration (In-House Counsel)*	Acted in an investor–state claim against an African state in relation to a series of term oil lifting arrangements

B. Cross-border Contractual Arrangements

2025-ongoing	*Asset Acquisition (Legal Advisor)*	Acting as legal advisor to an oil and gas investor in the acquisition of a jack-up drilling rig in Malaysia, 2025-ongoing
2024-2025	*Asset Acquisition (Legal Advisor)*	Acted as legal advisor to an offshore contractor in the acquisition of a jack-up rig in China, including due diligence, corporate structuring, and asset transfer, 2024-2025
2014-2015	*M&A Transaction (Lead Counsel)*	Advised an oil construction company on acquiring a drilling company and associated shipping/drilling assets through multilateral settlement and assignment frameworks
2016-2017	*EPC Contract (Lead Counsel)*	Negotiated and finalized EPC contracts for offshore pipeline and SPM installation in the Persian Gulf Oil Tank Farm & Terminal project
2014-2015	*LNG Project Claims & Settlements (Lead Counsel)*	Acted for petroleum engineering and procurement company for managing claims and settlements against the project owner as well as many European and Chinese suppliers and contractors in a major LNG project,
2013-2014	*Offshore Oil Field Development (Legal Advisor)*	Advised on structuring and negotiating buy-back, EPC, and drilling contracts for NIOC's ARVAND and RESALAT offshore oil field development projects, 2013-2014
2013-2014	*Strategic Energy Project (Legal Advisor)*	Advised on negotiations with the Omani Government for the Trans-MAKRAN gas export pipeline project, including project finance and legal structuring

6 - Arbitration Training and Certification

- **Certificate, International Maritime Law & Shipping Contracts,** Lloyd's Maritime Academy, May 2026
- **Oral Advocacy and Witness Examination,** Foundation for International Arbitration Advocacy, Geneva, 2018
- **Financial Damages Analysis in International Arbitration,** Charles River Associates, Geneva, 2018
- **International Mediation,** ALTENBURGER Ltd., Geneva, 2017
- **Written Advocacy and Drafting skills,** Sidley Austin LLP, Geneva, 2017

7- Early Career Experience

- **Intern/Junior Expert, Arbitration Center of Iran Chamber (ACIC),** 2004-2006
- **Junior Associate, SALEHANDISHAN Law & Management Consultants,** 2006-2007
- **Associate, ARYAPISHRO International Legal Consultants,** 2007-2008

Academic Background and Scholarship

1- Education

- LL.M., International Dispute Settlement (MIDS), Geneva, October 2018,
University of Geneva Law School & Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies
- M.A., Private Law, Tehran, June 2006,
IMAM SADIQUE University, School of Law & Islamic Jurisprudence
- LL.B., Law, Tehran, June 2001,
IMAM SADIQUE University, School of Law & Islamic Jurisprudence

2- Research and Publication

- Independent Research Fellow (Part-Time), Swiss Institute of Comparative Law (ISDC), Lausanne, November 2024 – January 2026
Research project: *"Admissibility of Criminally Obtained Evidence in International Arbitration",* planned for publication in last quarter of 2026
- **LinkedIn Series:** *"Short Practical Notes on Court Intervention at the Seat of Arbitration: Swiss PILA Chapter 12 and the English Arbitration Act Compared",* December 2025 – ongoing
Topics published to date include: declining jurisdiction vs. staying proceedings (Art. 7 PILA / s. 9 EAA); standard of review at the pre-award stage; submission without reservation.
- LL.M. Thesis: *"Investment Frivolous Claims: Concept, Law and Practice",* under the supervision of Prof. Joost Pauwelyn, October 2018
Examined the doctrinal foundations and procedural mechanisms for early dismissal of manifestly unmeritorious claims under investment treaty arbitration rules
- M.A. Thesis: *"The Substance of Technology Transfer Contracts: a comparative analysis of Iranian and French Legal Systems"*, under the supervision of Prof. Seyyed Hossein Safaei and Prof. Rabia Eskini, June 2006

3- Speaking and Presentations

- CIDS, presentation to fellow MIDS students: Dispute Resolution in Free Trade Agreements
Geneva, April 2018
- CIDS, presentation to fellow MIDS students: Competence-Competence and Lis Pendens: Comparative analysis of positive/negative effects,
Geneva, December 2017
- IOEC, Training Seminars for Senior legal & executive teams, Tehran, 2010 - 2013

- Legal Structure of Offshore Platforms Construction and Installation Contracts, Analysis of warranties, indemnities, and liability clauses
- UN, EU, and US Sanctions on Iran's Oil and Gas industry: impacts on offshore construction contracts
- Claims and Variation Orders in Offshore EPC Projects
- Drafting Skills; Maritime Construction Contracts