



Leyla Ahmed, FCI Arb.

Associate, Dispute Resolution

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Qualifications:

LLM (International Trade and Investment Law in Africa), Diploma in International Arbitration, LLB (Hons.), Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (FCI Arb), Certified Mediator, and Diploma in Law (KSL).

Memberships:

Law Society of Kenya, East African Law Society, Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, International Chamber of Commerce (ICC-Kenya), Association of Turnaround & Insolvency Kenya (ATIK), Young International Arbitration Group of the London Court of International Arbitration (LCIA), and Association of Young Arbitrators.

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Overview:

Leyla specializes in commercial litigation, employment, and labour disputes, intellectual property, and constitutional and human rights matters. She has particularly strong expertise in disputes in the telecommunication and aviation sectors. She is a Notary Public, a Commissioner of Oaths, a Certified Mediator, and a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators. She represents parties both in mediation and arbitration proceedings and sits as a mediator and arbitrator. She has been trained as a tribunal secretary and has sat as a tribunal secretary in several arbitral proceedings. She also advises on trade and investment matters.

Leyla is very passionate about alternative dispute resolution. In addition to her practice, she trains on ADR. Notable is that she has trained Women Members of County Assemblies drawn from various Kenyan counties in conjunction with the Frontier Counties Development Council on alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and peacebuilding. She sits as a member of the Court Annexed Mediation Bar Bench Committee, High Court Commercial, and Tax Division Bar Bench Committee, and was instrumental in the formation of the Kadhis Court Bar Bench Committee where she is currently the Co-Convener. She is also a member of the Law Society of Kenya ADR Committee.

Leyla is currently the Co-Chair of the Executive Council of the Lagos Court of Arbitration Young Arbitrators Network (LCA-YAN) she is the Chair of the ICC Kenya, Customs and Trade Facilitation Commission and is a member of the African Users Council of the London Court of International Arbitration.

Leyla has been recognized for her expertise and skills. In 2019, Leyla's paper titled 'The Promise of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement and its Effect on the

Future of the East African Community’ won the second position in the East African Young Lawyers Essay Competition. She was nominated for recognition as one of Africa’s 50 Most Promising Young Arbitration Practitioners in 2020, an initiative of the Association of Young Arbitrators (AYA). Leyla emerged as the winner in the ‘Young Lawyer of the Year category in the Law Society of Kenya Legal Awards, in 2020, and was the 1st Runner Up in 2021. She also won ‘*the Young ADR Practitioner of the Year Award, 2022* in the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (Kenya) Excellence Awards.

Leyla has co-authored several publications including the Kenyan Chapter of the International Comparative Legal Guide – Business Crime 2019, as well Kenya’s chapter, within The Legal 500 Comparative Guide on Bribery and Corruption 2019 and 2020. She was part of the team that prepared a desktop review on Kenya’s Law and Disaster Preparedness and Response, a Multi-Country Synthesis 2019 Report by the International Federation of Red Cross, and Red Crescent Societies.

Leyla is a frequent speaker at ADR trade conferences and webinars.

Key Matters:

- **Five prominent senior counsels**, in a defamation case that saw each one of the senior counsels being awarded damages to the tune of over USD 85 million (KES 12.2 billion).
 - **Integrated Payment System Limited**, (a real-time payment services company) in a matter involving an allegation of infringement of four utility models and in particular the use of a uniform resource locator link in its SMS messaging for its PesaLink solution, a solution that allows for bank-to-bank transfers at a low cost. The case was lodged in the Industrial Property Tribunal and the requester sought damages worth USD 14 million (KES1.89 billion).
 - **Kenya Bankers Association**, (the Kenyan financial sector’s leading advocacy group) in a matter involving an alleged breach of the Constitution of Kenya and a violation of the Persons with Disabilities Act, the Public Health Act, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities where the petitioners sought compensation over USD 7.3 million (KES 1.03 billion).
 - **Kenya Bankers Association**, in a copyright right infringement claim where the Plaintiff sought a permanent injunction and an award of damages of USD 7 million (KES 1.003 billion).
 - **Kenya Airways PLC**, (the flag carrier airline of Kenya) in a 14-day Notice of Intention to Strike issued by the Kenya Airline Association. Apprehensive of the pending strike and the impact the strike would have on the airline, Leyla assisted in filing an application seeking interim orders staying the strike and successfully obtained an injunction and an order directing the pilots to resume
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work immediately.

- **Safaricom**, (the largest telecommunications provider in Kenya) regarding a telecommunication dispute in which an appeal was lodged with the Communications and Multimedia Appeals Tribunal appealing the decision of the Communications Authority of Kenya. Leyla was part of the team that successfully defended Safaricom in the Tribunal and subsequently at the High Court when the matter went on a second appeal.
 - **Kenya Bankers Association**, in a constitutional petition seeking whether sections of the Finance Act and the Banking Act conflict with the Kenya Constitution, 2010 as well as interpretation on whether in introducing amendments during the 2nd and 3rd Reading of the Finance Bill, 2018, the National Assembly failed to adhere to the national principle of public participation. Leyla successfully had the said sections declared unconstitutional.
 - **Kenya Bankers Association, Co-operative Bank of Kenya, Kenya Commercial Bank, and SBM Bank**, in a commercial suit instituted by an association representing the interests of auctioneers alleging a misapplication and infraction of the Auctioneers Act, 1996.
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