

Spotlighting Africa's international arbitration expertise at the 2nd Annual Africa Arbitration Awards 2020



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**AFRICA
ARBITRATION
AWARDS 2020**

Hosted by  **EAST AFRICA
INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION
CONFERENCE**

Hosted on the sidelines of the annual East Africa International Arbitration Conference 2020, the 2nd Africa Arbitration Awards (AAA) took place on Friday 29th August 2020 virtually.

This was an opportunity to once again shine a light on exemplary leadership and success in Africa Arbitration. The Africa Arbitration Awards incorporated in 2019, aims to celebrate, recognise and honor outstanding practitioners and leaders in the Africa arbitration ecosystem. This platform forms part of the organisers' vision of building international arbitration capacity, expanding Africa's networks as we promote, profile and celebrate Africa's success in international arbitration.

The Awards comprise of 5 categories where in each category, individual nominees must be of African nationality, and nominee organisations must have incorporated offices located in Africa. These categories are:

- (a) African Arbitrator of the Year (over 40 years);
- (b) Young Arbitration Practitioner of the Year (under 40 years);
- (c) Leading Case Counsel Team;
- (d) Leading Arbitration Services Provider; and
- (e) Innovation in Arbitration.

Nominations and Nominations Judges

This year's awards received thousands of nominations from across the Arbitration community. A Shortlist of 3 nominees per category was determined by highly respected, competent and independent judges who are renowned arbitrators and heads of Africa's leading international arbitration centres. ***The 2020 Nominations Judges*** were:

- (a) **Ms. Dipna Gunnoo**, the Head of the MCCI Arbitration & Mediation Center (MARC) at the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI);
- (b) **Prof. Ike Ehiribe**, a Fellow of CIArb, London, a Chartered Arbitrator, an accredited mediator and a professor of law at the Centre for International Legal Studies (CILS) in Salzburg, Christchurch Canterbury University SOAS and Queen Mary in the University of London;
- (c) **Dr. Dalia Hussein**, the Deputy Director of the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA), an Adjunct Professor of Law at the American University in Cairo, and a Lecturer at the Faculty of Law, Zakazik University;
- (d) **Dr. Fidele Masengo**, the Chief Executive and General Secretary of the Kigali International Arbitration Center (KIAC); and
- (e) **Mr. Lawrence Ngugi**, the Registrar and Chief Executive of the Nairobi Centre for International Arbitration (NCIA), who previously served as Chief State Counsel (Head of Commercial Litigation & Arbitration).

The Nominations Judges worked tirelessly to produce a shortlist of nominees, taking into account various criteria, including, demonstrated knowledge and experience in international arbitration, use of innovation, teamwork and collaboration, observance of confidentiality use of African centres, and training and mentorship.

The Africa Arbitration Awards 2020 Winners

Thousands of votes were cast by the arbitration community globally. The winners reflected the best that Africa has to offer in international arbitration expertise. The 2020 Africa Arbitration Award Winners were announced and celebrated in a virtual ceremony that was broadcasted Live on Zoom, YouTube and the Conference Portal.



DOROTHY UFOT SAN
Managing Partner, Dorothy Ufot
& Co., Nigeria

The African Arbitrator of the Year 2020 was Mrs. Dorothy Ufot SAN. She is founding and Managing Partner of Dorothy Ufot & Co, a leading law firm in Nigeria, a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (UK) and a Chartered Arbitrator. She has conducted arbitrations under the ICC, SCC, ICSID, DIAC, LCIA, and the RCICAL Rules as either a Sole Arbitrator or a member of a panel of three Arbitrators. Speaking to Arise News in Nigeria, Dorothy said that, *the win came from a journey of several years of being involved in complex investment and commercial disputes with the international arbitration community watching you.* Dorothy recalled her challenging work as arbitrator in investment arbitration cases concerning billions of dollars that were in the public domain.



MADELINE KIMEI
Chief Executive Officer
iResolve, Tanzania

The Young Arbitration Practitioner of the Year 2020 was Ms. Madeline Kimei, the CEO of iResolve Tanzania, an advocate, arbitrator and accredited commercial mediator and dispute resolution specialist. Madeline is a member of the Tanzania Institute of Arbitrators (TIArb), National Construction Council Tanzania and the ICC Court. Madeline also won the **Stephenson Harwood Prize for the Young Arbitration Practitioner of the Year**, being a one (1) year mentorship program with the Stephenson Harwood team of partners and associates, and leading arbitration practitioners. Madeline announced that she was *overjoyed with joy and happiness to receive the award, and thanked the global arbitration community, who had become her life challengers, companions, friends, mentors and inspirers.*



**Nigerian National
Petroleum Corporation**

The Leading Case Counsel Team 2020 was the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC). Speaking to Arise News Nigeria, Khalid said that, *the award showed that NNPC is not just Africa's greatest producer of hydrocarbons in Africa, but also a compliant company when it comes to processes and procedures.* Khalid praised the NNPC's robust Litigation and Arbitration Team for the win.

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Africa Arbitration Academy

inaugural Academy program held in London in June 2019. The Africa Arbitration Academy, recently in 2020 launched the Africa 50 list of Africa's top 50 young arbitrators, and the Africa Arbitration Academy Protocol on Virtual Hearings in Africa that was nominated for the Global Arbitration Review (GAR) Pandemic Response Award 2020.

Conclusion

The Africa Arbitration Awards will continue to spotlight Africa's expertise in international commercial and investment arbitration. Arbitrators, practitioners, case teams and service providers are encouraged to submit nominations and show case their talent. There are inspiring success stories to be written about arbitration in Africa, and the EAIAC Committee and the Africa Arbitration Awards are part of that. 2021 will be an even better year of celebration.

The Leading Arbitration Services Provider 2020 was JMiles & Co., a Nairobi-based legal consultancy that provides specialized advice on international arbitration, mediation, fraud investigation and asset chasing, in addition to legal consulting. JMiles & Co has represented clients, (both governments and the private sector) on disputes subject to international arbitration before

The Innovation in Arbitration 2020 award went to the Africa Arbitration Academy, is an initiative of the Association of Young Arbitrators (AYA). The Academy was established due to the rising demand for improved expertise and training of arbitration practitioners in Africa, and to expose the young practitioners to the current trends and developments in international commercial and investment arbitration. The