

Demystifying Abu Dhabi's Arbitration Landscape: Insights into ArbitrateAD

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In December 2023, the Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry unveiled the inauguration of the Abu Dhabi International Arbitration Centre (ArbitrateAD), officially commencing operations on February 1st, 2024. This milestone followed the announcement of the closure of the Abu Dhabi Commercial Conciliation and Arbitration Center (ADCCAC).

Remarkably, this marks the UAE's second endeavor in restructuring an arbitration center, echoing the 2021 decision to replace the DIFC-LCIA and the EMAC arbitration centers with DIAC. ArbitrateAD's newly introduced rules are poised to supersede the existing regulations of the ADCCAC, which have been readily accessible on the Center's official website. In contrast to its predecessor's framework, these rules modernize and streamline various mechanisms within arbitral proceedings, fortifying the region's dispute resolution framework.



As a pivotal hub for international businesses, particularly in Abu Dhabi, this strategic move was imperative to offer stakeholders enhanced options when selecting arbitral rules and institutions best suited to their needs for inclusion in their contract clauses. The newly implemented rules illustrate how ArbitrateAD seamlessly integrates into the region's existing arbitration landscape while effectively addressing pending cases previously earmarked for ADCCAC. Notably, provisions pertaining to early case dismissal, expedited or emergency proceedings, as well as joinder and consolidation options, have been incorporated—a notable enhancement absent in prior regulations. Moreover, ArbitrateAD designates the Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM) as the default seat of arbitral proceedings in instances where no seat is specified in the arbitration clause or agreement. This decision aligns with the ADGM's pro-arbitration regulations, facilitating the enforcement of ADGM-seated awards beyond UAE borders.

The institution boasts a roster of arbitrators hailing from diverse jurisdictions, each possessing extensive experience in arbitration and many of whom are multilingual. Furthermore, the ArbitrateAD court comprises 15 esteemed practitioners with profound insight into the region's evolving landscape, alongside specialized experts from across the globe, pivotal in overseeing cases and appointing arbitrators.



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In an effort to amplify awareness within the global business community, ArbitrateAD underscores Abu Dhabi's reliability as a destination of choice, promoting transparency, efficiency, and impartiality. To this end, the center has fully digitized communication channels and proceedings through DocketAD—a secure digital platform for case filing, communication, and document sharing. This digitization ensures privacy throughout the arbitration process and serves as an archive for proceedings post-closure or termination, enhancing transparency and accessibility.

Here at Abdulhameed Al Jasmi Advocates & Legal Consultants, our commitment lies in safeguarding our clients' interests by meticulously reviewing all contract clauses and ensuring alignment with the latest developments between ArbitrateAD and ADCCAC. With our extensive experience in the UAE, we possess a profound understanding of the region's dynamics and recent legal shifts. For businesses operating in the UAE seeking confirmation that their contract clauses, particularly arbitral agreements, align with these recent changes, we extend an invitation to arrange a consultation with one of our esteemed attorneys.



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