

QATAR  
INTERNATIONAL  
COURT AND  
DISPUTE  
RESOLUTION  
CENTRE



**AN INTRODUCTION**



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
وَأِنَّا حُكْمَتُمْ فَلْيُحْكَمْ وَأَلَّا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْكٰفِرِينَ  
مَدِينَةُ الدَّعْوَى



محكمة قطر الدولية  
ومركز تسوية المنازعات  
QATAR INTERNATIONAL COURT  
AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION CENTER





محكمة قطر الدولية  
ومركز تسوية المنازعات

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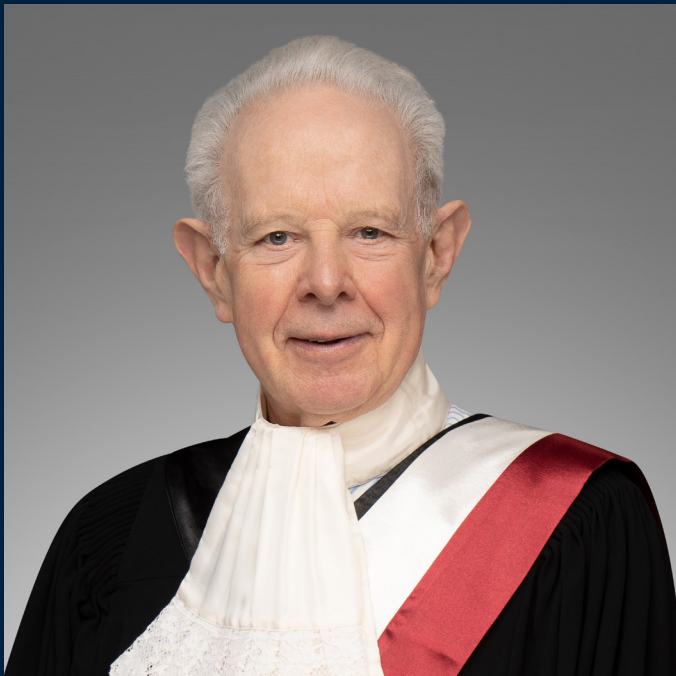
**QATAR INTERNATIONAL COURT  
AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION CENTRE**

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**QICDRC.GOV.QA**



# THE RT HON. THE LORD THOMAS OF CWMGIEDD

President of the Court



The Qatar International Court and Dispute Resolution Centre is a world class international court, ADR centre and Regulatory Tribunal with judges and staff drawn from diverse jurisdictions worldwide. Its aim is the fair, cost effective and efficient delivery of justice. Its use of technology as an essential way of improving and delivering access to justice has led the way. eCourt, the QICDRC's electronic case management and hearing system, is freely available, in both English and Arabic, to all litigants involved in proceedings at the QICDRC and is accessible through the QICDRC website. It ensures, among other things, that litigants, wherever they are in the world, can file, access communications with and, where appropriate, make submissions to the QICDRC, whether it be from their laptop, mobile phone or other electronic device.



# **FAISAL RASHID AL-SAHOUTI**

Chief Executive Officer





It gives me great pleasure to introduce you to the Qatar International Court and Dispute Resolution Centre, which is leading the way in developing outstanding international standards for an effective court system in the State of Qatar.

Our international judiciary, excellent governance, sophisticated case management system, guarantees of procedural and substantive fairness and use of advanced technology come together to provide a world-leading dispute resolution offering to individuals and businesses.

As this introductory booklet demonstrates, the operations of the QICDRC are, above all else, transparent and user friendly, and I hope you find it both informative and helpful.



## KEY FACTS



INTERNATIONAL  
CIVIL & COMMERCIAL  
COURT IN QATAR



WORLD LEADING  
eCOURT



JUDGES FROM  
DIFFERENT CIVIL  
& COMMON LAW  
JURISDICTIONS



SPECIALIST  
REGULATORY  
TRIBUNAL



ENGLISH OR ARABIC  
PROCEEDINGS



ASSOCIATE MEMBER OF  
THE INTERNATIONAL  
CONSORTIUM FOR COURT  
EXCELLENCE



STATE-OF-THE-ART  
COURTROOM



ENFORCEABLE  
JUDGMENTS

# ABOUT QATAR INTERNATIONAL COURT

The Qatar International Court and Dispute Resolution Centre (QICDRC), comprising the Civil and Commercial Court of the Qatar Financial Centre (QFC) and Regulatory Tribunal, was established by QFC Law No. 7 of 2005 to be the final piece of the State of Qatar's initiative to build a world-class international financial centre. Designed to have international standards in dispute resolution, QICDRC is part of the strategy of QFC to attract international business and financial services to Qatar. QICDRC provides a modern, specialist civil and commercial court designed to hear cases quickly and economically, in front of internationally renowned, independent judges. The Court also has jurisdiction to hear civil and commercial cases coming from the Qatar Free Zone (pursuant to Law No. 34 of 2005 on Free Zones, as amended).

Led by the President of the Court, The Rt. Hon. The Lord Thomas of Cwmgiedd, former Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales, the Judges of the Court are renowned for their independence, impartiality, integrity, and propriety. The judges hail from a variety of jurisdictions including Qatar, England and Wales, Scotland, Cyprus, New Zealand, India, France, China, and South Africa, making the Court a truly international one.



In addition to the Court, the Regulatory Tribunal of the Qatar Financial Centre has the jurisdiction to hear appeals raised by individuals and corporate bodies against decisions of the QFC Authority, the Regulatory Authority, and other QFC institutions, as well as hearing appeals relating to a decision to revoke or suspend the licenses of registered companies operating within the Qatar Free Zones.

Led by its Chairman, Sir William Blair, the Regulatory Tribunal comprises Judges from Qatar, the United Kingdom, Hong Kong, India, and the United States of America, all of whom specialise in the resolution of regulatory disputes.



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
وَإِذَا حُكِمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ  
صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ



محكمة قطر الدولية  
ومركز تسوية المنازعات

QATARI  
AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION COURT  
CENTRE





## JUDICIARY

One of the most important features of the Court and Regulatory Tribunal is the outstanding calibre of the judiciary. The international nature of the judiciary is a distinguishing feature of both the Court and Regulatory Tribunal: the Judges hail from a variety of civil and common law jurisdictions.

The Judges subscribe to a Judicial Code of Conduct, the cornerstones of which are independence, impartiality, integrity and propriety.

# JUDGES OF THE COURT



**THE RT HON. THE  
LORD THOMAS  
OF CWMGIEDD**  
President of the  
Court



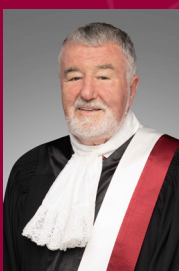
**DR MUNA AL  
MARZOUQI**  
Enforcement  
Judge



**PROFESSOR  
HASSAN AL  
SAYED**  
Judge of the  
Court



**ALI MALEK KC**  
Judge of the  
Court



**SIR BRUCE  
ROBERTSON**  
Judge of the  
Court



**LORD HAMILTON**  
Judge of the  
Court





**CHELVA RAJAH  
SC**  
Judge of the  
Court



**HER HONOUR  
FRANCES  
KIRKHAM CBE**  
Judge of the  
Court



**FRITZ BRAND**  
Judge of the  
Court



**PROFESSOR  
GEORGES AFFAKI**  
Judge of the  
Court



**GEORGE ARESTIS**  
Judge of the  
Court



**HELEN  
MOUNTFIELD KC**  
Judge of the  
Court



**SIR WILLIAM  
BLAIR**  
Judge of the  
Court



**YONGJIAN  
ZHANG**  
Judge of the  
Court

# JUDGES OF THE REGULATORY TRIBUNAL



**SIR WILLIAM  
BLAIR**  
Chairman of  
the Regulatory  
Tribunal



**EDWIN  
GLASGOW CBE  
KC**  
Judge of the  
Regulatory  
Tribunal



**GOPAL  
SUBRAMANIAM  
SA**  
Judge of the  
Regulatory  
Tribunal



**LAURENCE LI SC**  
Judge of the  
Regulatory  
Tribunal



**DR. MUNA AL  
MARZOUQI**  
Judge of the  
Regulatory  
Tribunal



**SEAN HAGAN**  
Judge of the  
Regulatory  
Tribunal

## REGISTRY



**UMAR AZMEH**  
Registrar



**ABDULATEF  
AHMED  
ALMOHANNADI**  
Deputy Registrar

## CASE PROCEEDINGS

Civil and Commercial Court proceedings commence when the Claimant submits a Claim Form, accompanied by supporting documents. Utilizing the eCourt system streamlines this process, enabling the Registry to assess the submitted materials and proceed to issue the case.

After the Claimant initiates proceedings, they are required to officially deliver the issued case to the Defendant. In standard claims, the Claim Form remains valid for service for a duration of four months from the date of issue. Upon being served, the Defendant is granted a 28-day window to provide a Response. Thereafter, the Claimant may file and serve a Reply. The case is then typically presented before a constitution of the Court for directions, often in the form of a directions hearing or case management conference.

During this phase, the Court issues directions that commonly address matters such as disclosure, witness arrangements, trial logistics, setting a trial date, preparing electronic bundles (eBundles), and any other documents deemed necessary by the Court. In most instances, the culmination of these proceedings involves a trial, unless the Court deems it unnecessary based on its assessment of the case.

In relation to cases before the Regulatory Tribunal, once the Tribunal receives an appeal against a decision of an authority, the Respondent authority will usually be given 28 days in which to respond. Thereafter, the Tribunal will issue directions for the future conduct of the case.



## SMALL CLAIMS

In 2022, the President issued Practice Direction No. 1 of 2022 on Small Claims, substantially shortening the time frame from the issue of a case to reaching a judgment in particular categories of cases.

The Practice Direction establishes a standard procedure for dealing with Small Claims (broadly speaking any case, whether brought by or against an individual, company or other entity, with a monetary value of up to and including QAR 100,000) without limiting the Court's general power to issue case management directions, including decisions to allocate claims which exceed the QAR 100,000 amount to the Small Claims Track in appropriate cases.

The Claimant will have seven days from the date of issue to serve the Claim Form and any supporting documentation on the Defendant, while the time frame for the Defendant's Response is 14 days.

In 2023, the average time from issue to judgment in Small Claims Track cases was under 5 weeks.

The logo for eCourt features a stylized globe on the left, with a scale of justice integrated into its right side. To the right of the globe, the word "eCourt" is written in a bold, sans-serif font. The "e" is lowercase and smaller than the other letters, while "Court" is entirely uppercase.

# eCourt

eCourt is the specialist electronic case management system for those involved in proceedings before the Court and Regulatory Tribunal.

eCourt has been specially designed in accordance with the Regulations and Procedural Rules of both the Civil and Commercial Court and Regulatory Tribunal to assist users - whether they be litigants, lawyers, Court staff or the judiciary - with a variety of essential tasks, from filing case papers, to corresponding with the Court and other parties to the litigation, as well as accessing Court orders and judgments.

# ECOURT BENEFITS



**MOBILE  
FRIENDLY**



**WEB-BASED  
PLATFORM**



**HIGHLY  
SECURE**



**BILINGUAL**



**FREE OF COST**



**VIRTUAL HEARING  
SOLUTION**



**END-USER ALERT**





Safe and secure method for users to file case papers, receive communications and access information relating to their case.



Accessible from portable electronic devices, allowing users to access their case files and send/receive communications from anywhere in the world.



Improved access to justice through a transparent medium, custom-built around the Regulations and Procedural Rules of the Court and Regulatory Tribunal.



Free to use and available in both English and Arabic languages.



Facilitated the end-to-end management of cases from the commencement of proceedings through to the issuing of judgments/decisions.



Intuitive interface, customised for litigants and legal practitioners to ensure streamlined navigation.



Multi-channel notifications via email and SMS to alert users of required tasks, communications, and progress on their case.

## COURT FACILITIES

The courtroom provides multi-channel video conferencing and audio facilities, with touchscreen computer panels for advocates, Judges and court staff, as well as full electronic evidence and in-court scanning and broadcasting facilities.

Each advocate has a designated retractable touchscreen monitor and wireless keyboard and mouse at their table. Proceedings can be viewed on large monitors within the courtroom, which are ideal for witnesses who are giving evidence over the video link.

The Court provides multi-language audio and video recording of proceedings where required. Housed within the courtroom is an international standard translation booth where the Court can provide simultaneous translation into any language as required, using the services of professional interpreters.

Parties and legal representatives will be offered their own conference suite with access to Wi-Fi and other office equipment (such as iPads, interactive presentation screens, telephone conferencing, printing and stationery), as required.



## PRO BONO SERVICE

The Qatar International Court and Dispute Resolution Centre Pro Bono Service enables individuals who fall within the ambit of the Service to receive legal advice, assistance and representation at no cost. The term 'pro bono' comes from the Latin phrase 'pro bono publico' meaning 'for the public good'. In the legal context, this generally means the provision of free legal advice and/or representation to those who cannot afford to pay for it and where public means of funding are not available. At the QICDRC, pro bono legal advice and representation are provided by a panel of lawyers who volunteer their time and expertise to assist with civil and commercial disputes, regulatory appeals or other legal issues that fall within the jurisdiction of the Qatar International Court or QFC Regulatory Tribunal.

The Service is only open to those who genuinely cannot afford to instruct a lawyer and so, as part of the application process, applicants will be required to disclose information about their financial position and provide evidence in support thereof. Those who are seeking pro bono assistance should refer to the QICDRC Pro Bono Service Guidelines.

## MEDIATION SERVICE

Mediation is a voluntary process involving an independent third party (the ‘Mediator’) who endeavours to help the parties reach an amicable settlement with respect to their dispute. Mediations are conducted in private and are generally considerably quicker and less expensive than arbitration or litigation.

Mediation can resolve a wide range of disputes, including but not limited to, disputes between employees and employers, consumers and traders, as well as disputes relating to businesses and those they work with. Unlike arbitration and litigation, mediation is not an adversarial process. Instead, the Mediator facilitates discussion and dialogue between the parties with a view to reaching a mutually agreed settlement. This can often preserve the business relationship between the parties.

## ARBITRATION FACILITIES

Law No 2 of 2017 issuing the Arbitration Law in Civil and Commercial Matters provides parties with the option to agree on the “Competent Court” of the arbitration. The Competent Court may perform various functions including in relation to interim measures, enforcement of awards and appeals. When drafting an arbitration agreement as part of a contract and where parties wish to elect the Court at the QICDRC as the Competent Court, parties should use the wording of the QICDRC Dispute Resolution Clause so that the intention of the parties is clear and unambiguous. The QFC Civil and Commercial Court can act as Competent Court for any arbitration seated in Qatar.





## OTHER FORMS OF ADR

Parties who are interested in other forms of alternative dispute resolution, such as mediation, should contact the QICDRC for more information.

## INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

The Qatar International Court and Dispute Resolution Centre offers an internship program to assist prospective lawyers with gaining an insight into the legal world, personal and professional development, and obtaining professional contacts.

Students who are undertaking a law degree, and interns at least 18 years of age or above are eligible to apply.

Internships will typically last anywhere from one week to two weeks. While interns will sit within the Registry, it is intended that they will be given as broad a view as possible of the QICDRC and wider Qatar Financial Centre business to gain a holistic understanding of how the QICDRC operates and the context within which it does so.





## CLERKSHIP PROGRAMME

The Qatar International Court and Dispute Resolution Centre has established a clerkship program to assist prospective lawyers with gaining an insight into the legal world, personal and professional development, and obtaining professional contacts.

Recent graduates who have completed a law degree and who wish to obtain a deep understanding of the practicalities of legal practice, along with judicial decision-making and the correlation between the two are eligible to apply.

Clerkships will usually last for around three months, and clerks will sit within the Registry team, conducting work that is centred around the core business of the QICDRC.

