

Kluwer Arbitration Blog

Conference: Fifty Years of Bilateral Investment Treaties

Boris Kasolowsky (Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer) · Tuesday, June 16th, 2009 · Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer

Conference: Fifty Years of Bilateral Investment Treaties
December 1-3, 2009, Frankfurt

Fifty years ago, Germany and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan concluded the first ever bilateral investment treaty. To mark (and celebrate) this important milestone in the development of investment protection, the German Society for the Promotion of Foreign Investments (GFA) and the German Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology are co-hosting a conference in Frankfurt, Germany from 1 to 3 December 2009 in cooperation with the OECD, UNCTAD and several universities, a leading bank and a number of law firms.

Entitled “Fifty Years of Bilateral Investment Treaties: Taking Stock and a Look to the Future,” this conference is aimed primarily at governments, foreign investors, academics and professionals. Speakers and panellists include many of the leading experts (including Professor Karl-Heinz Böckstiegel, L. Yves Fortier CC QC, Professor M. Sornarajah, Professor James Crawford, among others), government officials actively involved in the defence of their States and/or the drafting of the next generation of investment treaties, professionals representing investors and/or States in the defining investment treaty disputes of our times and representatives of international companies.

The speakers and panellists will share their experiences and discuss many of the currently hotly debated topics in the arena of investment protection and investment treaty disputes, including:

- The potential utilisation of investment treaties as a means of promoting sustainable development, corporate social responsibility and anti-corruption control.
- Investment protection regimes in Western Europe – a highly topical issue in light of the ICSID arbitration proceedings commenced by the Swedish energy giant Vattenfall A.S. against Germany, and possibly increasingly important as numerous investors in Western European countries consider themselves adversely affected by various government measures taken pursuant to “emergency” legislation passed as a reaction to the “credit crunch.”
- The interplay of States’ obligations under investment treaties and their other international law obligations, and the relationship of EU Member States’ obligations under BITs and their obligations under the EC Treaty. (The latter issue has, of course, already been addressed in *Eastern Sugar B.V. v The Czech Republic*, and is presently being considered in several other pending cases.)

Apart from providing a forum for debate and exchange among specialists, this conference will also raise awareness for foreign investment protection as an essential element of promoting external investment and more particularly for the possible avenues of recourse available to investors under BITs. On behalf of the patron of the conference, the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology, Mr. Joachim Steffens, welcomes at the birthplace of BITs the speakers, panellist and participants: “Germany had a pioneering role in the field of international investment protection. This conference in Frankfurt with its exceptionally high calibre speakers shows Germany’s ongoing strong commitment to contributing to the development of an effective global investment protection regime. A major conference in Germany on investment protection is well overdue, and we are looking forward to welcoming the participants and distinguished speakers and panellists.”

The organisers expect that the conference will be attended by several hundred participants. Further information and registration details can be found at:

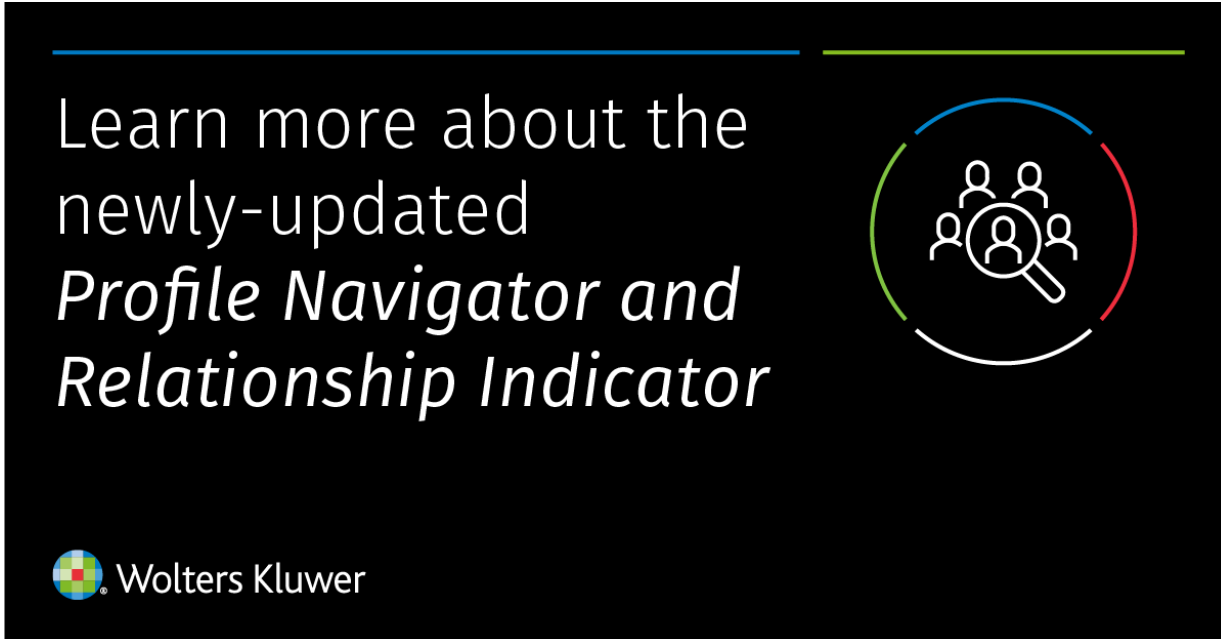
<https://www.50yearsofbits.com/>.

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