

Christopher Swart

Partner

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About Christopher Chris Swart is an industry group leader and EMEA lead of our Commodities & Shipping Group, and a partner in the firm's Litigation Practice, based in the Singapore office. He specialises in advising and representing traders, charterers, banks and SOE's in commercial disputes in commodities and shipping industries.

His practice includes restructuring negotiations, as well as litigation and arbitration. His arbitration experience includes ICC, LCIA, SIAC and HKIAC, as well as LMAA, GAFTA and FOSFA. He is a lawyer of the High Court of England and Wales and has over 25 years' experience in international dispute resolution and strategic advisory work on a global basis in Europe, Asia, North America and Africa. He has been based in Singapore since 2014 and, prior to that, he was based in London. He is also admitted as a lawyer in South Africa.

Experience

- Advising and representing an Asian consortium in high court litigation arising of the sale and refinancing of a well-known mining group in Indonesia.
- Acting for an SOE in Asia on its corporate restructuring and work out of a set of contracts with European and North American suppliers.
- Representing an Asian energy company in relation to multimillion-dollar LPG defaults by HK and PRC entities.
- Acting for a major US grain trader in a high-profile and successful WFO enforcement action against a well-known Middle Eastern SDN, following substantial grain cargo payment defaults and many other enforcements utilising the WFO jurisdiction of the High court, supported by penal sanctions.
- Representing a Singapore-based international energy trading company in the release of substantial oil cargo following detention of the carrying vessel in Indonesian Waters.
- Representing Swiss- and London-based mining interests in litigation in London, Switzerland, Sierra Leone and the BVI in multijurisdictional disputes arising out of joint ventures with a Swiss-based trading company concerning mines, minerals and gas in West Africa and a series of Worldwide Freezing Orders.

- Acted for the West African government and an SOE in successful resolution of substantial sovereign debt due to Asian Eximbank.
- Acted for a Japanese trading house in series of successful Vietnamese enforcements of grain arbitration awards.
- Acting for a US-based coal trader in a series of SIAC arbitrations arising out of PRC coal defaults.
- Acting for a Singapore- and Indonesia-based soft commodities company in a series of disputes with counterparts in Vietnam and Thailand.
- Representing a Japanese energy company in setting up a joint venture in Singapore.

Previous Reported Cases of Interest

- *LG Caltex v CNPC*, Court of Appeal decision on jurisdiction under 1996 Arbitration Act in connection with the supply of LPG to PRC.
- *Island Archon*, Court of Appeal decision on implied indemnities in charterparties.
- *Goodpal*, High Court decision on shippers liability.
- *Laconian Confidence*, High Court decision on NYPE standard clause 15.
- *Kriti Palm*, Court of Appeal decision on duties of Inspection Companies in international trade.
- *Aic v Marine Pilot*, High Court decision on unsafe port.
- *Puffin*, High Court decision on nominations under GAFTA contracts.
- *Chemstar Venus*, High Court decision re S68 challenge to award arising from seizure of a cargo of edible oil by pirates and its release.
- *Rays*, enforcement of security and underlying unseaworthiness of a vessel damaged in the Great lakes prior loading.

Other Cases of Interest

- IPE disciplinary enquiry concerning market abuse in oil futures.
- LCIA Arbitrations under UNCITRAL rules concerning joint venture agreements for the construction and sale of crushing plants and terminals in Eastern Europe.
- Establishing joint venture structures in Singapore for Asian/European energy joint venture.
- ICC arbitration in Switzerland concerning the supply of oil from an Eastern European country.
- RSA arbitration concerning coal contamination of sugar cargoes with coal residues.

Credentials

Education

- University of South Africa, LL.B., 1986
- University of Oxford (Rhodes Scholar, Natal & Magdalen College)Jurisprudence, 1985
- University of Cape TownReligious Studies, B.A. Hons, 1982
- University of NatalHistory, B.A. Hons, 1980
- University of Natal, B.A., 1979

Admissions

- England and Wales, 1991
- South Africa, 1987

Courts

- Supreme Court of Cape of Good Hope

Recognitions

- Recommended in *Chambers UK* for Physicals Commodities work.
- Recommended in *Legal 500 UK 2026* for commodities disputes, shipping and international arbitration.
- *Legal 500 UK 2026* interviewees describe Chris as:
 - "A true statesman with decades of experience and a fantastic understanding of international trade".
 - "Exceptionally experienced; utterly fearless; he has seen it all and done it all".
- *Legal 500 UK 2023* interviewees describe Chris as:
 - "Chris Swart is hugely experienced, litigation savvy and street wise. Chris has seen and done it all. This gives him real wisdom and perspective in difficult commercial litigation, and the confidence to make the right judgement calls"
- Noted for his "balanced judgement" in *Legal 500 UK* and "excellent knowledge of the commodities market" in *Chambers UK*.

Expertise

Services

- Litigation

Industries

- Commodities & Shipping
- Mining

About our firm

One of the world's strongest integrated law firms, providing insight at the point where law, business and government meet. We deliver commercially focused business solutions by combining our legal, lobbying and political capabilities and invaluable connections on the ground to a diverse mix of clients, from long-established leading corporations to emerging businesses, startup visionaries and sovereign nations. More than 1,500 lawyers in over 40 offices across four continents provide unrivaled access to expertise.