



**THE FINLAND
ARBITRATION
INSTITUTE**

FAI 115th Anniversary Conference

21 August 2026

Helsinki

**FINLAND
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

Contents

Conference at a Glance	3
Foreword	4
Programme	6
Registration	10
> Conference Pass	10
> Seminar Pass	10
> Remote Pass	10
> Reduced Rate Conference Pass	10
Venue & Accommodation	11
Partners	12
Contacts	16

Conference at a Glance

Founded in 1911, the Finland Arbitration Institute is one of the oldest continuously operating arbitration institutions in the world and the oldest in the Nordic region. For 115 years, the Institute has provided a neutral, efficient and reliable framework for the resolution of cross-border disputes through periods of political, economic and legal change.

The anniversary conference marks both a celebration and a moment of reflection. International commercial arbitration has developed within a global environment that has traditionally favoured legal predictability, cross-border trade and enforceability. Today, that environment is increasingly shaped by geopolitical tension, regulatory fragmentation and a renewed emphasis on sovereignty.

The conference programme explores how international commercial arbitration operates when the rules-based order is under strain. The discussion moves from contract drafting and risk allocation through arbitration proceedings to the recognition and enforcement of awards.

The day concludes with a gala dinner in Suomenlinna, a sea fortress that has stood through centuries of change, where colleagues, partners and friends will gather for an evening of dinner and music to mark the Institute's 115th anniversary.



Foreword



Henrik Sajakorpi
Secretary General

Dear colleagues, partners, and friends,

115 years is a long time. It is long enough to have weathered two world wars, the collapse of empires, the rise and partial retreat of globalisation, and more than one redrawing of the world order. Through all of it, the Finland Arbitration Institute has continued to do what it was founded to do in 1911: provide a neutral, efficient and reliable framework for resolving disputes across borders.

We do not take that continuity for granted. Nor do we celebrate it simply as a matter of institutional pride. We mark it because it means something: to the parties who have trusted us with their disputes, to the arbitrators and counsel who have engaged with our rules over the years, and to the broader international community that depends on institutions like ours to keep cross-border commerce functioning when the world around it is anything but stable.

The theme of this anniversary conference reflects exactly that. The questions we will explore, namely how arbitration adapts when geopolitics disrupts contracts, when the state enters the hearing room, and when awards meet sovereign resistance, are not academic exercises. They are questions we are all navigating right now.

Taken together, they point to a broader shift in the environment in which arbitration operates. The legal and commercial assumptions that long supported cross-border business can no longer be taken for granted in quite the same way. This conference is a response to that shift.

Join us in Helsinki on 21 August for a day of substantive discussion with leading practitioners, arbitrators and industry experts from across jurisdictions. Later, as the sun sets on a summer evening, we will gather at Suomenlinna, a sea fortress that has stood through centuries of change, for an evening of dinner, live music and celebration.

We look forward to welcoming you to Helsinki.

Warm regards,

Henrik



Programme

11:15 Registration and Lunch

12:15 Welcome Remarks

- **Mika Hemmo**, Chair of the Board, FAI
- **Henrik Sajakorpi**, Secretary General, FAI

12:30 The Helsinki Lecture 2026: International Commercial Arbitration in Uncertain Times

- International commercial arbitration has long operated within a broader framework that supported cross-border trade, legal predictability and the enforcement of obligations. While never insulated from political tension, recent developments indicate shifts in how states position themselves in relation to economic interdependence and regulatory autonomy.
- This keynote reflects on how arbitration adapts to a changing global environment and what continues to sustain confidence in it.

SPEAKERS:

- **Gary Born**, Partner, King & Spalding

13:00 Networking Break

13:30 Panel I: When Contracts Collide with Geopolitics

- Public law constraints increasingly reshape contractual rights and obligations in cross-border transactions. Sanctions, export controls and tariff regimes can disrupt performance, restrict payment flows and call into question the validity or continuation of contractual commitments.
- This panel explores how different legal frameworks address the consequences of such constraints and how parties manage contractual risk in an environment marked by geopolitical and regulatory uncertainty. It also examines how these issues shape the design of dispute resolution mechanisms.

MODERATOR:

- **Natalia Petrik**, Counsel, Westerberg & Partners

SPEAKERS:

- **John W. Lowe**, Arbitrator, Lowe Arbitration
- **Anna-Maria Tamminen**, Managing Partner, Hannes Snellman
- **Dr. Deming Zhao**, Partner, Global Law Office
- **Hayato Katayama**, Global Head of Legal, Insurance & Compliance, Ocean Network Express

14:45 Networking Break**15:15 Panel II: When the State Enters the Hearing Room**

➤ International commercial arbitration increasingly intersects with state authority, whether because a dispute involves a state-owned or state-affiliated party, or because national courts or public authorities take measures that directly affect the proceedings. This interaction may give rise to jurisdictional objections, claims of immunity, evidentiary and confidentiality restrictions, compliance-related barriers and strategic recourse to domestic courts.

➤ This panel examines how such dynamics shape arbitral proceedings and how tribunals and counsel navigate them.

MODERATOR:

- **Isabelle Michou**, Partner, Quinn Emanuel

SPEAKERS:

- **Khawar Qureshi** KC, Head of McNair International
- **Dr. Olena Perepelynska**, Partner, Impacta Law
- **Dr. Gisela Knuts**, Independent Arbitrator
- **James Castello**, Independent Arbitrator

16:30 Short Break

16:45 Panel III: When Awards Meet Power

➤ Arbitral awards are intended to provide final and binding resolution of disputes. Their legal effect, however, ultimately depends on recognition, enforcement and, where applicable, judicial review by national courts. In an environment shaped by sanctions regimes, sovereign interests and expanding regulatory frameworks, the post-award phase may involve closer scrutiny of how private adjudication interacts with public law.

➤ This panel examines the position of arbitral awards once they move beyond the tribunal and into domestic legal systems. It considers the role of public policy, sovereign immunity and public law constraints, and whether differing national perspectives influence the conditions under which awards are set aside, recognised or enforced.

MODERATOR:

- **Anders Forss**, Partner, Castrén & Snellman

SPEAKERS:

- **Carolyn Lamm**, Partner, White & Case
- **Elliott Geisinger**, Partner, Schellenberg Wittmer
- **Maria Pihlak**, Partner, Sorainen
- **Sherlin Tung**, Consultant and Independent Arbitrator, Withers

18:00 Closing Remarks

- **Henrik Sajakorpi**, Secretary General, FAI

19:30 Gala Dinner at Suomenlinna

➤ An evening of dinner and music marking the Finland Arbitration Institute's 115th anniversary, bringing together colleagues, partners and friends in a distinctive maritime setting.

Registration

Conference Pass

EUR 650 + VAT

- Includes the seminar at Valkoinen Sali and the Gala Dinner at Suomenlinna.

Seminar Pass

EUR 450 + VAT

- Covers the seminar at Valkoinen Sali. The Gala Dinner at Suomenlinna not included.

Remote Pass

EUR 250 + VAT

- Available for participants outside Europe.
- Includes live remote access to the seminar at Valkoinen Sali and on-demand viewing for seven days.

Reduced Rate Conference Pass

EUR 500 + VAT

- Available for public sector, academia, and in-house counsel.
- Includes the seminar at Valkoinen Sali and the Gala Dinner at Suomenlinna.

Register at fai115.fi

Venue & Accommodation

Venue:

The seminar will take place at Valkonen Sali, a historic hall in the heart of Helsinki. Restored to its original splendour in 2016, the nearly 100-year-old venue with its murals and chandeliers provides an elegant setting for the day.

📍 **Valkonen Sali**, Aleksanterinkatu 16, Helsinki.

The Gala Dinner will be held at Suomenlinna, a sea fortress that has stood through centuries of change. Guests will travel to Suomenlinna by private charter departing from Helsinki harbour.

Accommodation:

Conference attendees can benefit from a preferential rate at Hotel Haven and Hotel St George. Book directly through the hotels' own websites using the code SPECIAL15 for a 15% discount.





Partners

*We are grateful to our partners and
supporters of the FAI 115th Anniversary
Conference.*

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