



IIMC Colombo 2023  
**EVENT REPORT**

21st - 27th August 2023 | Colombo, Sri Lanka  
Beyond a Competition.

**“Mediation  
is conflict’s  
way of looking  
at itself.”**

— Jeff Cohen

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# What is the Moot Court Bench?

The Moot Court Bench (MCB) is Sri Lanka's first **fully integrated legal advocacy training platform**.

The aim of the MCB is to enhance the standard of the legal profession, by delivering education of global standards for Sri Lankan law students, focusing on International Commercial Mediation, Negotiation, International Commercial Arbitration, and International Trade Law. The MCB is administered completely by passionate volunteers and alumni with no profit motive.

## What is IIMC Colombo?

Effective conflict resolution mechanisms are vital for promoting foreign investments in a state. Sri Lanka's ongoing economic recovery underscores the importance of establishing resilient mechanisms to create an investor-friendly environment.

**The International Investor-State Mediation Competition — “IIMC Colombo” — is the World's first and only mediation competition centered around investor-state dispute settlements.**

Investor-State Mediation provides host states and foreign investors with a high degree of autonomy, flexibility, and choice, when navigating disputes. In the hopes of encouraging law students across the globe to view disputes differently, the MCB launched the inaugural edition of IIMC Colombo virtually, in early 2022.



# The Foundation

## IIMC Colombo 2022 | The World's First

IIMC Colombo 2022, the inaugural edition of the World's Only Investor-State Mediation Competition, was held virtually from 10th – 18th January 2022, with the participation of 8 Mediator Teams and 16 Negotiator Teams from 11 countries across the globe, and also a number of expert assessors, drafters and panellists from around the world.



*A webinar on UNCITRAL and the path to Investor-State Dispute Settlement, held in collaboration with the UNCITRAL RCAP and Sri Lanka Law College.*



*The IIMC Colombo 2022 Working Committee*

The success of IIMC 2022 can be attributed to the many organizations which endorsed and supported this endeavour, such as the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law Regional Centre for Asia and the Pacific (**UNCITRAL RCAP**), **Ministry of Justice of Sri Lanka**, and the International Mediation Institute (**IMI**) together with the Young Mediators' Initiative (**YMI**).

IIMC 2022 was privileged to be endorsed by our Silver Sponsor ChangAroth Chambers LLC, Bronze Sponsor ODRasia @ ChangAroth International Consultancy, Education Partner Mediator Academy, Skills Development Partner SAGE Mediation, Institutional Partner The Consensus Group, Official Research Partner Jus Mundi, and Career Partner the World Association of PPP Units and Professionals (WAPPP).



# A Step Beyond.

## IIMC Colombo 2023

IIMC Colombo 2023 successfully concluded on the 27th of August, hosting

**14 Negotiator Teams,**  
**07 Mediator Teams,**  
**60+ students,**  
**20+ Expert Assessors,**  
**and 15 volunteers,**  
**from more than 12 countries**

in-person in the heart of Colombo, Sri Lanka.



*Panel Discussion I at IIMC Colombo 2023*

With the theme of going “**Beyond a Competition**” at its core, IIMC Colombo 2023 aimed to deliver a holistic learning experience in ISM.

This included panel discussions, networking sessions, and cultural events on the agenda, in addition to its thrilling competition rounds.

After an exciting set of competition rounds, **the Negotiator Team from the University of Vienna, Austria** and the **Mediator Team from West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences, India** emerged as the **Winners** at IIMC Colombo 2023. The Runners-Up Negotiator Team and Mediator Team titles were awarded to the teams from O. P. Jindal Global University, India and the University of Vienna, Austria, respectively.



### Winning Mediator Team

West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences, Kolkata, India.



### Winning Negotiator Team & Runner-Up Mediator Team

University of Vienna, Austria.



### Runner-Up Negotiator Team

O. P. Jindal Global University, India.

## The Drafting Committee.

The cases for IIMC's competition rounds were drafted by our very own Drafting Committee, co-chaired by **Greg Bond** and **Sophie Tkemaladze**, and comprising of **Chintan Nirala**, **Ian Velásquez**, **Kandula Udawatta**, and **Vivek Krishnaswamy**.



**Greg Bond**  
CO-CHAIR



**Sophie Tkemaladze**  
CO-CHAIR



**Chintan Nirala**



**Ian Velásquez**



**Kandula Udawatta**



**Vivek Krishnaswamy**

The cases focused on Investor-State disputes in varying fields including the construction and operation of a stadium, how an earthquake affected the construction of a railway track, the effects of a government withdrawing incentives for the renewable energy sector, the suspension of a tourism venture due to environmental concerns, and a government's decision to phase out all coal-based power plants and how this decision impacted investments in the country.

These cases were centered around persistent issues faced by investors and governments, motivating students to devise pragmatic solutions and encouraging them to foster a deeper understanding of how to address these challenges for the betterment of all involved parties.



## Our Supporting Organizations.

This year, Supporting Organizations such as the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law Regional Centre for Asia and the Pacific (**UNCITRAL RCAP**), the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (**ICSID**), the International Mediation Institute (**IMI**) together with the Young Mediator's Initiative (**YMI**), the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre (**HKIAC**), and **JAMS ADR** came on board to partner with IIMC Colombo.

We are deeply grateful for the exceptional support extended by these global organizations for this initiative. Their collaboration has been instrumental in the success of IIMC Colombo this year, and their efforts have not only strengthened our initiative but have also emphasized the significance of a collective approach in addressing the complexities of investor-state disputes on a global scale.



**United Nations**  
**UNCITRAL**

Regional Centre for Asia and the Pacific



**ICSID**

**International Centre for  
Settlement of Investment Disputes**  
WORLD BANK GROUP



International Mediation Institute



Young Mediators Initiative



Local Solutions.  
Global Reach.



### Our Partners.

IIMC Colombo 2023 was advocated for by **Jus Mundi**, as the official Research Partner, providing free access to Jus Mundi Legal Research to all IIMC participants. **Edwards Mediation Academy**, **International Mediation Campus**, and **Accords International** joined in partnership with IIMC as Education Partners, and winners of the competition were awarded scholarships for mediation training courses offered by these institutions.

#### Research Partner



#### Education Partners



This year, local brands and organizations also collaborated with IIMC to offer attendees an enriching Sri Lankan experience. Sri Lanka's national carrier, **SriLankan Airlines** joined hands with IIMC as the Official Airline Partner, and **Kangaroo Cabs** as the Transport Partner.

#### Official Airline Partner



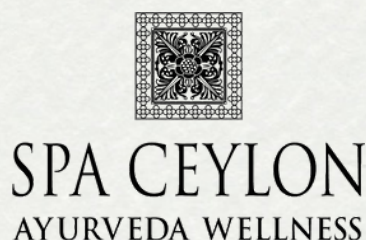
#### Transport Partner



For this year's edition of IIMC Colombo, renowned Sri Lankan brands, **Dilmah, Spa Ceylon, and Lakmedura** joined in as our Brand Partners, and **Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts, Jetwing Travels, Jetwing Hotels, Ramada by Wyndham Colombo, MaRadha Colombo, The Ocean Colombo, and Hostel Republic** joined in as Hospitality Partners.

Exclusive offers and special discounts were provided to IIMC attendees by these local partners to deliver the ultimate Sri Lankan experience.

### Brand Partners



### Hospitality Partners



### International Mediation Campus



### Partner Booths at IIMC Colombo 2023.

### Dilmah Ceylon Tea



# Beyond *just* a Competition.

Panel Discussions at IIMC Colombo 2023

## Panel Discussion I

**The future of Investor-State Dispute Settlement and the sub-structures of Investor-State Mediation.**

The first of the set of Panel Discussions for IIMC Colombo 2023 brought together a panel of experts representing leading organizations in the field of international dispute resolution. **Judith Knieper** from the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (**UNCITRAL**), **Anna Holloway** from the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (**ICSID**), **Anil Changaroth** from the International Mediation Institute (**IMI**), and **Mary Walker**, an accredited Investor-State Mediator with the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (**CEDR**), shared their insights and expertise at the Panel Discussion. The discussion was moderated by **Samaa Shazuli**, Program Manager at the Moot Court Bench.



*Panel Discussion I at IIMC Colombo 2023*

Aligned by the topic of **“The future of Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) and the sub-structures of ISM,”** the overarching objective of this panel discussion was to explore ISM’s evolving landscape and its potential impact on international dispute resolution, especially where Investor-State disputes are concerned. Panellists shared their observations on how ISM has been gaining traction as an effective means of resolving investment disputes, and each panelist's unique perspective contributed to a holistic understanding of the subject matter.

# Beyond *just* a Competition.

Panel Discussions at IIMC Colombo 2023

## Panel Discussion II

### Investor-State Mediation and the Shifting Approaches towards Investor-State Dispute Settlement Across Industries.

The theme of Panel Discussion II at IIMC Colombo 2023, 'ISM and the Shifting Approaches towards ISDS Across Industries,' served as a focal point for insightful conversation.

The discussion featured panellists **Sophie Tkemaladze**, a practicing mediator and arbitrator from Georgia who has acquired a wealth of expertise and experience in the mediation of commercial disputes in a number of jurisdictions across the world, **Joe Tirado**, a partner at the leading Spanish and Latin American firm Garrigues based in London, who has over thirty years of experience in the field of dispute resolution, and **Ike Ehiribe**, a barrister, a chartered arbitrator, adjudicator, and an expert determiner practicing in both London and Nigeria. The panel discussion was moderated by **Theshani Weligamage**, Program Manager of the Mediation Team at the MCB.



Panel Discussion II at IIMC Colombo 2023

With three esteemed panelists hailing from different sectors, the discourse not only delved into the challenges but also illuminated the innovative approaches and future trajectories of ISDS.

# Beyond *just* a Competition.

Panel Discussions at IIMC Colombo 2023

## The Outdoor Chat

### Mediation in Practice.

The insightful Outdoor Chat was a highlight of the IIMC Week as it was a distinctly more relaxed conversation, encouraging teams and experts engrossed in intense competition to look beyond the realms of competitive mediation, and come together to learn with, and from, each other.

The topic for the discussion, "**How to build your career and brand in mediation: Chronicles from real-life international practice,**" resonated with all IIMC attendees, and the panellists and the audience engaged in a thought-provoking conversation, moderated by the MCB's very own **Binuri Weerasinghe**.



*The Outdoor Chat at IIMC Colombo 2023*

With an exciting topic and platform for discussion, the event drew participants and attendees eager to gain insights from our Panellists, **Pascal Comvalius** and **Jean-Christophe Barth-Coullaré**. Pascal is a certified mediator specializing in family and criminal cases, and Jean-Christophe is an international mediator and Executive Director of the World Association of PPP Units and Professionals (WAPPP), focusing on governance and deal mediation for public-private partnerships.

# Testimonials.



## **Ian Velásquez**

Member of the Drafting Committee 2023.

“The work done by the MCB is incredible. IIMC is organized with care and attention to detail, in order to provide students with the best academic experience in the context of a competition based on international standards.

This one-of-a-kind event has the privilege to be the first and most relevant International Investor-State Mediation Competition. An amazing opportunity for students and participants to network, while enhancing their knowledge of mediation and Investor-State conflicts.

I invite students from all over the world to participate and develop their negotiation skills!”



## **Teresa Sihler**

Winner of the ‘Best Speaker’ Award, and Member of the Winning Negotiator Team, University of Vienna.

“When comparing IIMC 2023 to other international competitions, two aspects undeniably set it apart.

First, the entire competition was impeccably organized and thoughtfully executed from start to finish. From the pre-event information flow to the assistance in reaching Colombo and the guidance provided during the event, there was a remarkable level of care invested in every detail, always accompanied by warm words and friendly smiles. Secondly, the problems presented were expertly crafted, profoundly engaging, and addressed cutting-edge challenges in today's ISM field.

It has been a once-in-a-lifetime learning experience for me – professionally, culturally, and personally!”





# Testimonials.



## **Joe Tirado**

Panelist at Panel Discussion II and Expert Assessor.

“It was an honour and a privilege to judge the first in-person final of the IIMC Colombo 2023 with my fellow judges Lynette Edwards and Jean-Christophe Barth-Coullaré. It was great to be part of this pioneering event.

The International Investor-State Mediation Competition provides an excellent environment to raise awareness of and share expertise and experience in this rapidly developing area of dispute resolution. While the concept of international investor-state mediation (IISM) is not new, it has been a sleeping giant for too long.

As a result of the invaluable work of leading ISDS institutions including the International Center for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) and the Energy Charter Conference (ECT), the recent enactment of the United Nations Convention on the Enforcement of International Settlement Agreements Resulting from Mediation (“Singapore Convention”) and important events such as the IIMC Colombo, there is an increasing realisation of the advantages of IISM over more traditional forms of dispute resolution and a growing momentum to consider IISM as a viable and effective form of resolving complex disputes involving states.”



# A journey through IIMC Colombo 2023.







# The Team behind IIMC.

## THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE



**Fathima Salihah**  
Head of Mediation



**Arsiya Mahir**  
Deputy Head of Mediation



**Theshani Weligamage**  
Program Manager  
(Internal Affairs)



**Samaa Shazuli**  
Program Manager  
(External Affairs)



**Yasara Pitawala**  
Program Manager  
(Academics)



**Binuri Weerasinghe**  
Program Manager  
(Public Relations)



**Amana Imthiyas**  
Program Manager  
(Logistics)

## THE WORKING COMMITTEE



Hanaa Basik



Elisha Costa



Rajindh Gooneratne



Kaif Sally





# SEE YOU IN 2024!

IIMC Colombo 2023 | Beyond A Competition.

Register your interest for 2024!



**Get in touch** with IIMC Colombo:



[iimc.themootcourtbench.com](https://iimc.themootcourtbench.com)