



International Arbitration

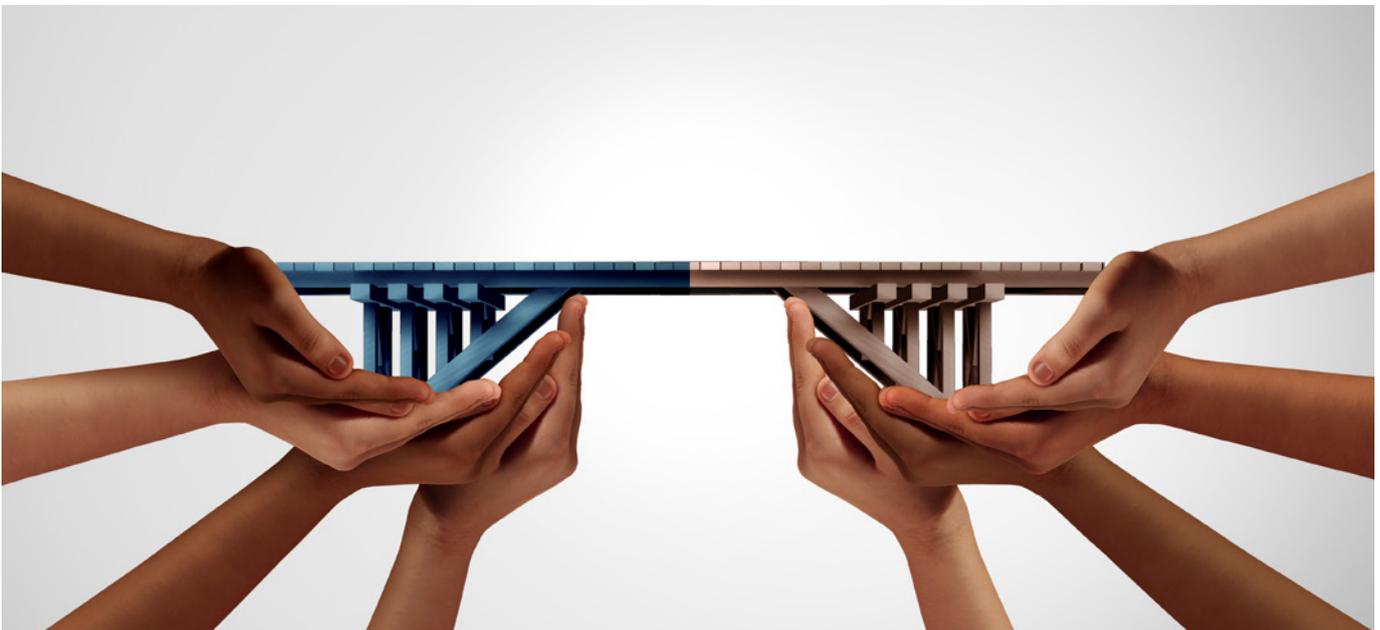
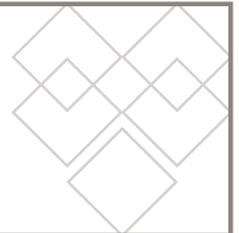
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PROFILED:

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International Arbitration



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PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY

Urs Weber-Stecher is the head of Wenger & Vieli's arbitration team. He has more than 20 years' experience in international arbitration. In more recent years, he extended his practice to commercial mediation. His practice includes a broad variety of areas of law in a wide range of industries. He has been a lecturer for international arbitration at the University of Zurich since 2001. He is president of the Commission of Arbitration and ADR of ICC Switzerland, member of the Board of the Swiss Arbitration Association (ASA) and currently also serves as member of the academic council and lecturer of the Swiss Arbitration Academy.

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Q&A WITH URS WEBER-STECHER

Looking back, have you fulfilled the ambitions and aspirations you set for yourself early in your career?

◆ This is difficult to say. I did not actually set myself long-term career goals, but went forward step by step. After my bar exam, for example, I worked at the Institute for European Law at the University of Zurich while writing my doctoral thesis, then went to Tulane Law School in New Orleans for an LL.M. programme, and then worked for three years at the Swiss Federal Office for Foreign Trade in the areas of bilateral investment treaties and competition policy. Only then did I return to private practice and joined Wenger & Vieli directly in the areas of arbitration and antitrust law. One step followed the other without long, prior planning. Since then, another partner at the firm has taken over the antitrust law practice, and in the dispute resolution practice we have a great team with excellent, motivated young colleagues who can work with me on exciting cases. So I think what I have achieved is a lot of satisfaction for me.

In what ways do you endeavour to support the career development of your colleagues rising through the ranks?

◆ In my opinion, the most important thing is that younger colleagues can assist in arbitration cases, establish their own practice and take on responsibility as soon as possible. Through continuous feedback they learn what it means to provide high-quality dispute resolution services. That is the core of any success. In addition, they learn in which professional organisations they should participate, where they can hold lectures and speeches and make publications. In this way, they continuously improve their professional skills, build up an international network and are able to constantly enhance their reputation in the field of dispute resolution.

**URS WEBER-STECHER**

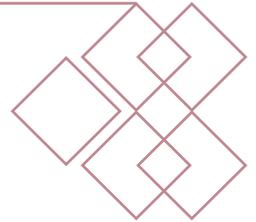
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Inclusion in rankings is then a natural consequence and reward for these efforts.

What strengths and characteristics do you, your team and your firm strive to demonstrate to clients?

◆ We want to offer our clients the best quality dispute resolution services at reasonable prices. This in itself is nothing spectacular, because that is what everyone wants to offer. However, I think that we can really live up to this expectation because we have a lean structure and a well-organised team in our firm that responds quickly and pragmatically to the specific needs of our clients. Today, state-of-the-art service also includes a good understanding of the various possibilities of online dispute resolution and making these available to clients. As an arbitrator and mediator, I also expect myself to contribute to the settlement of disputes between two or more parties as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible. The latter is particularly successful through mediation if the parties are willing to engage in a mediation process, which is still rather rare in the field of commercial disputes. ■



“YOUNGER COLLEAGUES CAN ASSIST IN ARBITRATION CASES, ESTABLISH THEIR OWN PRACTICE AND TAKE ON RESPONSIBILITY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THROUGH CONTINUOUS FEEDBACK THEY LEARN WHAT IT MEANS TO PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY DISPUTE RESOLUTION SERVICES.”

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**REPRESENTATIVE ENGAGEMENTS**

- ◆ Acted as chairman of an arbitral tribunal in a dispute between two European companies in the gas industry relating to gas price adjustments based on a gas supply contract. The amount in dispute was €1.2bn.
- ◆ Acted as co-arbitrator in a dispute between two large construction companies relating to the sale and purchase of group companies. The amount in dispute was more than €450m.
- ◆ Represented a Panamanian investor in an arbitration against an investor domiciled in the Cayman Island relating to a complex M&A transaction based on a share purchase agreement. The amount in dispute was €120m.
- ◆ Represented a US company in an arbitration against a German and an Argentinian company/group in the rare metals business relating to failed purchase agreements. The amount in dispute was \$65m.
- ◆ Represented a media company against a large media group relating to a disagreement on profit sharing based on a joint venture agreement. The amount in dispute was €10m.

