



Advocates for International Development

Symposium on Business and Human Rights

'Leadership in Responsible Business: Developments, Trends and Best Practices'

Friday 10 November 2017, The Claridges Hotel, New Delhi

Speaker Biographies

Advocates for International Development



Trishna Mohan Kripalani, Project Lead-India, Advocates for International Development

Trishna is A4ID's Project Lead in India. She has more than nine years of experience in the legal and humanitarian sector and holds an Advanced Masters in International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Law from the Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Law in Geneva. She is a qualified lawyer in India and has practiced both in chamber practice and law firms. As a lawyer, she has worked on civil, criminal and corporate cases, and handled a team of lawyers at Kochhar and Company dealing mostly in corporate litigation including corporate criminal liability and arbitration. During her Masters in Geneva she was involved in the discourse and working group in Business and Human Rights. She has also been engaged with the development sector with several NGOs and International Organisations including the International Committee of the Red Cross and has worked for the Ministry of Woman and Child Development as a legal consultant.



Yasmin Batliwala, Chief Executive, Advocates for International Development

Yasmin is the Chief Executive of Advocates for International Development (A4ID) the lead organisation to bring the UN Guiding Principles to the legal community and the first to publish a Guide for the Legal Profession. Yasmin has held a number of leadership positions over the years, including the Chair of the Hertfordshire Police Authority, and Vice Chair of a large NHS Trust. She has also undertaken work with the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime. Yasmin is a Magistrate serving on the Youth and Adult Bench.

Speakers



Avik Biswas, Partner, IndusLaw

Avik leads the employment law practice group of INDUSLAW. He has been ranked by Chambers and Partners, Legal 500 and Who's Who Legal as one of India's highly recommended employment lawyers since 2011. Avik is well known for his employment law practice across all industry sectors and is considered a subject matter expert in employment contracts, nationwide employment audits, company policies and handbooks, internal disciplinary inquiries, sexual harassment proceedings, whistle-blower investigations, structuring of compensation and benefits, conducting Reduction in Force (RIF) exercises, negotiation of senior management severances and labour management practices.

Avik is also very well regarded for his strategic advice to legal and HR functions of multinational corporations in relation to employment risk mitigation and management, and related best practices in Indian markets. Avik is regularly involved in speaking engagements on employment law topics across India in various seminars and events. Avik is frequently invited to speak on key issues surrounding Indian employment law at international events, including the International Bar Association (IBA) conferences.

Avik is also a member of the Technology Law practice group, having been involved with the IT industry right from the very beginning of his career. Prior to joining INDUSLAW, Avik was a Partner at RDA Legal. Avik has also been a senior member of Poovayya & Co and the in-house legal team of Infosys Technologies.



Avimukt Dar, Partner, IndusLaw

Avimukt is one of the founding partners of INDUSLAW and advises on a range of corporate, commercial and foreign investment laws. He represents domestic and international companies and private equity investors in strategic and financial investment transactions across a range of sectors.

Avimukt also represents clients in commercial and corporate disputes including competition law issues and has extensive experience in negotiating exit strategies for investors and joint venture partners.

Avimukt has been consistently recognised as “one of the leading lawyers of India” for Corporate/M&A, Investment Funds and Dispute Resolution by Asialaw Profiles (The Guide to Asia-Pacific’s Leading Domestic Law Firms). The Legal 500 Asia Pacific (2017) lists Avimukt as a recommended lawyer for Investment Funds. He has been recommended every year by the same publication over the last decade for Corporate and M&A transactions.

Avimukt is a regular speaker at the UIA-ABA International Seminars on Corporate Governance and M&A. He is guest faculty at the Indian Institute of Management (Lucknow) where he teaches legal aspects of Mergers & Acquisitions. He has authored articles and conducted several seminars on the recent corporate reforms introduced by the Companies Act, 2013.



Namit Agarwal, Lead Specialist on Private Sector Engagement, Oxfam India

Namit Agarwal works as Lead Specialist - Private Sector Engagement at Oxfam India. He leads Oxfam India’s engagement with private sector to advocate for responsible business policies and practices. He led creation of India Responsible Business Forum, a platform to promote adoption of inclusive and responsible business practices by Indian companies. He is also part of the team developing India Responsible Business Index of top 100 companies listed in India on how responsible their policies are. Namit has extensive experience of working on business responsibility related issues in India working with CARE, Samhita and a cluster development project. He is an MBA (Marketing) from ICFAI University and Bachelor of Commerce from Calcutta University.



Nidhish Mehrotra, Founding Partner, ANM Global Inc

Mr Nidhish Mehrotra is a co-founder of the firm. Mr Mehrotra represents companies before various courts with regards Food Laws, on issues relating to trademark, copyright and design infringements in India. Mr Mehrotra has also worked on cross-border transactions, restructurings and corporate reorganisations, mergers and acquisitions, private equity placements and general corporate governance. He also advises numerous national and international clients on information technology laws, cyber crimes, cyber compliance and has been speaker at various national conferences on Intellectual Property Rights and Information Technology Law. He also advises clients on joint ventures, foreign collaborations, project financing, debt financings and regulatory approvals.



Pavini Emiko Singh (Emiko), Lawyer, Clifford Chance LLP

Emiko is an Associate in Clifford Chance's Litigation and Disputes Resolution practice in London. She specialises in international arbitration, domestic and multi-jurisdictional commercial litigation and financial regulatory investigations. Emiko is actively involved with the firm's public international law and business & human rights practice and has experience in advising businesses on compliance with the UN Guiding Principles, the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights and the UK Modern Slavery Act.



Roger Leese, Partner, Clifford Chance LLP

Roger is a partner in Clifford Chance's Litigation and Disputes Resolution practice in London. He specialises in commercial, corporate, trust and finance related disputes across a wide range of industries, and co-heads the Firm's Business and Human Rights practice. In addition, Roger is responsible for the Firm's pro bono and Community Affairs programmes, chairs its Corporate Social Responsibility Committee and co-heads its Microfinance Group. He is a member of the UK Minister for International Development's International pro bono committee. He is also the Chair of A4ID, and is in addition a Trustee of the Royal Courts of Justice Citizens Advice Bureau.



Shankh Sengupta, Partner, Trilegal

Shankh Sengupta is a partner in the Dispute Resolution Practice group in Trilegal and specializes in commercial disputes and white collar crimes. He regularly represents Indian and multinational clients in corporate and commercial disputes before various courts and tribunals in India. Shankh has advised and represented shareholders in several shareholder disputes before the Company Law Board, High Courts in India and before the Supreme Court of India. A substantial part of his practice is conducting institutional and ad-hoc arbitrations in investment disputes and disputes arising out of construction contracts, hotel management and other commercial contracts in India and abroad. He also advises on mergers, demergers and amalgamations of companies.

Shankh is a preferred choice for clients in their internal investigations relating to anti-corruption and bribery issues. He has been advising and representing individual and corporate clients before courts and investigative authorities, such as the Central Bureau of Investigations, the Enforcement Directorate, Economic Offences Wing, Serious Frauds Investigation Office and criminal courts in India. He has represented sovereign funds and defense equipment suppliers in headline matters involving public procurement and mis-management of investor funds.

Multi-national companies regularly instruct Shankh to investigate matters involving kick-backs from vendors, facilitative payments to government officers etc. Shankh has advised and conducted investigations into operations of Fortune 500 companies to determine non-compliance of regulatory requirements and bribing of government officials. Shankh has been advising and acting for commercial banks, funds, construction majors, telecom and broadcasting giants and manufacturing companies on criminal and quasi-criminal matters and in actions against the government. Shankh is a regular speaker at international events and conducts anti-corruption trainings for a wide variety of clients.



Sunila Awasthi, Senior Partner, AZB & Partners

Ms. Sunila Awasthi is one of the senior partners at AZB & Partners, one of the top law firms in India. She qualified as a lawyer from Faculty of Law, Delhi University in 1992. She has about 25 years extensive experience in general corporate commercial advisory practice. Her initial years were spent advising various multi-national companies in investing into India which entailed obtaining FIPB approvals; negotiating joint ventures and collaborations across multiple sectors. She also did extensive opinion work on varying topics like contract law, FDI policy, FEMA regulations, labour laws, telecom regulations relating to OSPs and ISPs, data privacy, non-competition etc. She took a break in 2000 to do an LLM from T.C. Beirne School of Law, University of Queensland, Australia.

After the sabbatical and upon returning to her old firm, Sunila's practice area changed slightly and focused primarily on advising domestic and international clients on general commercial matters with focus on two broad areas of practice namely, (1) employment laws including sexual harassment matters and (2) information technology, e-commerce & data privacy. She continues to advise, along with her team, the world's largest e-commerce company in setting up its operations in India and its various wholly owned subsidiaries on India on issues relating to structuring & regulatory matters in view of the FDI policy and FEMA regulations; all kinds of commercial contracts; transactional matters; online operations of a marketplace and related matters. Under the employment laws practice, she is advising extensively on employment related issues including employment related compliances; contracts & HR policies; statutory benefits; labour laws compliance audits; severance packages for senior management; investigating violation of company policies or code of conduct; participating in investigations of sexual harassment complaints as a member of complaints committees; advising clients on dealing with harassment complaints; and conducting trainings for ICC members as well as employees as per requirements of law.



Vaneesha Jain, Senior Associate, Saikrishna & Associates

Vaneesha Jain is a Senior Associate at Saikrishna & Associates, and works in the Policy division of the Firm. With a focus on copyright, she works on a broad range of issues affecting IPR policy. Her interest in human rights has also led her to take initiative in public interest and pro bono matters.

Vaneesha received her L.L.M. degree from New York University in 2015, after having completed her B.A./L.L.B (Hons) from the National University of Juridical Sciences, Kolkata in 2011. Before going for her Masters' degree, she worked with a leading law firm in the intellectual property department, with a Government body working on child rights, and with an international non-profit on land and forest rights of indigenous people.



Dr. Vikas Goswami, Head of Sustainability - Good and Green, Godrej Group

Ms. Vikas Goswami has been Head of Good & Green at Godrej Industries Ltd. since Feb, 2015. Ms. Goswami drives the Group's Sustainability strategy known as 'Good & Green' vision. Focus of the strategy is on creating a more employable workforce, building a Greener India and innovating for good and green products. Under her leadership, the team is laying down processes to evaluate the impact of the Group's Good & Green initiatives. She has over 25 years' experience in working with both the corporate and development sector. Prior to joining the Godrej Group, she helped companies strategise on issues of corporate social responsibility and environment. She served as Group Head of CSR Vedanta Resources. She was also a member of the team responsible for crafting the Business Responsibility Report framework for SEBI and the National Voluntary Guidelines for the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India. Ms. Goswami completed Ph.D in Anthropology from Delhi University and M.Sc in Development Management from University of Wales.