

Miami hire brings treaty work for Shook

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Ricardo Ampudia

Missouri-headquartered firm Shook Hardy & Bacon has hired a multilingual of counsel in its Miami office who brings two active investment treaty arbitrations with him.

Ricardo Ampudia, an Ecuadorean-US national, joined the firm's global arbitration practice on 22 August from International Disputes Resources, a boutique he set up in 2015 with offices in Miami and Washington, DC. Before that he was an attorney at Weil Gotshal & Manges in DC for two and a half years.

Ampudia – who grew up in Latin America and speaks English, Spanish, Portuguese and French – has worked on investor-state and commercial disputes spanning the construction, energy and banking sectors.

He is currently working as co-counsel with Jones Day for a Puerto Rico-based engineering company and its CEO who launched an ICSID claim against Panama claiming they were unfairly caught up in a corruption investigation targeting president of the Panamanian Supreme Court under the administration of the country's former president Ricardo Martinelli.

Ampudia is also acting for an Argentine-Spanish businessman in an UNCITRAL claim against Mexico over the seizure of hotel properties in the Mexican Caribbean.

While at Weil Gotshal, he was also part of the team that defended Hungary against an Energy Charter Treaty claim by France's EDF; and represented Argentina's Pluspetrol and other investors in an ICSID claim against Peru.

At the same firm, he acted for an African internet trust and US internet company Dot Registry against Californian internet regulator ICANN in disputes under ICDR rules over the registration of domain name extensions.

He has spent time coaching moot teams on international arbitration at Georgetown University Law Center, where he studied for his LLM. Ampudia is admitted in Washington, DC, Florida and New York and has worked on international human rights and Interpol matters as well as assisting in civil and criminal investigations related to the procurement of public contracts.

Shook Hardy's international arbitration experience includes acting alongside Sisley Austin on behalf of Philip Morris in its high-profile ICSID claim against Uruguay over its tobacco packaging legislation.

In 2014, the firm also recruited **Marike Paulsson**, director of the Miami School of Law's international arbitration institute, to advise as a consultant on arbitration matters part-time.

In Shook Hardy's Miami office, Ampudia joins three partners with arbitration experience: **John Barkett**, **Frank Cruz-Alvarez** and **Humberto Ocariz**. Barkett says, "Ricardo is a talented and thoughtful lawyer who adds great depth and experience to our international arbitration team. He is able to move seamlessly between both the commercial and bilateral investment treaty worlds of arbitration. We are thrilled that he is at Shook."

Jones Day's Miami-based partner **Carlos Concepcion**, who is working with Ampudia on the ICSID case for Panama, says "Ricardo is an excellent lawyer who will surely contribute to Shook's growing international arbitration practice."

Baiju Vasani, another Jones Day partner on that case, says that Shook has made an "astute move" with Ampudia's hire. He says Ampudia is "undoubtedly a name to know for the future in this field, and we look forward to continue working with him at his new firm."