



Corporate and commercial disputes

Stephenson Harwood's highly regarded corporate and commercial disputes team advises on the full range of disputes. We represent clients in High Court litigation, international and domestic arbitration, and advise and assist clients on ADR, including mediation. Most of what we do is truly international and often multi-jurisdictional; we manage complex proceedings in other jurisdictions and co-ordinate proceedings in more than one jurisdiction. The team is renowned for its depth and ability to handle a broad range of disputes but has particular expertise in banking and financial services litigation and regulation, competition litigation, fund litigation, shareholder disputes and corporate litigation, professional and management liability and sanctions litigation.

Our clients include FTSE 100 and 250 companies as well as other multinational corporations, professional firms, major brands, private equity funds, asset managers, pension funds and ultra-high net worth individuals. We also act for states, governments, state-owned entities and sovereign wealth funds. These clients come to us for their 'bet the company' cases because they know that we have the knowledge and experience to handle the biggest and most complex cases.

We excel at high stakes litigation and have the scale, breadth of expertise and experience to act on any major dispute. This means that clients who have multiple parallel disputes can and regularly do instruct us on all their matters.

"The team are really experienced and technically excellent. They are responsive and diligent."

"Stephenson Harwood is a premier city firm outstanding in all departments no doubt, but I have particular experience of them in commercial litigation, sanctions and banking."

"Clever, thoughtful people. Very responsive and down to earth. They make you feel like you're their most important client, even though they must have many more."

Legal 500 UK, 2024

"Stephenson Harwood has a very efficient team that is always available to provide support."

Chambers UK, 2024

Our selected experience

Because we are involved in such a high number of major commercial cases each year, our procedural knowledge and experience is second to none. We are also extremely experienced in handling cross-border matters and taking cases to the Court of Appeal, Supreme Court and the Privy Council, where we have a strong track record.

Some of the team's recent experience includes:

Primer Design Limited and Novacyt S.A.

Acted for Primer Design Limited and its dual-listed (Euronext and LSE) French parent company, Novacyt S.A., defending a £134 million claim brought by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and PD's £81m counterclaim to recover sums due from DHSC under unpaid invoices. Both claims arose out of a +£200 million commercial contract to supply COVID-19 testing kits, instruments and ancillary services. The dispute involved high-value claims both by and against both parties, namely the Government and a leading publicly listed company in the Life Sciences sector. The dispute arose from conduct by the government and NHS at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, involving high-value public procurement decisions. It was the largest claim of its kind. The case was listed for a four week trial June-July 2024, and settled on the first day.

American multinational investment bank

Acting for an American multinational investment bank on a claim asserted by its client for losses arising out of the fall in value of a structured product related to a basket of indices including the Russian Depositary Index in USD (RDXUSD). RDXUSD was an index comprised of the most liquid depository receipts on Russian shares traded on the London Stock Exchange. Adverse changes in the market following Russia's invasion of Ukraine caused a loss in the value of the Certificate and it was ultimately cancelled following the suspension and subsequent discontinuation of RDXUSD.

Saxon Woods Investment Limited

Successfully secured a finding of unfair prejudice for Saxon Woods Investments Limited in February 2024 in a shareholder dispute, following a heavily contested 5-week liability trial in the Business and Property Courts in the autumn of 2023.

Natixis S.A.

Advising this longstanding and institutional client, who has counted on Stephenson Harwood's expertise and experience to resolve a complex, cross-jurisdictional and very high-value dispute before the English Courts arising out of the collapse of Zenrock Commodities.

Shanghai Commercial and Savings Bank Limited

Acting for Shanghai Commercial and Savings Bank Limited (Taiwan) ("SCSB") in its defence of a claim brought against it by Vegesentials Limited and Fibre Water Limited for vicarious liability arising out of a fraudulent misrepresentation, in respect of acts allegedly committed by SCSB's former employee in Taiwan, which have allegedly resulted in loss of chance and associated damages.

XiO Cayman

Advising on complex, multi-party and multi-jurisdictional investigations and proceedings arising out of one of the largest corporate/private equity fund collapses in recent years.

ETI v Bolivia and Entel

Successfully discharging a freezing order before the English Commercial Court and Court of Appeal in a telecoms investment treaty dispute under ICSID arbitration rules involving issues of state immunity.

International energy company

Advising an international energy company on claims in excess of \$1bn against a top 5 global oil major arising out of an attempted purchase of a major shareholding in one of the largest crude oil refineries in Europe. This case involves key energy security issues arising from the Russian/Ukraine war.

Gold Reserve v Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

Acting for the Republic of Venezuela in the defence of the enforcement of an arbitral award arising from ICSID's Additional Facility proceedings brought by a Canadian gold mining company to challenge Venezuela's revocation of environmental permits and the related termination of a gold and copper mining project.

Sanctions issues

Advising on a wide range of sanctions issues including disputed financial transactions and representing major commercial companies and individuals in challenging sanctions designations in national and EU Courts, often in difficult circumstances.

Major Cypriot Banks

Advising a number of major Cypriot banks in relation to a large number of claims based on alleged 'mis-selling' brought in the UK and Cyprus, in group actions involving hundreds of parties.

Medlands PTC Limited (as trustee of the Trust) and Spanish Steps Holdings Limited

Assisting clients in securing billions of dollars of trust assets in complex, multi-jurisdictional proceedings, including advising on a successful contested application to appoint liquidators to manage the trust assets.

One of the world's largest sovereign wealth funds

Advising one of the world's largest sovereign wealth funds in respect of allegations of bribery made against it by the UK regulatory authorities in relation to investments valued in excess of £4.5 billion.

Market recognition

"Stephenson Harwood is always very responsive as well as being sound in its advice and in its anticipation of client needs."

"They have technically gifted lawyers who are able to grasp tricky matters very quickly and who always factor the business implications into the advice given."

Chambers UK & Chambers Global, 2023

"Stephenson Harwood has an excellent and diverse commercial litigation team. It is always a pleasure to work with them, they are professional, engaged, dynamic and effective."

Legal 500 UK, 2023

Sources commend the firm's strategy of "putting forward small yet strong teams that are very focused on a case rather than spreading resources over a vast number of lawyers."

Chambers UK, 2022

"Innovative thinking and commercially savvy; highly experienced in complex international cases, but also reliable and skilled in smaller domestic disputes."

"Brilliant international firm with exciting global reach into markets where London lawyers are not always prominent. The commerciality and skill of the lawyers and their knowledge of comparative legal systems and experience of big litigation ought to place them at the top of London's legal offering. Also their diversity and gender balance is very impressive."

Legal 500 UK, 2022



For the
fifth year
running



Shortlisted
for
Commercial
Litigation
Team of the
Year 2024

Our team



Richard Garcia

Partner, Head of Corporate and Commercial Disputes team, London

T: +44 20 7809 2346

E: richard.garcia@shlegal.com



Adam Culy

Partner, London

T: +44 20 7809 2371

E: adam.culy@shlegal.com



Roland Foord

Consultant, London

T: +44 20 7809 2315

E: roland.foord@shlegal.com



Guy Harper

Partner, London

T: +44 20 7809 2398

E: guy.harper@shlegal.com



Sue Millar

Partner, London

T: +44 20 7809 2329

E: sue.millar@shlegal.com



Donna Newman

Partner, London

T: +44 20 7809 2357

E: donna.newman@shlegal.com



Ben Sigler

Partner, London

T: +44 20 7809 2919

E: ben.sigler@shlegal.com



Dan Smith

Partner, London

T: +44 20 7809 2369

E: dan.smith@shlegal.com