

**Paris Baby Investigation – PAW 2023 mini-series :**  
**Presenting the Paris Arbitration Week 2023,**  
**with Marily Paralika & Raphaël Kaminsky (English transcript)**

**[Introduction]**

**PBA :** For today's episode, I am joined by Ms. Marily Paralika. You are a lawyer admitted to the Paris Bar and the Athens Bar. You are partners at Fieldfisher, where you head the international arbitration practice. You act as counsel and arbitrator in commercial and investment proceedings in a wide range of industries. You are also particularly involved in ICC as a member of the ICC International Court of Arbitration for Greece, a member of the ICC Commissioners for Arbitration and Chair of the ICC Hellas Committee. Before all this, you were a member of the ArbitralWomen organization, a member of the White & Case law firm and a member of the ICC secretariat, as deputy counsel. Thank you Mr. Paralika for being with us today.

**Marily Paralika :** Thank you.

**PBA :** Also by my side, Mr. Raphaël Kaminsky. You are an attorney admitted to the Paris and New York bars. You are a partner at Teynier Pic, a law firm specializing in commercial litigation, commercial arbitration and alternative dispute resolution. You regularly represent clients in national and international arbitrations, both in institutional and ac hoc arbitration proceedings and you also represent clients in mediations and consultations. You are also a member of the board of directors of the French Arbitration Committee and you teach various courses on international arbitration at Sciences Po and the University of Paris II. Before that, you set up your own firm and were a member of Latham & Watkins.

We thank you for being present for this podcast.

You have both been members of the Paris Arbitration Week board for 2 years, but it is only since this year that you have been members of the board as Co-Chairmen and it is therefore quite naturally that we turn to you today for this first episode dealing with the 2023 edition of the Paris Arbitration Week. And so we will start with a first question by way of introduction for our listeners which is the following: concretely, what is the PAW and why is this event important for Paris as an arbitration place?

**Marily Paralika :** PAW is a week dedicated to international arbitration. It takes place in March and has been since 2017. This year, we are in the presence of its 7th edition, and aims to bring together all arbitration professionals around a week of events both academic and social. Through this ticket, connect the community of practitioners and promote academic exchanges and Paris as a place of arbitration at the global level.

PAW also aims during this week of events to promote two principles that are dear to our hearts: diversity in the refereeing community and sustainable development. These two commitments that we try to promote as much as possible with our partners and our participants. To sum up, I also wanted to mention the motto we have been using for a year to promote PAW to the refereeing world - in English, it is "learning, sharing, celebrating together" - I think it sums up the spirit of this week dedicated to refereeing.

**Raphaël Kaminsky :** To complete the picture, I would just like to give some figures on what PAW represents today for Paris and arbitration at the global level.

This year, and it is a truly exceptional year, we have more than 150 partners, firms, associations, arbitration centers, and various companies involved in arbitration, who are organizing more than 130 events. And among these, more than 150 partners, almost half of them are from abroad, and are really based abroad without any link with Paris, which gives an idea of the attractiveness of PAW, at the world level and obviously this attractiveness of PAW is reflected on Paris as an arbitration place since a great majority have a link with Paris as a seat of arbitration or as Paris, as one of the substantial rights, which can be applicable in arbitrations.

**PBA** : Thank you both very much for these words of introduction. PAW is indeed a week that is much awaited in the arbitration world in Paris but also in other countries. I would now like to ask you in what way do you think the events organized during the PAW allow a better understanding of what arbitration is and to better identify its current and future stakes?

**Raphaël Kaminsky** : That's a very good question. I think that the PAW allows to have an absolutely general and global view on what is arbitration today. There are more than 130 events that will be organized during one week and that represent 5 days. All these events deal with extremely different and varied subjects. These subjects are considered topical by the organizers (firms and institutions), who decide to organize events in which they decide to speak about subjects for which they have a particular expertise and/or on a topical subject. This allows people who are new to arbitration and who are not yet familiar with arbitration or, on the contrary, people who are very specialized and who would really like to be interested in a particular area of construction or investment law, to have access to in-depth information on a wide variety of subjects and locations.

**Marily Paralika** : Just by looking at the events posted in the PAW calendar, one can indeed observe a great variety that covers topics of commercial arbitration, investment arbitration, which goes through more specialized topics such as sports law, arbitration in space via also topics a little more classic such as construction, investment, third party funding. There is a big variety that follows closely the trends and issues in this field.

**Raphaël Kaminsky** : Absolutely, and even many events, in all that is quantum and evaluation of damages. We have a lot of partners, who are expert firms and who do subjects that really go beyond the usual fields of arbitration, as taught at the university or as we know them in practice. We have an exceptional offer of events.

In the first days, there are quality meetings with very high ranking people, like Toby Landau, like Alain Pellet, like Meg Kinnear. So you have access to people you would rarely have access to.

**PBA** : A multitude of subjects and a multitude of personalities. Through what kind of events can we discover all this ?

**Marily Paralika** : Events during PAW fall into two main categories. They are divided into academic events and social events. The academic events, in fact, are the vast majority of events that allow, as we have just discussed, to put forward topics, to bring together practitioners and panels, which exchange on selected topics and also, there are quite a few social events, which allow a maximum of networking, to achieve this principle of connections, which is dear to the Paris Arbitration Week and which have become important moments not to be missed in the calendar of arbitration practitioners around the world, including of course the 3 events organized by the PAW board, the opening cocktail, on Monday, March 27 (first day), which brings together nearly 1000 people. It is an event open to all, and which allows to start the week well surrounded and then on Wednesday 29th arbitration cruise, another social event co-organized, with several

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associations of young arbitration practitioners and the closing-cocktails, the very last day, another social event, reserved only to the PAW partner.

The first event (Monday morning at 9am, the kick-off event) is the event to start the week, organized by the PAW board. We have had a tradition for the past 3 years of inviting a personality from the arbitration world to speak on the subject of diversity in the international arbitration field. In the continuity of this tradition, this year, we are delighted to welcome Yas Banifatemi, who will present his keynote speeches on Monday morning, and it is indeed for us the best way to show our commitment to diversity and to promote this principle during the PAW week.

**PBA :** What is the target audience for these events? Is it reserved for experienced arbitrators? Or is it intended to have a wider audience? I am thinking in particular of lawyers specialized in other fields, and even other professions, and I am also thinking in particular of students.

**Marily Paralika :** That's a very good question. I would say that the audience of PAW is really the arbitration lovers and it is very wide: it can include practitioners, lawyers practicing international arbitration, arbitrators, representatives of what we call the users of arbitration, structures, companies that use arbitration as a dispute resolution method, arbitration institutions, student associations, international professional associations from all over the world. Indeed, it is a unique platform, which gives the opportunity to follow the trends and all these actors, all these different categories can find topics that interest them, and also participate, meet, exchange and make contacts and meetings with other participants, other interested people.

As to the question of lawyers specializing in other fields, of course PAW is open to all lawyers including those specializing in other fields and we are well aware of lawyers who do not practice arbitration but who are brought by their practice, by their contact with their client to face subjects and questions and may very well be interested in the subjects and academic events that take place during PAW.

As far as students are concerned, they have been the core audience for PAW. It's not just about the experienced arbitrators that we want to reach and attract but obviously the younger generation, who want to learn, who want to connect with practitioners. This PAW platform is really interesting from that point of view. As an association and as a board, we have first editions, we have worked closely with students, especially from MACI. These groups of students participate to cover the events during the week by making reports that we then post to give even more visibility to the events and for a few years now, we have a close collaboration with Paris Baby Arbitration. We are delighted to work with you. We have put in place several initiatives in the last two years. It is our commitment to reach out to a younger and student audience.

**Raphaël Kaminsky :** This is PAW, in 99% of the cases it is free. Practically all the events are free. There are a few paying events that are generally reserved for practitioners that are not necessarily of great interest to students, it's not necessarily a tragedy to miss them, but most of the events are free and you shouldn't be afraid to get involved, you shouldn't be afraid to go, so sometimes you don't get answers right away but you shouldn't hesitate to attend as many events as possible.

**PBA :** And then a few words perhaps on this last point. We, our association Paris Baby Arbitration is part of this young generation of arbitrators, and we wanted to ask you how you think a student should approach PAW? Are some events more interesting than others for students or should we as you said try to attend as many events as possible?

**Raphaël Kaminsky** : All the events are exciting, obviously. Some of them are more geared towards a more experienced practitioner audience, but indeed PAW is absolutely an amazing opportunity for a student to have access to thousands of practitioners, who come from all over the world, during these 5 days. My recommendation is to spend those 5 days meeting people, attending conferences, going to cocktail parties and there are really youth oriented events. Marily told you about the YAC which was really created for young people. For the rest, everything is open and also directed towards students so meet as many people as possible, and soak up this refereeing environment, because in Paris, the refereeing world is a relatively small environment in which people know each other well and recommend each other. People can share their experiences with each other, where there is activity, where there is less. So it allows you to have contact with real people and to realize how things can be with some lawyers and to see a little bit closer what the life of an arbitration lawyer is, even if the life of an arbitration lawyer is not only conferences and cocktails like the PAW unfortunately.

**PBA** : Yes indeed it's a pity but fortunately we have this week in March to make up for it. I would now like to take a step back and ask you what are your expectations for the PAW 2023 edition? Have there been any changes, any innovations that have been implemented compared to previous years?

**Marily Paralika** : Obviously, we are very ambitious. The objective is to beat all the records. We have broken them and we hope to continue. The impressive figures demonstrate the ability of PAW's partners to attract thousands of practitioners and actors of the arbitration world to Paris. Our ambition is obviously to continue to grow, and to do so, this year we have implemented an innovation. It was our main project on which we worked for several months. It was the setting up of a new PAW website, it was a work that we discovered little by little.

We looked into it by considering a better optimal use of this site from the perspective of partners and participants. We put ourselves in the shoes of all the actors who aim for PAW. We wanted to do something very integrated and we succeeded because the feedback from visitors and partners is very enthusiastic. For us, this was the innovation of this edition. It will transform the way partners and participants experience this week.

**Raphaël Kaminsky** : And lastly, this website would not have existed without our former president, Yasmin Mohammad, who was determined to leave us a golden website before passing on the reins of the association.

**Marily Paralika** : Yes, this site is truly unique. There is no other venue like this one in the world and it offers a unique experience.

**PBA** : It is indeed a great success, and I invite our listeners to go to the website [parisarbitrationweek.com](https://parisarbitrationweek.com) and create their personal spaces and register for events. One last question because you mentioned the fact that the site was unique, and on this subject I would like to ask you in what way does PAW stand out compared to other arbitration weeks?

**Raphaël Kaminsky** : Paris Arbitration Week has become the reference in terms of arbitration in the world. It's only been 6 years since PAW was created, and it has become the biggest arbitration week in the world. We are proud of it. It's the firms and the participants who wanted to get together and that's what makes it so different, because Paris attracts so many people. It is the most international arbitration week in the world, no arbitration week. Last year, there were over 10,000 attendees mixing online and in person. We have over 12,000 followers on the association's LinkedIn account and there is this global framework. It is not a French event but a global event attracting people from all over the world and covering themes that are again totally

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international. Some events are about the war in Ukraine, other events are about arbitration in Asia, others about Asia and Latin America. We have events all over the world and in Paris.

**PBA** : Marily Paralika et Raphaël Kaminsky, thank you very much for taking the time to answer our questions and to present to our listeners this week that promises to be great. See you soon I hope.

**Raphaël Kaminsky** : Thank you to you, to PBA, for being our partners again this year and for welcoming us for this podcast and this interview.

**Marily Paralika**: Thank you very much.