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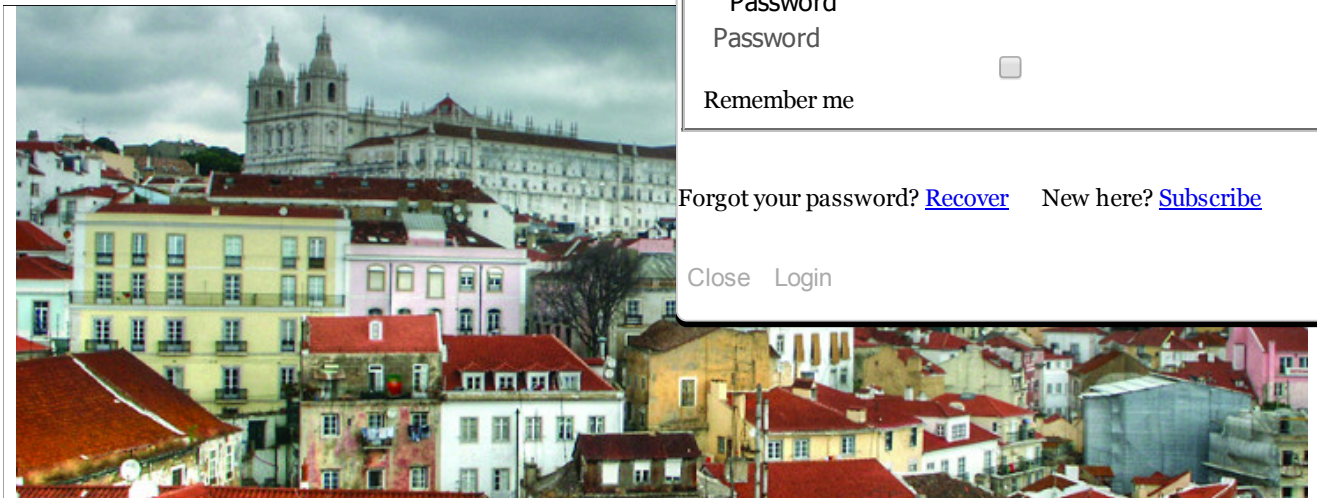
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# PLMJ Arbitration looks to the future

**BEN RIGBY** 24 MARCH, 2016

PRINT EMAIL



**Leading Portuguese firm PLMJ has announced the arrival of Gonçalo de Almeida Ribeiro at PLMJ Arbitration; the firm's dedicated arbitration team.**

Ribeiro, a leading legal academic and lawyer, has a doctorate in legal sciences from Harvard Law School, where he won several prizes for academic excellence, is an assistant guest lecturer at the faculty of law of *Universidade Católica Portuguesa* and the co-coordinator of the Lisbon section of the Catholic Research Centre for the Future of Law.

He has also held guest lectureships in law at Perugia, Italy, and Leuven, Belgium, as well as having acted as a consultant to the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) amongst other speaking, writing, and advisory capacities.

**José Miguel Júdice**, the name partner who heads up PLMJ Arbitration, said in a statement: "We believe his intelligence, scientific knowledge of international law and experience will strengthen our international arbitration practice, above all, in the English language. He will also be very important to our focus on public law arbitrations".

## A GROWING PRACTICE

Arbitration in Portugal has developed steadily over the last ten years, thanks in part to the foresight of Júdice, forming a stand-alone team within the firm, one of Portugal's largest, distinct from the firm's litigation lawyers – although it works closely with them.

The team is notable for its academic interests, ranging from multi-party proceedings in arbitration, to investment treaty arbitration and the law of evidence, while the backgrounds and experiences of the teams' lawyers span a number of jurisdictions; it is not unusual for the team's lawyers to have assisted commercial clients in the firm's African offices as well as Lisbon; the firm as a whole is spread across nine countries.

Its growth comes at a point at which it has made over 20 lateral hires and recruited 26 trainee lawyers in recent years, as well as making internal promotions. The firm promoted three disputes lawyers and the heads of its Angola and Mozambique desks in its 2016 promotions round

In November 2015, the firm recruited **Rui Soares Pereira** as of counsel in the arbitration practice, swiftly followed by the February appointment of 12 managing associates and seven senior associates.

The firm also introduced the rank of managing associate to help coordinate key clients and matters in PLMJ's various practice areas. The managing associates were chosen for possessing over 10 years of legal experience, knowledge and leadership capacity, as preparation for an eventual partnership, through the management of teams, projects and clients.

Of the 12 lawyers appointed as managing associates, two practiced in dispute resolution; **Raquel Ribeiro Correia**, of the commercial litigation team and **Alexandra Mota Gomes**, a criminal lawyer.

Three senior associates practising in the dispute resolution team were promoted: **António Pinto Monteiro**, a member of PLMJ Arbitration, and commercial litigators, **Raquel Sofia Lemos** and **Filipa Nunes Dias**.

PLMJ managing partner, competition lawyer, **Luís Pais Antunes** said, in a statement: "These appointments are recognition of the levels of specialisation and work done for clients, and reflect PLMJ's culture of rewarding the merit of its lawyers.

"The appointment of these new managing associates is also a challenge to those appointed to develop their leadership and management capacities."

## A DEVELOPING SYSTEM

CDR spoke with two senior associates, **António Júdice Moreira** and **Filipa Cansado de Carvalho**, in Lisbon this month. The lawyers confirmed that investors and businesses increasingly recognised the flexibility, speed and convenience of arbitration.

This was thanks to a careful process of client engagement, the addition of arbitral clauses to contractual agreements, active participation in Portugal's arbitration institutions and growing commercial awareness of the benefits, both for smaller cases as well as larger ones. Júdice's role in encouraging this process was both important and influential.

Similarly, with Portuguese lawyers increasingly international in outlook, particularly at the larger firms, the idea of studying ADR at a distinguished international university, such as Harvard, Georgetown, or Columbia, like Ribeiro, is more common for the most able.

Those same lawyers have also encouraged the progressive redevelopment of Portugal's arbitration institutions, including the *Centro de Arbitragem Comercial da Associação Comercial de Lisboa*, while CDR understands that lists of arbitrators have been refreshed, as practitioners have shown added interest in ADR practice in Portugal.

Mediation is also showing signs of growth; it is believed to be at the same stage of development as arbitration was ten years ago; with the issue of new mediation rules, its use may also become more common among clients.

## AN INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK

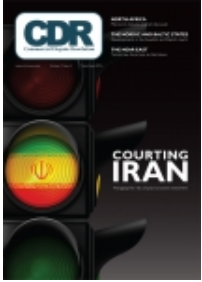
While the legacies of the credit crunch will affect the country for years yet, Portugal having been one of the EU nation states that required assistance from European and international institutions, the country's business lawyers have a progressive international outlook.

PLMJ Arbitration currently has more than 20 lawyers, including eight partners and six different nationalities, giving it excellent experience in representing clients in arbitrations in five languages (Portuguese, English, Spanish, French and German) in a range of different countries.

COUNTRIES.

Those lawyers increasingly look both to the country's European friends, like Britain, and its Mediterranean and African neighbours, as well as to historic former colonies like Brazil, Macao, Mozambique, and Angola, the latter of whom have seen economic growth in past decades. The team may see further growth yet still.

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