

Australasian Association of Private International Law



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Seminar Series, 2026 (Online)

A Long-Awaited Reform:

Papua New Guinea's New Arbitration Law

A conversation with Michael Henao

For over half a century, Papua New Guinea's arbitration framework rested on the Arbitration Act 1951, a pre-independence statute modelled on the United Kingdom's long-repealed Arbitration Act 1889. On 20 February 2024, PNG enacted a modern dual-track regime comprising the Arbitration (International) Act 2024 and the Arbitration (Domestic) Act 2024, aligning its arbitration law with international standards, including the UNCITRAL Model Law and the New York Convention, to which PNG acceded in 2019. This seminar examines the key features of the new regime — separability, competence-competence, limited court intervention, and the finality and enforcement of awards — alongside notable innovations in the IAA, including recognition of emergency arbitrators, arbitrator and institutional immunity, and a clarified public policy ground for refusing enforcement. This presentation offers practitioners and academics a valuable opportunity to understand how PNG's reformed framework enhances arbitral procedure, strengthens award enforceability, and promotes confidence in PNG as a destination for cross-border commerce and foreign investment.

Please join us for a conversation with Michael Henao led by Cara North



Michael Henao is a Partner in Ashurst's dispute resolution and global arbitration team. Michael is a skilled practitioner in litigation, regulatory and commercial law. He is an accomplished member of the legal fraternity in Papua New Guinea, and known for his ability to navigate complex regulatory environments and his comprehensive understanding of various sectors, including banking, finance, and telecommunications. Michael is qualified in Australia and PNG where he regularly appears before the Supreme, National and District courts sitting throughout the jurisdiction.



Cara North is Counsel in Ashurst's dispute resolution practice and global arbitration team. She has extensive experience acting for clients on large and complex multijurisdictional disputes, specialising in domestic and international commercial litigation, arbitration and investor-state dispute resolution. Cara has worked in disputes teams in firms in London and Geneva and for five years as a consultant for the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on Private International Law.

Date and Time: Tuesday 9 June 2026, 5:00pm to 6:00pm (AEST)*

Online only: [Zoom Link](#)

Zoom ID: 895 7280 3111

RSVP: Please register via [this link](#) by COB Thursday 4 June 2026

Anyone is welcome to attend this seminar. There is no cost.

* NZ: 7:00-8:00pm: ACT, NSW, PNG, Qld, Tas and Vic: 5:00-6:00pm: NT and SA, 4:30pm-5:30pm: WA, 3:00pm-4:00pm