

MYRNA BARAKAT FRIEDMAN

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Commercial Arbitrator, Mediator and Dispute Prevention Neutral

Presiding Fellow & Founder, ACT-ADR | Fellow, CIARB (FCI Arb) | CEDR-Accredited & NYS Certified Mediator

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Independent commercial arbitrator, mediator and dispute-prevention neutral with nearly 30 years of legal, corporate and business experience.

Former M&A, securities and financial-institutions lawyer at **Sullivan & Cromwell**, lead in-house M&A counsel and Corporate Development Managing Director at **CIT Group**, and founder of **MB Corporate Advisory Partners**, a strategic growth advisory firm. Brings particular depth in M&A, financial services, technology and complex cross-border disputes, together with firsthand understanding of the legal, financial and operational considerations underlying sophisticated commercial matters.

Trained in both common and civil law and fluent in English, French and Arabic, with proficiency in Spanish.

Known for a structured, practical and business-minded approach focused on identifying core issues efficiently and understanding the commercial context in which disputes arise—with a deep appreciation for the nuances of disputes involving multiple legal and business environments and multicultural constituents.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION EXPERIENCE

INDEPENDENT COMMERCIAL NEUTRAL

2021–Present

New York, USA (Domestic & International Mandates)

- Serve as Chair, Sole Arbitrator, Co-Arbitrator, Appellate Arbitrator, and Mediator in over 150 cases involving a broad range of complex commercial and financial matters, including matters under the rules of the AAA, ICDR, ICC, JAMS, CPR, and FINRA.
- Design and deliver bespoke soft skills and negotiation programs for corporate teams at global organizations, focusing on matrix influence, cross-functional communication, and dispute prevention.

Panel Admissions & Rosters

Domestic Panels & Rosters

- AAA Commercial Panels (Complex Commercial, Construction, Technology)
- CPR Arbitrator and Mediator Panels
- WIPO Arbitrator and Mediator Panels
- FINRA Arbitrator Panel
- Federal Court Mediator Panel (EDNY & SDNY)
- NY State Commercial and Surrogate's Courts Mediator Panel
- Special Master, New York State Supreme Court (Second Dept.)

International & Regional Rosters

- International Center for Dispute Resolution (ICDR)
- International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)- Listed as Arbitrator and Mediator
- London Court of International Arbitration (LCIA)
- Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC)
- Dubai International Arbitration Centre (DIAC) Arbitrator Panel
- Saudi Center for Commercial Arbitration (SCCA) Arbitrator and Mediator Rosters
- Qatar International Center for Conciliation & Arbitration (QICCA) Arbitrator and Mediator Rosters
- KCAB International Panel of Arbitrators

Leadership in Dispute Resolution

- Presiding Fellow and Founder, ACT-ADR (Association of Commercial and Transactional ADR Professionals)
- Founder, Salon d'Arb. (Invitation-only forum for arbitrator roundtable discussions)
- Chair, ICC/USCIB Mediation Subcommittee of the Arbitration Committee
- Chair, New York City Bar Association AI in Arbitration Subcommittee
- Member, AAA-ICDR Financial Industry Advisory Committee
- Member, New York International Arbitration Center (NYIAC) Program Committee
- Member, National Academy of Distinguished Neutrals (NADN)

AREAS OF DISPUTE RESOLUTION EXPERTISE

Corporate, M&A & Financial Transactions

M&A and post-M&A matters, joint ventures, private equity, family offices, investment vehicles, corporate finance, securities, financial services, bankruptcy, partnership disputes, and business divorces.

Technology, IP & Digital Assets

Technology licensing, data breaches, software/hardware professional services and manufacturing, crypto/online exchange platforms, pharmaceuticals, life sciences, biotechnology, and related IP disputes.

Industrial, Construction & Infrastructure

Complex construction disputes (subcontractor, scope of work, payment, EOTs, and defects), domestic/international manufacturing and distribution, transportation, logistics, automotive industry, defense, security and satellite infrastructure.

Commercial Operations & Professional Services

Commercial/residential real estate, commercial insurance and reinsurance (including specialty and D&O insurance), healthcare, film and entertainment, professional services disputes (investment banking, accounting, audit, IT, and legal), and food/beverage manufacturing and sales.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR • MB Corporate Advisory Partners S.A.R.L. (MBCAP)

2009–2022

Provided strategic growth advisory services (strategy formulation and execution) on acquisitions, partnerships, financing, and investments to corporations, financial institutions, high-growth companies, and investors. Industry focus: insurance/reinsurance, technology and infrastructure. *Transitioned firm advisory practice in 2021 to focus exclusively on independent neutral and arbitration services.*

- **Sourced** acquisition targets, joint ventures, and other strategic business combination partners.
- **Structured and negotiated** transactional deal terms, investment agreements, and financing structures.
- **Led** capital raising and corporate fundraising initiatives across diverse industries.
- **Advised** executive leadership on general corporate and governance matters related to strategic growth.

MANAGING DIRECTOR & SVP, CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT • CIT Group Inc.

2005–2008

- **Formulated** CIT Group's global M&A strategy; sourced, evaluated, and initiated contact with strategic partners and acquisition targets across CIT's five global business units.
- **Served** as Chief Counsel-M&A, lead for structuring, reviewing, and completing all acquisitions, divestitures, and other strategic corporate transactions.
- **Served as a member** of the Legal Executive Committee responsible for management of the CIT Group Legal Department.

ASSOCIATE (Corporate Finance, M&A & Financial Institutions) • Sullivan & Cromwell LLP

1998–2005

- **Managed** a broad array of strategic cross-border transactions, including mergers, acquisitions, joint ventures, IPOs, and spin-offs for leading US and international clients.
- **Advised** domestic and foreign banks, asset managers, insurers, reinsurers, and other financial institutions on regulatory compliance and transactional matters.
- **Led** legal teams advising on complex strategic transactions across Europe, Australia, Latin America, and Asia.
- **Led** public and private securities offerings, including convertible, high-yield, and tax-structured debt and equity.
- **Interim In-House M&A Counsel (Allianz AG, Munich, Germany — 2000):** Agreed a six-month leave of absence from S&C to oversee Allianz AG groupwide M&A and strategic transactions globally while recruiting and training global transactional counsel.

ASSOCIATE (Corporate) • Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP

1997–1998

- **Managed and completed** strategic M&A transactions, leveraged lease structures, and commercial paper facilities.

EDUCATION & CREDENTIALS

MCGILL UNIVERSITY, FACULTY OF LAW

Montreal, Canada • 1997

Juris Doctor (J.D.) & Bachelor of Civil Law (B.C.L.) (*Dual Qualification*) | *Honors: Graduated with Distinction (Top 10% of class)*

MCGILL UNIVERSITY, FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT

Montreal, Canada • 1993

Bachelor of Commerce (B.Com.) in Economics and Finance | *Honors: Graduated with Great Distinction (Dean's Honor List)*

Bar Admission: State of New York (Admitted 1998)

Languages: Fluent in English, French, and Arabic
Proficient in Spanish

OTHER PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES & MEMBERSHIPS

Professional Affiliations & Committees

- Chair, Mediation Privilege Subcommittee, Arbitration Committee of the NY City Bar Association
- Co-Chair, Dispute Prevention Committee, NYSBA Dispute Resolution Section (2023–2025)
- Member:
 - American Bar Association (ABA) – Section of Dispute Resolution
 - NY State Bar Association – Dispute Resolution Section; Insurance Disputes Committee; Securities Disputes Committee; Cannabis Law Section
 - NY City Bar Association – Arbitration, Mediation, International Commercial Disputes Committees
 - California Arbitration (CalArb)
 - International Bar Association (IBA) – Arbitration Committee
 - International Arbitration Club of New York
 - Silicon Valley Arbitration & Mediation Center
 - Institute for Transnational Arbitration (ITA)
 - International Council for Commercial Arbitration (ICCA)

Academic Appointments

Adjunct Professor

St. John's University School of Law

"Negotiation" & "Contract Drafting" (Fall 2023)

Visiting Professor

Notre-Dame Univ. / Bordeaux EMBA

"Mergers, Acquisitions & Strategic Alliances" (Winter terms 2010, 2011, 2012)

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS & SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Please refer to BarakatADR.com for a complete list of publications and speaking history.

Selected Publications

- “Rethinking Arbitration in the Contemporary Commercial Landscape – Enhancing Efficiency, Adaptability, and Results,” NYSBA NY Dispute Resolution Lawyer (March 2026).
- “The Mediator’s Role in Cross-Border Commercial Disputes: Navigating Three Dimensions of Culture,” NY Law Journal (October 2025).
- “Artificial Wisdom or Automated Folly? Practical Considerations for Arbitration Practitioners to Address the AI Conundrum,” NY Law Journal (January 2025).
- “Arbitration: The Solution to the Cannabis Industry Regulatory Morass,” NY Law Journal (March 2024).
- “Dispute Resolution Through the Lens of the Tech and Finance Sectors,” NY Law Journal (October 2023).
- “Arbitrating Crypto, NFTs and Other New Technologies: Demystifying the Landscape,” NY Law Journal (April 2023).
- “The Pitfalls of Conflicting Judicial Outcomes in International Arbitration,” NY Law Journal (April 2022).
- “Drafting an Arbitration Agreement in 2022,” NY Law Journal, four-part series: “2021 Considerations” (December 2021); “The Drafter’s Perspective” (January 2022); “The Litigator’s Perspective” (January 2022); “The Arbitrator’s Perspective” (January 2022).
- “Testing the Scope of Article V(1)d of the New York Convention on Enforcement of Arbitration Awards Following the Dubai Arbitration Venue Combination,” NY Law Journal (October 2021).
- “Dispute Prevention and Resolution Options That Can Save Start-Ups From Failure,” NY Law Journal (June 2021).
- “The Covid-19 Case for ADR Provisions in M&A Agreements,” NY Law Journal (April 2021).

Selected Speaking and Teaching Engagements

- Moderator, “Arbitral Institution Roundtable,” GAR Live: Istanbul (June 2026).
- Panelist, “AI in the Seat of Justice: Oversight, Transparency, Human Accountability,” ABA International Law Section (May 2026).
- Facilitator/Trainer, “AAA AI Bootcamp,” American Arbitration Association (April & July 2026).
- Panelist, “Friend or Foe? A Candid Conversation With In-House Counsel,” ACC Westchester–Southern CT (February 2026).
- Chair, “Mapping the New Generation of Arbitration Laws: From China to the UK to France,” PLI (January 2026).
- Panelist, “The International Mediation Lifecycle: Transactional and Disputes Counsel’s Role: From Drafting to Settlement,” ICC/USCIB Chicago (January 2026).
- Panel Chair, “Rethinking Arbitration for the Contemporary Commercial Landscape: Enhancing Efficiency, Adaptability and Results,” New York Arbitration Week (November 2025).
- Chair, “Drafting International Arbitration Agreements: Reflecting on Current Trends,” PLI (December 2024).
- Panelist, “Contract Drafting and International Arbitration,” Oslo Center for Commercial Law/New York University (February 2024).
- Chair, “Four-Part Series: Drafting an Arbitration Agreement in 2023: Beyond Basics, Reflecting Current Trends and Events,” PLI (August 2023).
- Faculty, “ABA International Arbitration Masterclass, Panel Chair,” American Bar Association (June 2023).
- Panelist, “The Interplay Between Mediation and Arbitration,” 2022 CPR Global Conference (December 2022).