JOINT PRESS RELEASE

LACIAC and PCA sign Cooperation Agreement

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In pursuit of their shared objective of promoting arbitration as an effective means of peaceful dispute settlement on the African continent, the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) has entered into a Cooperation Agreement with the Lagos Chamber of Commerce International Arbitration Centre (LACIAC). The two organizations will collaborate to promote the resolution of international disputes through arbitration and other alternative dispute resolution (ADR) methods in the region.

The signing ceremony was held at the Permanent Court of Arbitration’s Mauritius Office in Port Louis, during the PCA Secretary-General’s official visit to Mauritius. It coincided with the signature, on the same day, of a cooperation agreement between the LACIAC and the Mauritius International Arbitration Centre (MIAC). The LACIAC was represented by Mr. Babatunde Fagbohunlu SAN, while the PCA was represented by its Secretary-General, Dr. Marcin Czepelak, and MIAC by its Director, Mr. Yvan Jean-Louis and its Registrar, Ms. Clémence Assou.

The PCA-LACIAC Cooperation Agreement symbolizes the commitment of the organizations to cooperate with other arbitral institutions around the world with the aim of facilitating the efficient conduct of arbitration, mediation and other ADR proceedings, and further reflects the PCA’s commitment to pursuing its objectives of promoting peaceful dispute resolution mechanisms worldwide. Under this Agreement, the PCA and LACIAC will, amongst other initiatives, collaborate towards the organization of PCA meetings and hearings at LACIAC’s facilities in Lagos, Nigeria and LACIAC meetings and hearings at the PCA’s facilities in Port Louis, Mauritius. They will also cooperate by exchanging information and holding conferences, seminars and specialized events.

During the signing ceremony, the LACIAC representative Mr. Fagbohunlu pointed out that the Agreement was being signed at an auspicious time, as it followed the operationalization of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AFCFTA), which will necessitate Africa-based and Africa-focused dispute resolution services.

For his part, PCA Secretary-General Dr. Marcin Czepelak said: “We are excited to sign today this new agreement with LACIAC, a key institution located in the commercial capital of Africa’s largest economy. It is all the more significant for us to sign this agreement where we opened our first foreign office in Africa, here in Mauritius. It is yet another symbol of the ever-strengthening relationship between the Permanent Court of Arbitration and African states.” Dr. Czepelak also expressed hope that the Agreement will lead to greater cooperation with Nigeria and other Contracting Parties.

In addition, Ms. Assou observed that the collaboration provided an opportunity to strengthen the ties between the two organizations, and to create synergy between the “Arbitration in Lagos Project” and the Mauritius Arbitration Project.

The event was held in a hybrid format and concluded with a celebratory cocktail with members of the legal community in Mauritius and the diplomatic corps.
Background on the Lagos Chamber of Commerce International Arbitration Centre

The Lagos Chamber of Commerce International Arbitration Centre is an independent arbitration institution established by the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and industry with the aim of providing efficient alternative dispute resolution services in Africa. The Centre is part of the “Arbitration in Lagos Project”, which, together with the Lagos Court of Arbitration, aims to position Lagos as a reliable hub for international arbitration. For more information, visit the LACIAC website: https://www.laciac.org/.

Background on the Permanent Court of Arbitration

The Permanent Court of Arbitration is an intergovernmental organization established by the 1899 Hague Convention on the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes. The PCA has 122 Contracting Parties. Headquartered at the Peace Palace in The Hague, the Netherlands, the PCA facilitates arbitration, conciliation, fact-finding, and other dispute resolution proceedings among various combinations of States, State entities, intergovernmental organizations, and private parties. The PCA’s International Bureau is currently administering 4 interstate disputes, 105 investor-State arbitrations, and 65 cases arising under contracts involving a State or other public entity. More information about the PCA can be found at www.pca-cpa.org.