Jonathan Worboys

Call: 2010

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Jonathan is recognised as a leading junior, with a practice spanning all areas of public, commercial and international law. He is regularly instructed in high-profile and significant cases, often at the intersection of private, public and international areas of law. Jonathan has a particular focus on disputes with an international dimension. He has been nominated for 'International Law Junior of the year' previously at the Legal 500 Bar Awards.

Jonathan's clients are wide-ranging and include States (seven different States in the last eight years), UK Government departments (e.g. Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, Department for Business and Trade, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster), businesses and multinational corporations, high-net worth individuals, NGOs, civil society groups and international organizations (multinational development banks and specialised agencies of international organizations). Jonathan appears as sole counsel and as part of a team before domestic and international courts and tribunals.

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Jonathan has experience acting in cases before a variety of courts and tribunals, including: all levels of the English courts (High Court; Court of Appeal; Supreme Court); the courts of British Overseas Territories; specialist domestic tribunals (Special Immigration Appeals Commission, Investigatory Powers Tribunal); international arbitration tribunals; the International Court of Justice; the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea; the European Court of Human Rights; the International Criminal Court; internationalised tribunals such as the Kosovo Specialist Chambers. He also has experience working on cases before UN Special Procedures (UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention; UN Special Rapporteurs; UN Working Group on Enforced Disappearances) and the UN Human Rights Council (e.g. during Universal Periodic Reviews). He appears in a range of public, commercial and international law cases, including commercial judicial reviews, jurisdiction challenges and inter-State disputes.

Recent examples of Jonathan's practice include:

- *R (C3) v State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs* (Syria consular assistance and repatriation; applicability of Article 6 ECHR to consular decisions; acting for the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs);
- *R (Al-Haq) v Secretary of State for Business and Trade* (exports in the Gaza conflict, the Lawyer Top 20 Cases 2025; acting for the Secretary of State for Business and Trade);
- *R (FTDIHL Holdings Limited) v Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster* (divestment under the National Security and Investment Act 2021);
- *Ferguson and others v United Kingdom* (same sex marriage rights in Bermuda; acting for the UK before the European Court of Human Rights);
- *Viegas and others v Cutrale* and *Fundao Group Litigation* (competition group action; anti-suit injunctions in the context of group litigation);
- *Chagos Archipelago* (acting for the UK and Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs in litigation and negotiations concerning the Chagos Archipelago, from 2015-present);
- *Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam* (acting for the Government of Sudan in respect of its dispute with the Government of Ethiopia relating to the GERD dam).

Jonathan commenced practice at the Bar in 2015. Prior to this, he worked as a consultant in international law and in the arbitration team at WilmerHale, London. He was also a Visiting Lecturer at King's College London. In 2024, Jonathan was appointed as Constitutional Counsel to the Overseas Territories Department at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, to advise the Secretary of State on disallowance procedures in the British Overseas Territories. He is on the Attorney General's B panel of civil and public international law counsel. He is also a Senior Legal Adviser at the Public International Law & Policy Group in Washington DC.

Expertise

Sanctions & economic security

Jonathan has considerable expertise in sanctions. He has acted for the Government in respect of sanctions designations under a variety of Regulations and for the Secretary of State in *Evtushenkova v Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs* (Court review challenge to sanctions designations). He presently acts for the Secretary of State in *Paramount Energy and Commodities SA and Paramount Energy and Commodities DMCC v Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs* (Court review challenge to sanctions designations), and regularly acts for the Office of Trade Sanctions Implementation in sanctions enforcement and compliance cases. Jonathan also acts for banks, corporations and private parties on sanctions compliance issues including in respect of corporate transactions and bond issuance.

As to economic security, Jonathan has acted for the Government in two of leading cases relating to the National Security and Investment Act 2021. He is familiar with cases at the intersection of commercial and public law and acting in fact heavy and often expedited judicial reviews.

R (L1 FM Holdings and LetterOne Core Investments) v Secretary of State in the Cabinet Office

R (FTDIHL Holdings Limited) v Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster

Achievements

Appointments

Attorney General B Panel of Counsel

Attorney General C Panel of Public International Law Counsel

Constitutional Counsel to the Overseas Territories Department at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Senior Legal Adviser, Public International Law & Policy Group.

Education

- Bachelor of Civil Law, University of Oxford (2011).
- Bachelor of Laws, King's College London (First Class Honours) (2009) (Russian Law prize).

Publications

Book Chapters

- *The Interpretation and Application of Peace Agreements,* International Law and Peace Settlements (Cambridge University Press) (forthcoming).
- *Elections and Electoral Law,* Handbook on Post-Conflict State Building (Edward Elgar Publishing) (forthcoming).

Law Journal

- *Decision Pursuant to Article 15 of the Rome Statute on the Authorisation of an Investigation into the Situation in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (29(2) ILM, 280 – 301 (2020))*.
- *Reflections on a Potential Peace Treaty for the Korean Peninsula* YJIL Forum (August 2018) (co-authored).
- *Belhaj v. Straw (Eng. Wales Ct. App.)* (54(6) ILM, 1069 – 1114 (2015)).
- *Report on the Protection of Civilians in the Non-International Armed Conflict in Iraq: UNHRC Res S-22/1; UNSCRs 2170 and 2178* (54(2) ILM 306 – 346 (2015)).
- Book Review: *Customary International Law in Times of Fundamental Change* (25 (2) KLJ (2014)).
- *Preventing Mass Atrocity Crimes: The Responsibility to Protect and the Syria Crisis,* 45 (1 and 2) CWRJIL (2012) (co-authored)).

Policy Articles and Op-Eds

- *The Legal Case for Using Force to Prevent a Government from Employing Chemical Weapons to Commit Mass Atrocities*, The Atlantic Council, Sept. 2012 (co-authored).
- *Chemical Red Lines on Syria*, Foreign Policy, Dec. 2012 (co-authored).
- *Preventing Atrocity Crimes*, The Atlantic Council, Sept. 2012 (co-authored).

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