

**GIOVANNY VEGA-BARBOSA**

[Giovanny.vega@gvb-ils.com](mailto:Giovanny.vega@gvb-ils.com)

(57) 3168343441

Nationality: Colombian



**Professional Experience**

- Founder, GVB International Legal Studio (2025 – Present)  
*Independent legal advisor on matters of public and private law with international dimensions. Current practice areas encompass risk analysis and advisory services in the mining and energy sectors, strategic human rights litigation, early dispute resolution between private parties, and comprehensive public law advisory.*
- Chief, Investment Arbitration Group, International Legal Defence Directorate, National Legal Defence Agency (ANDJE) (2022-24)  
*After heading the International Legal Defence Department in early 2024, Giovanni resumed leadership in steering decisions concerning international claims filed by foreign investors under Colombia's ratified international agreements. Consolidated Colombia's investment arbitration group and secured significant in-house victories.*
- Acting Director, International Legal Defence Directorate, National Legal Defence Agency (ANDJE) (Intermittently 2020–2024; Continuously January–July 2024).  
*Led Colombia's defence before international investment tribunals and Inter-American human rights bodies. Served as Colombia's principal representative in multilateral forums on reform of the investor-State system. Directed contentious and amicable proceedings before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and engaged with NGOs and civil society groups concerning victims' rights.*
- International Litigation Expert, International Legal Defence Directorate, National Legal Defence Agency (ANDJE) (2020-2024)  
*Advised the Colombian State on inter-institutional coordination and strategic design in investment arbitrations. Led Colombia's defence in landmark cases where the State assumed direct defence responsibilities.*
- Arbitration Counsel, Cartagena Refinery (2019-2020)  
*Counsel on transactional and arbitration proceedings, both domestic and international, related to cost overruns and delays in the expansion and modernisation of Cartagena Refinery. Concurrently managed parallel fiscal, criminal, and disciplinary proceedings.*
- External Counsel, Inter-American Litigation Group, National Agency for Legal Defence of the State (ANDJE) (2016-2018)  
*Advised Colombia's Inter-American litigation team on the State's case portfolio before the Inter-American Commission and Court of Human Rights.*
- External Consultant, Colombian Society of Geology (June–December 2017)  
*Engaged by DIMAR through the Colombian Society of Geology to shape the normative framework for applying the reefs' baselines methodology in the San Andrés and Providencia Archipelago.*
- Legal Advisor, Group on Matters before the International Court of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2013-2016)  
*Counsel to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the second generation of litigation against Nicaragua before the International Court of Justice.*
- Acting Director, International Legal Affairs Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2012–2014, intermittently)  
*Responsible for high-level legal opinions and leading Colombian delegations in bilateral, plurilateral, and multilateral fora (e.g., treaty negotiations, representation before international organisations, defence before the Constitutional Court and Congress).*
- Chief, International Legally Advisory and Extradition Section, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2012-2013).  
*Head of the team responsible for advising on questions of public international law to serve the Ministry's needs. Oversaw extradition cases managed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and represented Colombia in multilateral forums such as INTERPOL.*
- Legal Advisor, Internal Treaties Group, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2011-2012).

*Advised the Ministry across all stages of treaty formation and consent regarding treaties – responsible for Executive Power’s defence of treaties before the Colombian Congress and the Constitutional Court.*

### **Relevant Arbitral Experience**

- State Counsel in investment arbitration under the ICSID Rules (2006) and the Colombia–Canada FTA in the mining sector: total ban on mining in páramos, including an additional damages quantification phase and a request for rectification of a dissenting opinion. Outcome: declaration of liability, but no damages awarded to the investor, and a historic defense against the possibility of rectifying a dissenting opinion under the ICSID regime.
- State Counsel in investment arbitration under the ICSID Rules (2006) and the Colombia–Canada FTA in the mining sector: total ban on mining in páramos. Outcome: award with no liability for the State.
- State Counsel in investment arbitration under the ICSID Rules (2006) and the Colombia–Canada FTA in the mining sector: total ban on mining in páramos. Outcome: award with no liability for the State.
- State Counsel in investment arbitration under the ICSID Rules (2006) and the Colombia–United States TPA in the construction sector: initiation of an asset forfeiture action against the property of a real estate project at an early stage. Outcome: historic award in favor of the State, with acceptance of the essential security exception.
- State Counsel in investment arbitration under the ICSID Rules (2006) and the Colombia–United States TPA in the construction sector: criminal and fiscal actions regarding the Project Manager of the Cartagena Refinery modernization and expansion project due to allegations of cost overruns and delays. Outcome: award in favor of the State, upholding an admissibility objection on the grounds of the premature nature of the claim.
- State Counsel in investment arbitration under the ICSID Rules (2006) and the Colombia–United Kingdom BIT in the construction sector: criminal and fiscal actions regarding the contractor of the Cartagena Refinery modernization and expansion project due to allegations of cost overruns and delays. Outcome: discontinuance.
- State Counsel in investment arbitration under the ICSID Rules (2006) and the Colombia–Spain BIT in the financial sector: state intervention in a fiduciary company. Outcome: award in favor of the State, upholding an objection of manifest lack of legal merit under ICSID Arbitration Rule 41(5) (2006).
- State Counsel in investment arbitration under the UNCITRAL Rules (2021) and the Colombia–United States TPA in the maritime sector: state actions denying investor rights regarding the alleged discovery of the San José galleon in Colombian territorial waters. Outcome: pending.
- State Counsel in investment arbitration under the ICSID Rules (2006) and the Colombia–Switzerland BIT in the mining sector: actions relating to the reversion of mining infrastructure following the investor’s relinquishment of the title, and a Constitutional Court decision ordering a consultation process with an indigenous community regarding the diversion of a stream. Outcome: pending.
- State Counsel in investment arbitration under the ICSID Rules (2022) in the public utilities sector: actions related to the early divestment of the investor’s shares in a local company. Outcome: pending.
- Counsel for the State-owned company in international commercial arbitration under the ICC Rules in the construction sector: cost overruns and delays in the Cartagena Refinery modernization and expansion project. Outcome: award in favor of the Cartagena Refinery.

### **Litigation Experience before Permanent International Courts**

- Counsel for Colombia before the International Court of Justice:
  - Alleged Violations of Sovereign Rights and Maritime Spaces in the Caribbean Sea (Nicaragua v. Colombia)
  - Question of the Delimitation of the Continental Shelf between Nicaragua and Colombia beyond 200 nautical miles from the Nicaraguan Coast (Nicaragua v. Colombia)
- Counsel for Colombia before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights:
  - Case of Members and Militants of the Patriotic Union v. Colombia, Interpretation of the Judgment on Preliminary Objections, Merits, Reparations and Costs. Judgment of 24 January 2024. Series C No. 515.
  - Case of Bedoya Lima et al. v. Colombia, Merits, Reparations and Costs. Judgment of 26 August 2021. Series C No. 431.

### **Education**

- **University College London** – United Kingdom  
LL.M. – Public International Law (1st Class- Distinction)  
Thesis: “Holding the corrupt State accountable in investor-State arbitration: what chances for the innocent bidder?”
- **Universidad del Rosario** – Bogota Law Degree – Recognition to Academic Excellence

### Languages

---

- **Spanish:** Native
- **English:** Advanced
- **French:** Intermediate

### Teaching Experience

---

15 years of teaching experience at leading universities in the country. Areas of lecturing include International Economic Law, the Law of the Sea, International Human Rights Law, Environmental Law, and International Investment Arbitration. Extensive experience in designing practical workshops to train both private and public stakeholders on the specific challenges associated with investment arbitration.

### Sample of Relevant Publications

---

- **The Latin American States and the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes before the International Court of Justice: Toward Confidence as the Contemporary Pattern**, in Alejandro Chehtman et al (eds), *Latin American International in the Twenty-First Century* (Oxford University Press, 2025), 271-291
- **Managing Counsel**, in *The Guide to Investment Treaty Protection and Enforcement* – First and Second Edition (2022, 2023)
- **Compliance with international human rights obligations in Colombia: assessing the normative evolution and practical challenges**, in *Research Handbook on Compliance in International Human Rights Law*, EE Elgar (2021)
- **The State’s Duty of Prevention in Light of the International Corpus Juris on the Protection of Women against Gender-based Violence**, *Ius et Praxis*, Año 19, Nº 2, 2013, pp. 335 – 368
- **The admissibility of outer continental shelf delimitation claims before the ICJ absent a recommendation by the CLCS**, *Ocean Development and International Law Journal*, 2017
- **Consolidation of Territorial and Maritime Rights in the Arctic**: *Ius et Praxis*, 23, Nº 2, 2017
- **Colombia and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea: A Legal Analysis of the Ratification Dilemma**, *Revista Chilena de Derecho*, 45 Nº 1, 2018
- **On the Legal Regime Applicable to the Environmental Protection of the Arctic Ocean**, *Revista de derecho*, Vol. XXIX (2), 2016
- **The Arrest of Ships in the Resolution of International Maritime Commercial Disputes: A Theoretical Approach to the Legal Issues Arising from the Qualification of ‘Ship Arrest’**, in *Estudios contemporáneos de derecho internacional privado*, (Legis, 2016) 377-426

### Recognitions and Distinctions

---

- **“Arbitration Team of the Month Issue No. 13 – The Republic of Colombia”**, (Jus Mundi, 2021)
- **Jessup - Steven M. Schneebaum Award for Outstanding National Administrator** (ILSA, 2020)
- **Ejil Talk – Most Read Posts of 2018 - Human Rights and the Protection of the Environment: The Advisory Opinion of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (Feb. 2018)** (2018)
- **Chevening Scholar** (2017)
- **UN International Law Seminar (Geneva) - Fellowship** (2016)
- **Hague Academy of International Law** (2013)
- **Admission to the “Directed Studies” course – Dr Patricia Galvão Teles.**
- **Philip C. Jessup Int. Law Moot Court Competition**
- Coach of UCL. National runner-up and representative of the United Kingdom in the world rounds (2018)
- Coach of Universidad de la Sabana (Colombia). National Champion.
- Coach of Universidad del Rosario (Colombia). National Champion, Octo-finalists and sixth best combined memorials in the world rounds (2016).