



Gerard Leval

PARTNER

With a practice that ranges from international commercial and corporate transactions to investor-state dispute resolution, with a focus on francophone African nations, as well as the representation of numerous nonprofit entities in various fields, Gerard has a broad base of transactional and dispute resolution experience. A significant portion of his practice is dedicated to the hospitality industry.



Industries

[Hospitality](#)

Practices

[International Arbitration & Dispute Resolution](#)

— [Sovereign Representation](#)

[Real Estate](#)

— [Acquisitions & Dispositions](#)

— [Real Estate Finance - Borrowers](#)

International

[Africa](#)

[Europe](#)

Languages

[French](#)

Education

[University of Chicago Law School, JD, 1975](#)

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Since joining ArentFox Schiff in 1981, Gerard has been engaged in an extensive transactional practice as a member of both the firm's Business and International groups. He is one of the most experienced attorneys in ArentFox Schiff's Hospitality group and also previously served as co-leader of the firm's International practice.

Client Work

Gerard's international clients include the governments of several francophone African nations, various multinational enterprises, European investment groups, and a variety of United States based investors. An important part of his practice consists of advising foreign governments in resolving disputes and negotiating agreements of various types. Currently, he is advising two sovereign governments in connection with investor-state ICSID arbitrations. He represents major foreign corporations in their corporate, commercial and real estate activities in the United States and American entities in their activities in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East.

In the real estate area, Gerard advises hotel, office building, retail, and residential developers and owners in their land acquisition and development matters and large-scale land developers in their development activities. Among his domestic clients, are two of the largest public hospitality REITs which he has represented since their creation.

Gerard serves as the pro bono general counsel to the United States Holocaust Memorial Council which oversees the Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC and is counsel to other cultural institutions, as well as to one of the most prominent international charitable service organizations.

Gerard is fluent in French and renders a significant portion of his legal services in that language.

Previous Work

Following graduation from law school, Gerard was associated for one year with the Law Offices of SG Archibald in Paris, where he represented American clients in connection with their European, Middle Eastern, and African investments. Upon returning to the United States, he spent several years as an associate of a prominent Chicago law firm where he developed transactional experience with an emphasis on sophisticated real estate and corporate transactions.

Professional Activities

Gerard has held membership in the American Bar Association International Section, as well as the District of Columbia Bar Association. He has served on the boards of several charitable and religious organizations, frequently acting as legal adviser to those organizations. He served for nearly 12 years as a board member of the Lycée Rochambeau, the French international school of the Washington metropolitan area.

Publications, Presentations & Recognitions

Gerard has lectured on assorted transactional, real estate and related legal topics at conferences, seminars, and conventions. Through the District of Columbia Bar Association, he has taught real estate contract seminars to minority lawyers. He regularly lectures at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to law students and young lawyers on the ethical dimensions of the practice of law.

Due to his extensive pro bono services to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Gerard has been recognized as a United States Holocaust Memorial Museum “Founder.”

Gerard is the author of a book entitled *Lobbying for Equality*, published in February 2022 by HUC Press, which focuses on the efforts by a young French lawyer on behalf of persecuted minority groups during the early years of the French Revolution. He is a frequent contributor to various national and local newspapers and other publications, writing on a variety of domestic and international topics. Gerard also regularly lectures on those topics.

Gerard was recognized as a leading real estate lawyer by *Legal 500* for 2011.

In 2014, Gerard received the Fleischaker Pro Bono Award for the contribution of his legal services in the public interest.

Bar Admissions

[District of Columbia](#)