



Freshfields says ciao in Milan

Alison Ross • Wednesday, 15 October 2014 (20 hours ago)

Following the recent departure to boutiques of partners in London, Paris and Cologne, Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer has bid goodbye to Italian partner **Massimo Benedettelli** as he joins Milan boutique Arblit.



Massimo Benedettelli

Arblit was founded just over a year ago by **Luca Radicati di Brozolo** and **Michele Sabatini**. Both were formerly of Italian law firm Bonelli Erede Pappalardo, where Radicati di Brozolo was a partner and Sabatini a senior associate.

With the addition of Benedettelli, the boutique's full name will be Arblit - Radicati di Brozolo Sabatini Benedettelli. The firm has five lawyers in addition to the three name partners.

Benedettelli joined Freshfields in 2001 from Italian law firm Chiomenti. He is professor of international law at the University Aldo Moro in Bari. In 2010, he was chosen as one of 16 experts to advise the European Commission on whether arbitration should be exempted from the "Brussels I" regulation, which requires the courts of member states to respect each other's jurisdictions.

Since its formation, Arblit has been acting for Italian bondholders in two ICSID claims against Argentina relating to the country's 2002 debt default – following in the wake of the controversial *Abaclat* case. The boutique has also been acting for investors in the solar photovoltaic industry in six Energy Charter Treaty claims against the Czech Republic over a retroactive tax on solar power products. The claims are being heard under UNCITRAL rules.

In April, it emerged that Radicati di Brozolo is representing Italian investors in cases against Ethiopian and Djiboutian state entities at the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague.

The news of Benedettelli's move follows the recent exodus of several other senior Freshfields' partners in Europe. In February, the head of international arbitration in London **Constantine Partasides QC** and Paris-based partner **Georgios Petrochilos** announced their departure to set up a boutique with the firm's former global head of international arbitration **Jan Paulsson** and others. The boutique is known as Three Crowns.

A month later, Cologne-based partner **Christian Borris** and associates **Sebastian Kneisel** and **Rudolph Hennecke** left to form **Borris Hennecke Kneisel** in the German city.

Freshfields is not the only firm that has been affected by the movement towards boutique practices. Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr senior partner **Wendy Miles** recently left the firm to head the global arbitration practice at US disputes boutique Boies Schiller & Flexner.

At the time **Stephen Jagusch**, who himself left Allen & Overy to be head of international arbitration at a specialist US disputes firm, Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan, told *GAR*: "We are seeing unprecedented partner movement in the arbitration market, mostly reflecting the desires of successful, confident specialists to build practices in an environment free of conflicts and the other constraints imposed by large, multi-service firms."

In the US, Freshfields recently also bid farewell to New York based partner **Alex Yanos**, after 12 years with the firm. He did not opt for a boutique but joined Hughes Hubbard & Reed.

In Italy, Freshfields retains international arbitration specialists **Domenico di Pietro** in Milan and **Luis Paradel** in Rome, who are partner and counsel respectively.

Freshfields has topped the *GAR* 100 ranking of the busiest international arbitration practices worldwide since the ranking was created.