

Rene GONNE



Partner

Rene.gonne@tglaw.be

T: +32 2 895 30 70, F: +32 2 895 30 71

Avenue Louise 480, 1050 Brussels, Belgium

AREAS OF SPECIALISATION

René Gonne's activity developed in international litigation and arbitration. As from the successful defense of Société Générale de Belgique, the largest company that ever existed in Belgium, against an hostile takeover bid, his practice also evolved towards company law, acquisitions and restructurings, shareholder assistance, partnerships and complex contracts, including numerous public offerings, in iconic cases, that shaped important portions of the Belgian take over bid and corporate regulations.

René also gained extensive experience in financial regulation and advised buyers or sellers, target companies and shareholders in a wide range of situations. He represents States – including non-European ones – and public shareholders, private or listed companies, as well as individuals, families or investors in structuring projects, agreements, investments and partnerships, or in industrial or financial restructurings within multiple sectors such as glass, steel and iron, holding companies, telecommunications, biotechnology and energy, as well as in related litigation cases. He represented exporters, builders, credit insurers, states, project leaders in more than thirty large arbitration in various industrial sectors.

WORKING LANGUAGES

French, English, Dutch

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 1979 - Law degree – UCL – Magna cum laude – Major of his graduating class
- 1979 - Member of the Brussels Bar
- 1982-1986 Assistant lecturer – Economic law department – UCL
- 1983 – Partner of Coppens Horsmans & Malherbe
- 1995 – Managing Partner of the merged firm Coppens Van Ommeslaghe & Faurès
- 2000 – Managing Partner of the merged firm Coppens Van Ommeslaghe Faurès – Coudert Brothers LLP
- 2005 – 2016 Partner of Dechert LLP
- 2011 - 2016 Managing Partner of Dechert’s Brussels office
- 2017 – Partner of Tossens Goldman Gonne

SELECTED RECENT EXPERIENCE - TRANSACTIONAL

- Representing the Belgian Federal Investment Company (SFPI) in the structuring of several partnerships in the biotech sector
- Assisting the Government of Luxembourg in the hostile takeover bid of Mittal for Arcelor
- Assisting Elia (Belgian Electricity TSO) and Fluxys (Belgian Gas TSO) in implementing the unbundling sectoral directives and managing their impact on shareholder structures. Structuring third party access, related contracts and assisting Elia and Fluxys in the adaptation of the regulatory framework
- Counseling a North American family on partnership structuring of investments with a European family, through Europe, and coordination in several countries.

SELECTED RECENT EXPERIENCE - LITIGATION

- Assisting one of the European energy leaders in pre-litigation and the renegotiation of very long-term gas exchange contract in Europe and at its borders
- Counsel to a European start-up in the field of biotechnology, victim of breaches of exclusivity and confidentiality commitments. International litigation in France, Belgium and the USA
- Assisting a major European telecom operator on structuring shareholders agreements and the acquisition by a Belgian subsidiary, resulting in a takeover bid of a North African telecom operator
- Assisting a Walloon public company regarding a construction dispute on a Formula One infrastructure

- Assisting a Walloon public investment company in large post acquisition disputes over price adaptation mechanisms
- Representing French and Belgian leader companies in a dispute against a UK producer of power plants' turbines following an industrial loss

INTERNATIONAL RANKINGS

Since 2002, René Gonne has been strongly recommended by Legal Expert EMEA and Legal 500 EMEA, in company law and restructuring. Then in 2012 by Chambers in restructuring and joint ventures. He was noted as having "in-depth experience of the energy industry".

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