

FRAUD APPEAL IN CASINO DISPUTE FAILS IN SINGAPORE

The Singapore Court of Appeal has upheld an award on liability that led to a Manila gaming resort owner being ordered to pay US\$296 million to a Las Vegas casino operator – rejecting allegations that the successful party and its counsel fraudulently misled the tribunal.

Drumroll, Please: The 2020 American Lawyer Industry Awards Winners

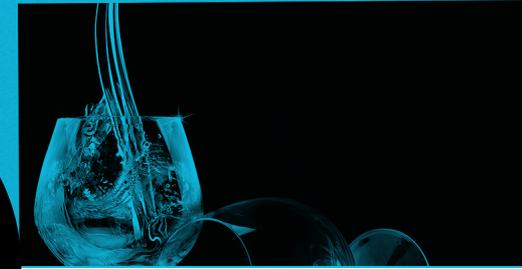
The American Lawyer celebrated the industry's most impressive law firms and lawyers on Thursday at the 2020 American Lawyer Industry Awards.

Former French PM Balladur acquitted over arms kickback

Édouard Balladur, former French prime minister, was acquitted Thursday of conspiracy to divert illegal arms sales in a failed campaign for the presidency in 1995.

Judge Won't Block French Action On \$2M Liquor Deal

Law360 (January 8, 2021, 8:37 PM EST) -- A French cognac company has lost its bid to block a defunct U.S. distributor's bid to buy \$2 million worth of cognac from France.



Litigation Wrap
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1Q2021 Developments

Acquittal for Former French PM in Corruption Trial

Félix de Belloy won an acquittal for Edouard Balladur before the Court of Justice of the Republic in the former French prime minister's trial over allegations that he financed his 1995 presidential campaign with illegal kickbacks from international arms deals. On March 4, a 15-judge panel exonerated the 91-year-old politician after 20 years of public accusations. The Court found that Balladur was never involved in a fraudulent system of kickbacks; that financing for his presidential campaign in 1995 was lawful; and that he was not responsible, even indirectly, for a bombing in Karachi, Pakistan in 2002 that had been linked to the kickbacks. De Belloy delivered the closing argument in the trial.

Casino Operator Win in Singapore

On Feb. 16, in the latest win for HHR client Global Gaming Asset Management in a nearly eight-year-long legal battle with a Philippine gaming resort owner, the Singapore Court of Appeal upheld a \$296 million arbitral award on liability in favor of the Las Vegas-based casino operator. Issued in September 2016 by a Singapore-based arbitration tribunal, the liability award declared wrongful

Bloomberry Resorts' termination of a contract with Global Gaming to build and operate a five-star casino and hotel in Manila. **Dan Weiner, Hagit Elul** and **Meaghan Gragg** represented Global Gaming in the arbitration.

Securities Fraud Suit Defeated

Shahzeb Lari achieved a major victory for Sellas Life Sciences Group when a New Jersey federal judge dismissed a proposed class action lawsuit against its predecessor company, Galena Biopharma, over alleged misrepresentations regarding its fentanyl-based painkiller drug Abstral. On Jan. 5, U.S. District Judge John Michael Vazquez granted the defendants' motion to dismiss a complaint asserting claims for securities fraud under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 against Galena and two of its former executives.

SKAT Settles Claims With Pension Plan

The firm assisted the government of Denmark in reaching a settlement with a U.S. pension plan as part of an ongoing effort to recover \$2.1 billion stolen in an international tax-refund scam. On Jan. 29, U.S. District Judge Lewis Kaplan approved dismissal of the Danish Tax Agency's dispute with Tvetter LLC

Pension Plan and its representative, Christopher Nowell. The Danish Tax Agency, or Skatteforvaltningen (SKAT), announced a day earlier in a one-page filing that it would drop its claims against the two for allegedly applying for at least \$470,000 in tax refunds for shares in Danish companies that they didn't own. **Bill Maguire, Marc Weinstein** and **Neil Oxford** lead the HHR team.

Confirmation of Arbitral Award

Dan Weiner and **Malik Havalic** served up a decisive victory for defunct U.S. liquor importer Mystique Brands when a New York federal judge confirmed a nearly \$2 million arbitration award of attorney fees against French cognac distiller Cognac Ferrand SAS. On Jan. 13, U.S. District Judge Paul A. Engelmayer denied Ferrand's motion to vacate the award, holding that the award is "final, definite and unambiguous." The ruling capped a decades-long legal battle over Ferrand's termination of a 2008 agreement for Mystique to become the exclusive importer and distributor for Ferrand's "Landy" line of cognac and brandy, and to hire Snoop Dogg to endorse Landy products.

Early Release for Drug Offender Serving Life

Laura Perkins, Tamara Kraljic and **Samuel Salyer** secured a victory in a First Step Act motion before a Virginia federal court, resulting in the release of an inmate serving a life sentence for drug offenses. The pro bono client was sentenced in 1992 after he was convicted of conspiracy to distribute powder and crack cocaine, and distributing crack cocaine. On Dec. 18, a federal judge granted the client's First Step Act motion and reduced his sentence from life to 360 months followed by five years of supervised release. Accounting for accumulated good time, the client was released immediately.

AmLaw Industry Award

An HHR team led by **Kevin Abikoff** and **Michael Huneke**, along with several other firms, was awarded "Best Provider Collaboration" at the 2020 American Lawyer Industry Awards for its representation of France-based Airbus in its record-setting, multijurisdictional settlement to successfully resolve bribery and corruption allegations in 16 different countries.