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Andrew Mizner , 23 March 2026

Legal and political leaders emphasised the importance of arbitration to investment and to the city of Paris, and called for more action on diversity, at the launch of Paris Arbitration Week 2026.

The French Ministries of Justice and Foreign Affairs endorsed arbitration as a tool for improving rule of law and for attracting investment to France at the opening of Paris Arbitration Week (PAW) this morning.

Marking the event's 10th edition, Minister of Justice Gérald Darmanin praised PAW as a "unique alliance" between institutions, which "strengthens Paris' prestige" and contributes to an ecosystem where "Paris is one of the leading arbitration centres".

The importance the ministry places on this position is reflected in its [patronage of PAW over the past three years](#) and ongoing reforms of the French arbitration law, about which a consultation recently closed.

Louis Degos, president of the Paris Bar and [the first specialist arbitration lawyer](#) to hold that office, added the support of the Paris Bar for the reforms and said PAW2026 took place in the context of promoting Paris as a worldwide leader: "The French idea of international arbitration is particularly adapted to dispute resolution changes internationally."

Darmanin was joined at the opening by Éléonore Caroit, delegate minister at the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs. Caroit highlighted "the importance of arbitration and the possibility of using it for creating a good climate for investments and businesses", while Darmanin described arbitration as "justice that protects investments without compromising on principles".

This year's Paris Arbitration Week has kickstarted by asking lawyers to examine if they are safe from internal bias.

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The ministers also gave support for rule of law and criticised states, including the US, who fail to do the same. Darmanin said France “respects the rule of law” during times of geopolitical upheaval, while Caroit described a crisis in rule of law as great as any since the Second World War, singling out the use of tariffs “as a war instrument”.

PAW progress

Reflecting on PAW’s progress over its first decade, PAW co-president Catherine Schroeder reported that the number of member organisations had grown from 17 to 288, and from 20 events to 267, with more than 40,000 registrations this year.

Last month, board members [told CDR that](#) maintaining a sense of community remained at the heart of PAW, and speaking at today’s event co-president Diamana Diawara, the outgoing director for dispute resolution services in Africa at the ICC International Court of Arbitration, [whose move to law firm Talex International was announced last week](#), said: “In a geopolitical context where the rule of law, where diversity, where dialogue, where peaceful resolution of disputes are constantly under attack, it is extremely important to us that PAW remains that place of reunion and supports dialogue.”

Positive discrimination

[Diversity has been a recurring theme for PAW’s organisers](#), and in a discussion which followed, former board member Yasmin Mohammad, from Fortress Investment Group, spoke in favour of positive discrimination to tackle inequalities in the legal and arbitration communities.

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In conversation with Nania Owusu-Ankomah of Bentsi-Enchill, Letsa & Ankomah in Ghana and Coralie Lolliot, Africa development head at Sciences Po Paris, Mohammad said “diversity does not fail for lack of talent, it fails for lack of opportunity”, citing the new PAW Fellowship, provides support and mentorship to lawyers from diverse backgrounds.

Lolliot agreed, describing positive discrimination as “an imperfect tool” but necessary to counteract biases, while Owusu-Ankomah said the goal of positive discrimination was necessary.

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