

MANIFESTO OF THE HUMAN ARBITRATOR IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

I, an international arbitrator called upon to render justice with equity and transparency, acknowledge the revolutionary potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI). I affirm, however, that in the arbitral decision-making process, centrality must remain with the human being. I set forth the principles by which I choose not to employ AI tools in the phases that bear upon my decision-making process.

Judgment must remain human

The essence of arbitration is human judgment: wise, balanced, empathic. The arbitrator is chosen *intuitu personae* for competence, independence, and capacity for judgment: the parties trust that the arbitrator will personally examine the evidence and the arguments. Being an arbitrator is a vocation, an honour, and a responsibility: I shall not betray the trust of those who choose me by delegating the noblest part of my work to an algorithm. I commit to reading, listening, evaluating, and deciding in person. No delegation, no surrogate: legal science is inescapably political, and the choices of value it demands are for the human being to make.

AI is not neutral

The apparent objectivity of AI is illusory. Every output reflects biases in training data and non-transparent algorithmic choices. Any AI summary or suggestion introduces unconscious distortions into the decision-making process. AI does not apply the law: it calculates probabilities based on statistical correlations. The impartiality of the arbitrator requires independence from algorithmic biases as well.

Direct engagement with the parties

Understanding the parties is a fundamental duty. Reading every submission, capturing every nuance, is essential to deciding with full knowledge of the case. An AI summary makes selective, non-neutral choices that alter the perception of the parties' positions and neutralise their advocacy. The arbitrator must decide with sweat, not from an algorithmic anchor point they did not choose. International arbitration requires sensitivity to diverse cultures, legal systems, and contexts: human judgment can read between the lines, adapt equity to the concrete case, and balance the rigidity of the rule with the demands of substantive justice. The algorithm sees patterns; the arbitrator grasps meanings.

AI as a tool, not as a surrogate

I enthusiastically embrace AI as a tool that expands my capabilities without replacing them. I use AI to streamline administrative tasks, facilitate access to information and research, and simplify and refine linguistic expression, including translation. For this I use it. Nothing more. I intend to remain informed and to employ AI with awareness and critical judgment. But the functions that define the substance of adjudication, analysis, evaluation, decision, remain with the human being.

Accountability, transparency, and personal responsibility

Legitimate arbitration requires personal responsibility for the decision-making process. AI is opaque: it does not explain, does not engage, does not answer. Every line of my award will be mine, capable of being justified and scrutinised. My professional ethics demand personal commitment and direct responsibility: I invest in my growth as a jurist, not in technological delegation.

Integrity of the arbitral system

Arbitration lives on credibility and legitimacy. Algorithmic decisions, or decisions merely tainted by opaque algorithmic processes, risk undermining its very foundations, opening the way to challenges at the stage of setting aside and recognition and enforcement of awards and emboldening the system's critics. I shall protect the integrity of the system I love and serve.

Solemn commitment

When I act as arbitrator, every determination I make shall be the fruit of an autonomous intellectual process, guided by facts, law, conscience, and deliberation. This is not technoscepticism: it is respect for the arbitral function and for those who entrust it to me.

Michelangelo Cicogna - *a human arbitrator, for a human system*

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