

MVP: Quinn Emanuel's Philippe Pinsolle

By **Caroline Simson**

Law360 (November 17, 2025, 4:03 PM EST) -- Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan LLP's Philippe Pinsolle helped to secure a €14 billion (\$16.2 billion) arbitral award for German energy company Uniper after Russian government-controlled natural gas giant Gazprom cut off gas deliveries in mid-2022, earning him a spot as one of the 2025 Law360 International Arbitration MVPs.

His biggest accomplishment:

In June 2024, Pinsolle obtained the €14 billion award for Uniper after Gazprom Export abruptly stopped delivering pipeline gas that was owed under long-term contracts that spanned decades. Once Gazprom stopped its deliveries, gas prices in Europe increased tenfold, according to Quinn Emanuel.

As the gas provider for approximately 60% of the German industry, Uniper could not default, Quinn Emanuel said. The company incurred more than €13.5 billion in losses in August 2022 as a result of Gazprom's actions, before ultimately being bailed out and taken over by the German government.

Pinsolle said the case marked his biggest accomplishment given that the gas supply stoppage is likely to mark a historic turning point for the energy market in Europe. Moreover, the award allowed Uniper to terminate its contracts with Gazprom.

"It was a bit of a historic moment, where Russia ceased to supply gas to Europe," he said. "The money was one thing, but getting the relief from the contracts was another — perhaps even more valuable for the client."

His biggest challenge:

Pinsolle says that his biggest challenge at the moment involves training younger generations of lawyers.

He said that he's noticed the trend since the COVID-19 pandemic confined people to their homes in 2020. Although many lawyers have since largely returned to the office, the atmosphere has changed as



there's less interaction among co-workers.

"I can see a gap in the training between what I had and what they are having, and their interest in it," he said. "I believe there is a big, big challenge for us ... to train young lawyers. In arbitration, in litigation, it's really important, because we are not machines. We are not producing documents. We are trying to win cases."

"So you develop the strategy, you implement the strategy, you define the goals, etc.," he continued. "And all of this has to be done in teams with more junior lawyers, and they are less present than they used to be. I believe it will be fixed in the coming years, but we might have a generation which will be suffering from that situation."

Why he's an international arbitration attorney:

Pinsolle said that, because he has both a business and a law degree, he started his career in mergers and acquisitions. And he might have stayed in that practice area had he not found it "extremely boring," he said.

So he set out to practice litigation, and eventually began working with Emmanuel Gaillard, the late founder of the international arbitration practice at Shearman & Sterling LLP — now known as Allen Overy Shearman Sterling — and a widely respected practitioner and leader in the field.

"The rest is history," Pinsolle said. As for what drew him to the practice area, he said he was "attracted by the fact that it is contentious and the fact that it is very international ... and [because], with each case, you have to learn the way the client works."

His advice for junior attorneys:

Pinsolle has what some might consider surprising advice for the next generation of arbitration lawyers: Don't specialize in arbitration too early. Instead, he says, the secret is to get a good degree in something substantive, like contract law. Arbitration is procedural and can be learned, he said.

"What you need is really being strong on substance, and then you should join a firm that actually does arbitration, practices arbitration on a daily basis, as opposed to a firm that practices arbitration, let's say, every other month or from time to time," he said. "It makes a huge difference. The more cases you see, the more diverse the cases are, the greater your experience."

His other piece of advice is for junior lawyers to become leaders in their own generation.

"You will never convince the old people, people like me — I might be interested, actually. But my generation is generally not interested in more junior people, and people who are more junior than you are not interested either," he said. "So it's really in your generation that you have to be a leader. And then, of course, when you get older, you become more important."

--As told to Caroline Simson. Editing by Melissa Treolo.

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