

## Seven chambers and 10 firms: Lawyers prepare for bumper \$13.8bn Russia dispute

By Annabel Tinson | 23 November 2023

Firms including Herbert Smith Freehills, Seladore Legal and Quinn Emanuel are on call in one of the largest ever claims to be brought in the English High Court outside the collective redress regime.

Valued at \$13.8bn, the lawsuit was filed in July by jailed Russian businessman Ziyavudin Magomedov against 22 defendants, including a number of Russian state companies.

Magomedov became a billionaire during Dmitry Medvedev's four-year term as Russian president, which ended in 2012. In December 2022, Magomedov was sentenced to 19 years in jail for embezzlement alongside his brother, having already spent more than four years in prison in 2018 awaiting trial.

Magomedov claims he was wrongly imprisoned and that his business empire was manoeuvred into Russian state hands. Losses argued include a controlling \$8.8bn stake in Russian transport operator FESCO.

The claim is one of the first clear examples of how the legal landscape looks after a host of law firms distanced themselves from Russia following its invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Of the 10 firms currently representing in this mammoth dispute, only three are full-service – Herbert Smith Freehills, Fieldfisher and Dentons – indicating a resurgence of litigation boutiques.

The claim itself is brought by Seladore Legal, new to the scene, having set up shop in 2020. Seladore has an impressive set of partners behind it, virtually all ex-HSF lawyers, including Simon Bushell, who founded HSF's Russia and CIS disputes practice before leaving the firm in 2013.

*The Lawyer* understands that four defendants have sanctions placed upon them in some form, including FESCO and Halimeda International, as well as limited sanctions on pipeline operator Transneft. A number of subsidiaries of state-owned nuclear company Rosatom are sanctioned by the British Government, although the parent company itself is not.

FESCO was, up until recently, defended by CANDEY, however the transport operator is now being represented by Quillon Law partner Mark Hastings, who set up his boutique in 2021 and spent most of his career at Addleshaw Goddard. CANDEY partners Yuri Botiuk and James Collins are still representing Halimeda International.

Rosatom, meanwhile, is represented by PCB Byrne's senior partner, Anthony Riem, while Transneft is defended by Enyo partner Lucinda Orr.

HSF seized the mandate to represent US private equity giant TPG, which commonly uses Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton. HSF's involvement indicates that large firms with reputations for taking

on complex disputes are still finding their way into mega lawsuits coming out of Russia.

Firms representing other defendants include well-established boutique Cooke Young & Keidan and disputes powerhouse Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan.

A few parties remain legally unrepresented in this case, including Leyla Mammad Zada, chairperson of the board of directors at FESCO, as well as Katina Papanikolaou, another individual allegedly involved in the conspiracy.

*The Lawyer* understands that the 13th defendant, Konstantin Kuzovkov, was represented by Mishcon de Reya partner Kasra Nouroozi but that Kuzovkov is now a litigant in person.

Regarding chambers, One Essex Court is the dominant set in this dispute, with six barristers appearing plus five silks, including Lord David Wolfson KC. Other sets making an appearance include Brick Court, leading for the claimants, as well as 4 Stone Buildings, Twenty Essex, Essex Court, 4 New Square and Fountain Court for the defendants.

Read across for the full legal line-up for the case.

## Legal line-up

### For the claimant, Ziyavudin Magomedov and others

4 New Square's Dan Saoul KC, Brick Court's Tim Lord KC, Thomas Plewman KC, Jonathan Scott, Chintan Chandrachud and Jessie Ingle, instructed by Seladore Legal partners Simon Bushell, Gary Milner-Moore, Gareth Keillor and Kevin Kilgour

### For the 1st to 7th defendants, TPG

One Essex Court's Sebastian Isaac KC, Daniel Toledano KC and Joyce Arnold, instructed by Herbert Smith Freehills partner Alan Watts

### For the 8th defendant, Domidias

Twenty Essex's Blair Leahy KC and 4 Stone Buildings' Donald Lilly, instructed by Cooke Young & Keidan partner Lydia Danon, senior associates Jordan Waldoock and Julia Ogjevetsky, and associate Emily Davies

### For the 9th defendant, Halimeda International

Twenty Essex's Paul Lowenstein KC, Andrew Feld and Sam Goodman, instructed by CANDEY partners Yuri Botiuk and James Collins

### For the 10th defendant, Leyla Mammad Zada

Currently unrepresented

### For the 11th, 12th and 14th defendants, Mikhail Rabinovich, Ermenossa Investments, and Felix

One Essex Court's Simon Colton KC, David Caplan, Patrick Harty and Veena Srirangam, instructed by Fieldfisher partner Daniel Hayward and director Rebecca McKee

### For the 13th defendant, Konstantin Kuzovkov

Litigant in person (formerly Mishcon de Reya partner Kasra Nouroozi)

### For the 15th defendant, Andrey Severilov

Essex Court Chambers' Nathan Pillow KC and David Peters, instructed by Cooke Young & Keidan partner Lydia Danon, senior associates Jordan Waldoock and Julia Ogjevetsky and associate Emily Davies

### For the 16th defendant, Katina Papanikolaou

Currently unrepresented

### For the 17th defendant, Rosatom

4 New Square's Justin Fenwick KC, Tim Chelmick and Mark Cullen, instructed by PCB Byrne senior partner Anthony Riem and associate Chloe Fleming

### For the 18th defendant, DP World Russia

One Essex Court's Lord David Wolfson KC and Mehdi Baiou, instructed by Quinn Emanuel London co-managing partner Ted Greeno

### For the 19th defendant, FESCO

Twenty Essex's Paul Lowenstein KC, Colleen Hanley, Andrew Feld and Sam Goodman, instructed by Quillon Law partners Mark Hastings and Abigail Healey

### For the 20th defendant, Transneft

One Essex Court's James MacDonald KC and Ben Lewy, instructed by Enyo partner Lucinda Orr

### For the 21st and 22nd defendants, Mark Garber and Garber Hannam & Partners

Fountain Court's Richard Power, instructed by Dentons partner Craig Neilson, counsel Adrian Giles and senior associate Sophie Palmer