



# Sir Rupert Jackson appointed to judicial role in the new Commercial Court headed by Lord Woolf in Kazakhstan

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**Sir Rupert Jackson** has been appointed, along with seven other judges and senior lawyers from the UK, to be justices of the new Commercial Court in Kazakhstan as part of a modernisation programme involving the Astana International Financial Centre (AIFC), with a view to making it the leading Financial Centre in Central Asia.

Lord Woolf, Formerly Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales, has been appointed Chief Justice of the new Court. Sir Rupert Jackson, together with Sir Robin Jacob, Sir Stephen Richards, Sir Jack Beatson, Lord Faulks QC and Andrew Spink QC have been appointed Justices of the Court to hear first instance cases in the principal first tier-court and to sit when required in the appeal court. The judicial team is completed by Tom Montagu-Smith QC, and Patricia Edwards who will sit as judges in the small claims court applying a fast-track procedure.

In an interview with The Times on 1 February 2018, Lord Woolf said the prospect of AIFC's success as a commercial centre is "*greatly enhanced*" if investors can see it is a safe environment with a court that upholds the rule of law. "*This is the first court of its kind in Eurasia. Kazakhstan has a huge border with China and with Russia, and China is building a new silk road that goes right through the country. All these are reasons it could do well. The judges will all be from the UK and it will use AIFC law, which is essentially English common law — something in which they have no background at all.*" "*It will be a sign of the court's independence and calibre of the judges. The independence is guaranteed in changes to the country's constitution.*" "*The court will promote English commercial law and recognition of the importance of the rule of law.*" "*It builds up links between a fast-developing country in Eastern and Central Asia and the UK — so they will look to us for advice and guidance.*"

The court opened in early 2018 and the judges will go to Kazakhstan for five main visits a year. All have been sworn in at a ceremony, with the oaths resembling those they have sworn in the UK.

Sir Rupert Jackson will maintain his practice as an arbitrator and adjudicator with 4 New Square outside of his part-time commitment to the AIFC Court.

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