



Christopher B. Kende

Member

New York

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Christopher focuses his practice on international insurance, reinsurance, aviation, and marine matters.

Christopher has more than 30 years of experience in handling major complex multinational litigation in the areas of insurance, reinsurance, environmental law, aviation and admiralty and maritime disputes. His experience includes virtually every aspect of pre-trial, trial and post-trial proceedings in state and federal courts around the country.

Christopher is a member in the Paris Maritime Arbitral Chamber. The Chamber is the premier maritime arbitral chamber in France. He is also a member of the Aeronautics Committee of the NYC Bar and a former member of the Foreign and Comparative Law Committee of that organization. He is past president of the Maritime Law Committee of the New York County Lawyers Association and the Admiralty and Transportation Law Commission of the Union Internationale des Avocats (UIA). Christopher is the current president of the Insurance Law Commission of the UIA and is a member of the UIA Governing Board. He also serves on the International Organizations, Conventions and Standards Committee of the Maritime Law Association of the United States. He is on the Board of Directors of the French American Chamber of Commerce Serge Bellanger Foundation, and has served on the Foundation's jury for the past three years. The Foundation grants scholarships to deserving French and American business school students who have been admitted to the top business schools in the United States and France.

Christopher has a combined B.A. and M.A. degree from Brown University, Phi Beta Kappa, and a J.D. from New York University School of Law, Order of the Coif. He is fluent in French.

Christopher is an adjunct professor of Maritime and Transportation Law at Brooklyn Law School.

Experience

Provided reinsurance advice to the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, a federal agency, in connection with several major transactions involving political risk insurance, including assistance in the structuring of a worldwide facility offering political risk, currency conversion and expropriation cover based in Bermuda.

Acted for several major carriers in asbestos and hazardous waste site coverage cases.

Acted for native regional and village corporations in Prince William Sound in the EXXON VALDEZ oil spill actions in state and federal court in Alaska.

Obtained dismissal, after a seven-week bench trial, of a seven-figure claim brought against the French ship classification society by cargo owners due the sinking of the *Star of Alexandria*. This result was affirmed on appeal.

Obtained dismissal of an eight-figure claim brought against the French ship classification society by Holland America Line for the total loss of the *M/V Wind Star*. This result was affirmed on appeal.

Acted for several large foreign reinsurers in connection with matters ranging from advice on treaty wording to litigation and arbitration involving first party property insurance, reinsurance of complex

Practice Areas

- Maritime Litigation
- Aviation Litigation
- Reinsurance
- Insurance Coverage

Industry Sectors

- Aviation
- Maritime
- Insurance

Education

- New York University School of Law, J.D., 1973
- Brown University, B.A., 1970
- Brown University, M.A., 1970

Bar Admissions

- California
- District of Columbia
- Massachusetts
- New York

Court Admissions

- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit
- U.S. District Court -- Eastern District of New York
- U.S. District Court -- Northern District of California
- U.S. District Court -- Southern District of New York
- U.S. Supreme Court
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit
- U.S. District Court -- Central District of California
- U.S. District Court -- Southern District of California
- U.S. District Court -- Eastern District of Michigan

Affiliations

- American Bar Association
- Association of the Bar of the City of New York
- Maritime Law Association of the United States
- New York County Lawyers Association

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- Union Internationale des Avocats
- Corresponding Member, French Maritime Law Association
- Board of Directors of the French American Foundation
- Board Member, French American Maritime Society

Awards & Honors

- Union Internationale des Avocats (UIA) - President of the Insurance Law Commission
- Marquis' Who's Who in America; Who's Who in American Law; Who's Who in the World; Who's Who in American Education
- Board of Directors of the French American Foundation
- New York Super Lawyers 2006-2011
- Best Lawyers in America 2018-2021
- AV Rated, Martindale-Hubbell
- Member, Paris Maritime Arbitral Chamber

financial products, insurance-backed film financing, catastrophic business interruption losses, cargo and hull cover and health and medical reinsurance.

Successfully represented the French government in the AMOCO CADIZ oil spill litigation which involved the largest shoreline pollution in history.

Successfully moved to dismiss a putative class action against our airline client facing breach of contract, unjust enrichment, and a variety of other claims stemming from alleged false advertising regarding its enhanced economy class. In dismissing the complaint, which carried potential exposure of millions of dollars, the court accepted our arguments that the claims were time-barred and/or preempted. Before moving to dismiss, we successfully sought an order staying discovery in the case.

Successfully moved to dismiss a seven-figure claim brought by a disgruntled passenger against a cruise line, based on a forum selection clause requiring that all suits against the cruise line be brought in Marseille, France.