**About**

We are an Afghan legal and government relations advisory firm staffed by experienced lawyers from Afghanistan, the United States and Australia.

We provide premium legal, regulatory, tax and government relations advisory services to development finance institutions, businesses, investors, non-government organizations and government agencies.

We are known for our technical strength, our commercial approach and our tenacity. We frequently represent clients on complex and significant matters and transactions in Afghanistan.

Our service is based on a deep understanding of our clients' requirements in the context of their operational objectives. We provide exceptional, practical and cost-effective services.

We work with our clients to build strong relationships. We attach great importance to accessibility. All our matters are properly resourced and effectively managed.

Doing business in Afghanistan frequently involves dealing with the complexities of the Afghan Government. We regularly engage with ministers, parliamentary committees, regulators and senior administrators.

Our experience in Afghanistan is unparalleled. Our clients benefits from our experience.

**People**

Zmarak Zhouand

Partner

B.A (SCU) LL.B (UNE) GDLP (College of Law) ACAMS

Qualification: barrister and solicitor in New South Wales, Australia (2001); completed requirements for admission to the New York Bar - anticipated admission date 2014

Languages: English, Dari

Mr. Zhouand is Afghan-Australian and was admitted as a barrister and solicitor in New South Wales, Australia, in 2001. Between 2001 and 2008, Mr. Zhouand worked with Henry Davis York and Gadens Lawyers, both leading Australian corporate law firms, where he represented “blue-chip” national and international clients across the corporate, commercial, banking and finance and litigation practice areas. Mr. Zhouand returned to Afghanistan in 2008 to work as Senior Legal Counsel with Roshan, where, until early 2011, he co-led Roshan’s legal and government affairs team and was also in charge of the legal and regulatory function for Roshan’s wholly owned subsidiary, M-Paisa, before re-entering private practice, as a partner, at the beginning of 2011. Mr. Zhouand regularly represents and advises development finance institutions, foreign investors, donor agencies, United States Government implementing partners and contractors, Government of Afghanistan agencies, foreign governments and non-governmental organizations on large and complex Afghanistan related matters and transactions. He focuses on banking and finance, mergers and acquisitions, projects (telecommunications, mining and infrastructure, energy), litigation, regulatory and general commercial. Mr. Zhouand is recognized as one of Afghanistan’s leading corporate, finance and mining lawyers by a number of publications including Chambers Global, Chambers Asia Pacific and IFLR 1000.

Abdul Shukor Mahjoor

Partner

B.A. (Law) (Aazhar University) LL.M (Arab League University) LL.M (University of Missouri) PhD (in progress) (Cairo University)

Qualifications: Advocate – Afghanistan Independent Bar Association

Languages: English, Dari, Pashto, Arabic

Prof. Mahjoor is an Afghan-American advocate registered with the Afghanistan Independent Bar Association. He has worked extensively in Afghanistan in the legal and government affairs environments over several years including having worked as a consultant with Mr. Zhouand. Prior to forming ALI with Mr. Zhouand, Prof. Mahjoor was, for a period of almost 3 years, Managing Partner of a specialist dispute resolution law firm in Kabul, Afghanistan. Prof. Mahjoor is Chancellor of, and Professor of Law at, Karwan University, Kabul, Afghanistan. In addition to lecturing at Karwan University, Professor Mahjoor is frequently called upon to train high-ranking Government of Afghanistan officials on legal and diplomatic matters. He is a regular speaker at conferences on issues relating to rule of law and economic development and often features on television programs where topical legal issues are discussed. Prof. Mahjoor is a dispute resolution specialist, and arguably one of Afghanistan’s most effective dispute resolution lawyers. He frequently represents United States Government implementing partners and contractors, their foreign employees, and foreign legal and natural persons generally in relation to multi-million dollar disputes with Afghan counterparties, and in relation to Office of the Attorney-General investigations and commercial and criminal court proceedings up to and including the Supreme Court of Afghanistan.

Rodrigo Sara

Senior Associate

B.Sc. (UQ) LL.B. (UQ) LL.M. (UTS) Grad. Certificate in Commerce (UoS)

Qualifications: barrister and solicitor in New South Wales, Australia (2007)

Languages: English, Spanish

Mr. Sara commenced his legal career working for a boutique law firm in Sydney, Australia, as a corporate/commercial lawyer and has subsequently attained diverse international legal experience, including having previously worked in Afghanistan with Mr. Zhouand as corporate legal counsel at Roshan.  Prior to joining ALI, and for the last 2.5 years, Mr. Sara was a senior legal advisor and at times Acting Head of Legal at a prominent international non-governmental organization headquartered in Mexico where he led the advisory and transactional support function for a broad portfolio of Public Private Partnerships focusing on technology transfer in agricultural and development sectors predominantly in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Mr. Sara is a commercial lawyer with multi-jurisdictional exposure and particular expertise in intellectual property. He has an excellent ability to work with people from diverse cultural and commercial backgrounds.

**Services**

Corporate and investment: specific and integrated full legal services to organizations doing business, and overseas investors looking to do business, in Afghanistan.

We provide a wide range of specific and integrated legal services to organizations doing business, and overseas investors looking to do business, in Afghanistan.

We have the knowledge and experience to provide legal advice, along with the cultural and business support, necessary for clients to successfully establish and maintain their presence in Afghanistan.

We provide our international client base with a full range of legal services, and work in conjunction with our clients' other advisers to ensure that all of their needs are met.

Part of our corporate offering consists of legal advice regarding the formation of companies, establishment of branch and representative offices, and related agency arrangements, both inside and outside Afghanistan.

We offer a comprehensive, entry to exit service that includes advising on:

* inward investment projects including licensing and incorporation in Afghanistan
* mergers, acquisitions and disposals
* corporate structuring and restructuring
* changes to ownership and management structures
* corporate governance and duties of directors
* Afghan corporate laws and regulations
* regulatory strategies and compliance
* establishment of branch and representative offices of foreign companies
* commercial agencies, sponsorship and related arrangements
* shareholder and joint venture agreements
* investment laws
* shareholder and management disputes

Tax: the firm specializes in the full range of tax issues such as tax exemptions, BRT, withholding taxes, corporate income tax, customs and tax dispute resolution.

We specialize in the full range of tax issues such as tax exemptions, BRT, withholding taxes, income tax, customs and tax disputes.

We advise clients across a wide range of industries including United States Government implementing partners, medium to large enterprises, security and logistics organizations, manufacturers and other suppliers, telecommunications operators, financiers, accountants, investment funds and financial services institutions.

We provide strategic planning advice, particularly in relation to the financial structuring of commercial transactions, corporate acquisitions and joint ventures and strategic advice in relation to engaging with the tax authorities on tax disputes.

We develop tailored strategies to meet our clients' needs.

Projects: providing local counsel support for large and complex projects across a range of industries including mining and infrastructure, oil and gas and telecommunications.

We have experience and expertise in providing local counsel support for large and complex projects across a range of industries. We have a track record in acting for project sponsors and financiers in the Afghan telecommunications industry, as well as advising in other groundbreaking international projects and public private partnerships.

Commercial contracts: broad practice encompassing a range of commercial contracts and joint ventures, together with agency, distribution, franchising, sale of goods and services, procurement and other forms of transaction structures.

We have a broad practice encompassing a range of commercial contracts and joint ventures, together with agency, distribution, franchising, sale of goods and services, procurement and other forms of transaction structures.

Our lawyers have experience in a range of sectors, including security and logistics, energy, mining and oil and gas, financial services, telecommunications, insurance, technology and media. Our experience enables us to provide well informed and practical advice, addressing international requirements and standards, together with the specific laws, regulations, practices and customs of Afghanistan.

Financings: acting for financiers, borrowers and other intermediaries, strategic advice and practical structuring solutions, opinions, as well as documentation, for all types of transactions.

We act for financiers, borrowers and other intermediaries, providing strategic advice and practical structuring solutions, as well as documentation, for all types of financial transactions.

Our team has been involved in one of Afghanistan’s largest project financings as well as other significant financings for both lenders and borrowers. Internationally, our lawyers have been engaged on the following types of financings:

* project finance
* corporate finance
* construction and real estate finance
* acquisition finance
* club and syndicated loans
* asset finance
* security arrangements and documentation
* forms of guarantees and available shareholder and government support mechanisms
* banking regulatory and compliance issues
* legal opinions

Dispute resolution: negotiation, mediation, arbitration, specialist tribunals, primary and appellate courts.

We take the shortest path to resolution of a dispute.

Commercial disputes do not form part of our clients’ core business. Finding an effective resolution to any given dispute is paramount. This may involve a quickly negotiated settlement, a settlement achieved at mediation, and in rare cases having a matter determined before a tribunal.

Our approach is a combination of strategy, practicality and persistence. We are commercial and practical but will not shy away when perseverance is required.

Regulatory and Government of Afghanistan advisory and lobbying services: including advising clients on devising engagement strategies with the Government of Afghanistan at the ministerial and deputy ministerial levels.

We provide our clients integrated legal, government affairs, and regulatory advice and solutions, allowing them to do business with confidence. In Afghanistan, robust regulatory controls and procedures, Government of Afghanistan engagement strategies are essential to protect organizations, senior management and directors.

We specialize in developing frameworks and systems that support everyone in an organization.

We advise clients across a wide range of industries, including retail, energy, transport, logistics, aviation, financial services and retail banking sectors.

Employment: including drafting standard employment agreements, human resources policies and procedures, advising on compliance and managing employee exits and disputes.

We advise on employment, industrial relations, human resources, discrimination, and occupational health and safety law.

We have a reputation for providing sound, strategic advice and applying technical skills to the real world of the workplace. We pride ourselves on getting to know your business – which allows us to understand and provide advice that is useful, commercial and easily implemented.

The issues our clients face give us frequent and indepth exposure to the Labor Code and the practical issues it poses for employers.

**Ethics**

We will:

## maintain the highest standards of integrity, fairness, honesty and respect in all our dealings;

## charge fairly for our work;

## act competently and diligently in serving our clients;

## advance our clients' interests above our own;

## not allow our interests to conflict with those of our clients;

1. never before, during or after termination of a retainer disclose any of our clients’ confidential information unless:
   1. the client authorizes disclosure;
   2. we are permitted or compelled by law to disclose;
   3. we disclose the information in circumstances in which the law would compel its disclosure, despite a client's claim of privilege, and for the sole purpose of avoiding the probable commission or concealment of a serious criminal offence; and
2. never, even where instructed to do so by our client, perform any legal work or service in breach of any of any applicable law.

**Publications**

Coming soon.

**TerraLex**

We are the exclusive member firm for TerraLex, the world’s second-largest association of independent law firms.

TerraLex is an organization that consists of more than 160 premier firms in 102 countries and over 17,000 attorney and is widely considered as the mark of quality for legal services.  TerraLex has been allocated the highest rating, “Elite”, by Chambers Global, which is a reflection of the quality of its member firms.