

Tarek J. Helou

PARTNER

Litigation

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FOCUS AREAS

Board and Internal Investigations
FCPA and Anti-Corruption
Government Contracts
Government Investigations
Litigation
State Attorneys General
Strategic Risk and Crisis Management
Trial
White Collar Crime

HIGHLIGHTS

- Corporate Investigation and Trial Experience from 12 Years as a Federal Prosecutor**
From 2014 to 2019, Tarek was an assistant chief in the DOJ's FCPA Unit and served as a trial attorney in the FCPA Unit from 2012 to 2014. In these positions, he served as the decision maker for some of the DOJ's largest, most complex international criminal investigations. From 2007 to 2012, Tarek was an assistant U.S. attorney in San Francisco.
- Wide-Ranging Industry and Geographic Expertise in Corporate Investigations**
Tarek has deep expertise in all aspects of government investigations, having led or supervised more than 100 FCPA investigations focusing on every major industry, including companies in the technology, software, data analytics, medical device, pharmaceutical, mining, oil and gas, and finance sectors. He has also led investigations in six continents.
- Subject Matter Expert**
Chambers and Partners recognized Tarek as a leading FCPA attorney, and *Global Investigations Review* included Tarek in its "Top FCPA Practitioners" list as one of the leading 30 lawyers and forensic advisers in the FCPA space. He has also been quoted in high-profile publications and media outlets, including *Bloomberg*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *NPR*.

EXPERIENCE

Tarek Helou is a partner in the Washington, D.C., office of Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati, where he represents companies in internal investigations and defends companies and individuals in multi-jurisdictional government enforcement actions. He also handles crisis management and advises clients on risk assessments, compliance, and due diligence, with a focus on anti-corruption matters. Tarek, a former supervisor in the U.S. Department of Justice's Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) Unit, has deep expertise in all aspects of government investigations. At the DOJ, he led or supervised more than 100 FCPA investigations focusing on every major industry. Those investigations have resulted in FCPA, wire fraud, money laundering, and tax charges against publicly traded and privately held companies, board members and executives, and senior foreign government officials.

Tarek is an experienced trial lawyer and investigator who has a deep understanding of how prosecutors think and how the Justice Department approaches criminal cases. His practice is driven by this experience and his insight into what the Justice Department and other U.S. and foreign government agencies expect companies to do when they conduct internal investigations, interact with the government, and implement and improve their compliance programs.

Before joining the firm, Tarek spent 12 years at the Justice Department. From 2014 to 2019, he was an assistant chief in the FCPA Unit of the Criminal Division's Fraud Section, and he also served as a trial

attorney in the FCPA Unit from 2012 to 2014. In these positions, he led and supervised teams of agents and prosecutors in the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney's Offices throughout the country and coordinated investigations with domestic regulators and foreign criminal and regulatory authorities throughout the world. In addition, Tarek selected and supervised seven independent corporate compliance monitors. He also helped develop the FCPA Pilot Program and the FCPA Corporate Enforcement Policy. While in the FCPA Unit, Tarek was the lead attorney or supervisor for some of the Justice Department's most significant corporate and individual cases, including corporate resolutions with companies in the software, hardware, telecommunications, defense, oil and gas, retail, life sciences, and medical device industries.

His cases against individual defendants included charges against dozens of board members, executives, and foreign government officials.

Before joining the FCPA Unit, Tarek was an assistant U.S. attorney (AUSA) in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of California from 2007 to 2012. As an AUSA, he tried several cases and investigated and prosecuted cases involving drug trafficking, gangs, violent crime, child exploitation, money laundering, and tax fraud and evasion.

Before serving as a federal prosecutor, Tarek was an associate in the San Francisco and Silicon Valley offices of a global law firm from 2001 to 2007, where he represented companies, boards of directors, and executives in internal and government-facing investigations concerning fraud and trade secrets misappropriation and in intellectual property litigation.

Tarek is nationally recognized as one of the top attorneys in his field of practice having been recognized as a leading FCPA attorney by *Chambers USA* and identified by *Global Investigations Review* as a "Top FCPA Practitioner." Tarek has also been quoted in high-profile publications and media outlets, including *Bloomberg*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *NPR*.

CREDENTIALS

Education

- J.D., New York University School of Law, 2001
- B.A., International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, 1996

Associations and Memberships

- Chairman, Special Committee on Biometrics, Section of Science and Technology Law, American Bar Association, 2004-2007

Honors

- Named to the 2025 and 2026 *Lawdragon "500 Global Leaders in Crisis Management"* guides
- Recognized in the 2025-2026 editions of *Chambers Global* as a leading FCPA lawyer
- Recognized in the 2024-2026 editions of *Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business*
- Recognized as a Top FCPA Practitioner by *Global Investigations Review*

Admissions

- Bar of the District of Columbia
- State Bar of California

INSIGHTS

Select Publications

- Co-author, "Rising Risks and Shifting Strategies: The Future of FCPA Enforcement," *Dow Jones Risk Journal*, October 7, 2025
- Co-author, "Banks Fined \$2 Billion for Employees' 'Off-Channel' Communications—Is Your Industry at Risk?" *Wilson Sonsini Alert*, November 16, 2022
- Co-author and editor, *The Practitioner's Guide to Biometrics*, American Bar Association, 2007

Select Speaking Engagements

- "Managing the Risks of Government-Run Healthcare Systems: Mitigating Global Corruption and More Potential Exposure in Drug and Device Research, Testing and Approvals in Foreign Jurisdictions," 20th Annual FCPA & Anti-Corruption for the Life Sciences Industry, American Conference Institute, May 2025

- Panelist, “President Trump’s Executive Order on the FCPA, the Attorney General’s February 5th Memo, and What May Happen Next,” PLI’s The Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and International Anti-Corruption Developments 2025, April 2025
- Panelist, “Life Sciences in China Series: Pharma, Medical Device and Biotech Companies Discuss New Compliance Risks Amid Geopolitical Tensions,” American Conference Institute’s FCPA & Anti-Corruption for the Life Sciences Industry Webinar, March 2025
- Panelist, “Thorny and Recurring Anti-Corruption Compliance Issues,” PLI’s The Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and International Anti-Corruption Developments 2024, April 2024
- Moderator, “Fireside Chat, 18th Annual FCPA & Anti-Corruption Conference for the Life Sciences Industry,” with Derek Ettinger, Assistant Chief, FCPA Unit Fraud Section, Criminal Division, U.S. Department of Justice, American Conference Institute, May 2023
- Panelist, “Life Sciences and the FCPA – What Are Your Risks and How Can You Manage Them in the Face of New DOJ and SEC Enforcement Priorities?” 3rd Annual ACC San Francisco Bay Area Life Sciences Conference, 2023 Life Sciences: Future-Ready Resilience, May 2023
- Panelist, “Anti-Bribery & Corruption and Sanctions Symposium,” Wilson Sonsini and American-Qualified Lawyers in London, London, United Kingdom, March 9, 2023
- Panelist, “Crisis Management Hypothetical: How to Handle a Real World FCPA Problem,” PLI’s The Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and International Anti-Corruption Developments 2022, April 2022
- Panelist, “Tough FCPA Compliance Challenges,” PLI’s The Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and International Anti-Corruption Developments 2021, April 2021
- Moderator, “FCPA Trends and Developments,” Securities Enforcement Forum 2020, October 2020
- “DOJ and SEC Update the FCPA Resource Guide: Here’s What You Need To Know,” Wilson Sonsini Webinar, July 2020
- “SEC and DOJ Enforcement: What’s on the Horizon?” American Bar Association - Criminal Justice Section Webinar, April 2020
- “Enforcement Spotlight—Recent Trends and High-Priority Risk Areas Impacting the Life Sciences Sector,” 2019 Pharmaceutical Compliance Congress, April 2019
- “FCPA Enforcement Keynote: DOJ, SEC, and FBI Update,” 19th Annual Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Compliance Congress, Washington, D.C., November 2018
- “International Cooperation in the New Globalization,” World Economic Forum Partnering Against Corruption Initiative, New York, New York, November 2018
- “FCPA Investigations: Self-Disclosure, DPA Agreements, and International Cooperation Agreements,” U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Argentina, New York, New York, September 2018
- “U.S. DOJ and SEC FCPA Enforcement Update,” Eighth Asia Pacific Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Compliance Congress, Singapore, September 2018
- “U.S. DOJ and SEC FCPA Enforcement Update,” 12th Annual International Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Compliance Congress, Vienna, Austria, May 2018
- “Government Roundtable: The ABAC-International Trade Nexus: Focus Enforcement Targets for Enforcement, Cooperation, Coordinated Investigations, and Voluntary Disclosure,” 11th Annual Compliance Summit on Anti-Corruption, Export Controls, and Sanctions, Momentum, Tysons Corner, Virginia, April 2018
- “Department of Justice’s New Corporate Enforcement Policy,” Coalition for Integrity, Washington, D.C., March 2018
- “Twenty Years of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention: Latin-American Perspectives,” Secretariat of Transparency of the Presidency of the Republic of Colombia, Bogota, Colombia, February 2018
- Government Keynote Interview: Status on FCPA Enforcement Priorities,” 12th Annual Houston Forum on the FCPA and Compliance, American Conference Institute, Houston, Texas, January 2018
- FCPA Enforcement Keynote: DOJ, SEC, and FBI Update,” 18th Annual Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Compliance Congress, Washington, D.C., November 2017
- SEC and DOJ Keynote: Status Report on FCPA Enforcement Priorities,” 10th Annual West Coast Conference on FCPA Enforcement and Compliance, American Conference Institute, San Francisco, September 2017
- Annual SEC/DOJ Enforcement 2017 Update,” Sandpiper Partners, Washington, D.C., June 2017
- Trends in FCPA Enforcement in the Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Industries,” 11th Annual International Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Compliance Congress, Lisbon, Portugal, May 2017
- Annual SEC/DOJ Enforcement 2016 Update,” Sandpiper Partners, Washington, D.C., May 2016
- Anti-Corruption Conference: Status Quo and Future Outlook,” Dutch Special Criminal Law Academy, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, December 2015
- Experiences in Investigating Corruption,” Superintendency of Corporations of the Republic of Colombia, National Anticorruption Day Conference, Bogotá, Colombia, August 2015
- Case Studies and Experience Prosecuting Foreign Bribery,” Office of the Secretary for Transparency of the Presidency of the Republic of Colombia, the European Union Program for Promoting Social Cohesion in Latin America, and the Ministry of Justice of Colombia, Bogotá, Colombia, December 2014