

## Pierre-Richard Prosper

### Partner

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### Practice Teams

[Government Relations](#)

[International Trade](#)

[Litigation](#)

### Areas of Focus

Economic Sanctions

Energy

International Arbitration

Internal Investigations

Corporate Social Responsibility

### Practice Areas

Ambassador Pierre-Richard Prosper is based in the firm's Los Angeles office. His practice centers on international government

relations and trade, mediation and internal assessments, and investigations on behalf of government entities and companies. Ambassador Prosper also spends a significant amount of time in the firm's Washington, DC office.

### Client Work

Ambassador Prosper is regularly called upon to handle complex and sensitive matters. Using his high-level diplomatic experience and legal skills, Ambassador Prosper helps clients navigate and troubleshoot the political and regulatory landscapes related to doing business in foreign markets. With his wide range of contacts throughout the world, he is able to open markets to clients, determine the feasibility of trade relationships and minimize legal and business risks. Ambassador Prosper has been appointed by the United States District Court to mediate complex legal and business disputes between parties and has investigated and recommended solutions on matters of public interest. He advises numerous clients on matters relating to economic sanction and advises foreign governments on improving their legal capacity.

Ambassador Prosper's representative cases include:

- Advises and represents the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste on matters related to the Petroleum sector, investment and infrastructure development.
- Advises and represents the government of Rwanda on a range of matters including international arbitration, litigation, and contract negotiation.
- Advises a publicly traded natural resources company on political and legal issues in numerous foreign countries throughout the world and travels to build relationships with foreign governments, entities, and individuals on behalf of the client.
- Successfully negotiated the release of an American citizen detained in the Islamic Republic of Iran through repeated travels to Iran and engagement with senior Iranian officials.
- Advised and assisted a telecommunications company on the feasibility of accessing foreign markets in Asia, the Americas, and Africa.
- Advised and assisted a top rank professional female athlete regarding a matter involving agencies from several countries.

- Advised and assisted a national television network and production company in the development of a television program requiring filming and the cooperation from authorities in numerous foreign countries on several continents.
- *Mattel v. MGA*; (commonly known as the Barbie vs. Bratz case) federal court-appointed mediator of a 1.8 billion dollar copyright infringement case involving the popular Bratz doll line pending in Riverside, California.
- *MGA v. Hartford Insurance et al.*; federal court-appointed mediator for a series of multi-million dollar claims by MGA against various insurance carriers.

## Recent Articles and Legal Updates

- [International Trade 2012 Issues Preview](#)

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## Previous Work

### **US Department of State**

*US Ambassador-at-Large*

Prior to joining Arent Fox, Ambassador Prosper was the US Ambassador-at-Large in charge of the Secretary of State's Office of War Crimes Issues. He was appointed in 2001 by President George W. Bush and, after being unanimously confirmed by the US Senate, served until October 2005.

As the President's envoy and senior diplomat, Ambassador Prosper traveled worldwide conducting diplomatic negotiations and consultations with heads of state, foreign ministers, and senior government officials from over 60 different countries. He also engaged foreign parliaments and multilateral and international organizations to build support for US policies. He regularly visited conflict zones in efforts to secure peace, stability, and the rule of law. In this capacity, Ambassador Prosper formulated and coordinated US policy responses to atrocities and attacks against civilians throughout the world. He reported directly to US Secretaries of State Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice and advised the President of the United States, Secretary of Defense, Attorney General, National Security Advisor, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, White House Counsel and other senior US government officials. After September 11, 2001, Ambassador Prosper played a key role in developing policy to confront terrorism. He was also the chief US negotiator and lead diplomat responsible for engaging nations regarding their nationals held in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba and captured by US forces in combat.

### **US Department of State/US Department of Justice**

*Special Counsel and Policy Adviser/Special Assistant to the Assistant Attorney General*

From 1999 to 2001, Ambassador Prosper worked in the US State Department, Office of the Secretary of State, where he served as a special counsel and policy adviser on war crimes issues. He was detailed from the US Department of Justice, where he served as Special Assistant to the Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division.

### **United Nations**

*Lead Trial Attorney*

From 1996 to late 1998, Ambassador Prosper was a war crimes prosecutor for the UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. While working and living in Rwanda for nearly three years in the aftermath of the genocide, he was appointed lead trial attorney and prosecuted *Prosecutor vs. Jean-Paul Akayesu*, the first-ever case of genocide under the 1948 Genocide Convention. He won additional convictions for crimes against humanity and broke new ground in international law by convincing the UN Tribunal, for the first time, to recognize rape as an act of genocide and a crime against humanity.

### **US Department of Justice, Office of the United States Attorney**

*Assistant US Attorney*

From 1994 to 1996, Ambassador Prosper was an Assistant United States Attorney for the Central District of California in Los Angeles assigned to the Narcotics Section, Drug Enforcement Task Force, where he investigated and prosecuted major international drug cartels.

### **Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office**

*Deputy District Attorney*

Prior to becoming an Assistant US attorney, Ambassador Prosper was a Deputy District Attorney for Los Angeles, California from 1989 to 1994. His last two years in the DA's Office were spent in the Hardcore Gang Division of the Bureau of Special Operations prosecuting solely gang-related murders.

### **Professional Activities**

Ambassador Prosper remains engaged in matters of public interest. In April 2008, he was appointed by President Bush to be a member of the US Holocaust Memorial Council. In January 2008, he was elected by United Nations member States to serve as an independent expert and vice-chairman to a human rights treaty body, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, in Geneva, Switzerland, which monitors compliance by State parties to the Convention. In April 2007, he led, on behalf of the International Republican Institute, a 59-person international election observation mission to Nigeria to observe the Presidential and National Assembly elections in that country. He has been a speaker for numerous organizations and universities. In addition, he was an ambassador-in-residence/adjunct professor at the University of Utah's S.J. Quinney College of Law.

### **Publications, Presentations and Recognitions**

Ambassador Prosper's work representing Reza Taghavi, who was released from an Iranian prison in 2010, and Amir Michael Hekmati, a former US marine who currently stands accused of spying in Iran for the United States, was recently profiled in [California Lawyer](#).

### **Press Coverage**

- [Arent Fox Los Angeles Celebrates Five Year Anniversary](#)
- [The Wall Street Journal and CNN Report on Arent Fox Partner Pierre-Richard Prosper's Efforts to Save Ex-US Marine Charged with Spying by Iran](#)
- [Arent Fox Wins Dismissal of Wrongful Death Suit Filed Against President of Rwanda](#)

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### **Bar and Court Admissions**

California Bar  
Supreme Court of the United States  
US Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit  
US District Court, Central District of California

### **Education**

Pepperdine University School of Law, JD, 1989  
Boston College, BA, 1985

### **Life Beyond the Law**

Ambassador Prosper is the son of two physicians who emigrated from Haiti. He was born in Denver and raised in the state of New York. Ambassador Prosper speaks French and has a working knowledge of Italian and Spanish. He serves as a trustee on the Boston College Board of Trustees. He was a varsity lacrosse player at Boston College and continues to remain active in sports.