# Online and on-chain dispute resolution

Dr Alexander Ressos, TEP
Attorney-at-Law (Switzerland and Germany),
Solicitor (England & Wales and Hong Kong)
Of Counsel, KGP Legal LLC
alexander.ressos@kgplegal.com.sg
www.ressos.com.sg

Decentralised dispute-resolution protocols such as Kleros and Aragon Court resolve disputes by juries of token holders who stake tokens and vote, with the smart contract executing the outcome. Their decisions are not arbitral awards. They lack a seat, a tribunal in the legal sense, an arbitration agreement that identifies the parties and the procedural guarantees that Art. V of the New York Convention and Art. 34 of the Model Law presuppose. A party who loses before such a protocol can relitigate in court, while a party who wins has only what the smart contract already executed. Singapore courts have not ruled on the question. The IAA's definition of arbitration would, in my view, exclude such protocols because there is no agreement to submit to a tribunal that decides according to law or agreed rules.

The practical use of on-chain mechanisms is therefore as a first tier within a conventional clause. The parties agree to submit disputes below a threshold to an on-chain procedure and to treat its outcome as binding contractually, with SIAC arbitration for larger disputes and for challenges to the on-chain result. Several protocol foundations have adopted this structure. It gives the on-chain outcome the force of a contractual expert determination, which Singapore and Swiss courts

© 2026 Dr Alexander Ressos. General information only, not legal, tax or investment advice. No client relationship is created. All Singapore law advice is provided by a duly licensed and regulated firm of Singapore advocates and solicitors only on the basis of an express written letter of engagement. More information at SingaporeIQ.com and ressos.com.sg.

enforce as a matter of contract unless the determination is tainted by fraud or manifest error. The enforceability of the New York Convention is preserved for what matters.

## Disclaimer

This article is provided for general information only. It is based on publicly available sources as at its date of publication. These sources have not been independently verified against licences, regulatory registers or the records of the entities concerned. It is not legal, tax, financial or investment advice. Nor is it a recommendation to invest in, transact with or use the services of any entity mentioned. Law and regulation change frequently, so the content may be incomplete or outdated. To the fullest extent permitted by law, Dr Alexander Ressos and the publisher of SingaporeIQ exclude all liability for loss or damage arising from the use of or reliance on this article. Readers should obtain advice on their specific circumstances before acting or refraining from action.

Names and trademarks of the entities discussed belong to their owners and are used for identification only. Their mention implies no endorsement, affiliation or allegation of wrongdoing. All Singapore law advice is provided by a duly licensed and regulated firm of Singapore advocates and solicitors only on the basis of an express written letter of engagement. Corrections and updates: contact@ressos.com.

© 2026 Dr Alexander Ressos. This article may be quoted with attribution to SingaporeIQ (SingaporeIQ.com). Reproduction in full and any commercial use require prior written consent. The Legal Terms at https://singaporeiq.com/legal-terms apply.

Author contact: Dr Alexander Ressos, TEP · contact@ressos.com