18. If the arbitral tribunal decides that the claim is not admissible, or the claim is outside the jurisdiction or competence of the arbitral tribunal, or that the claim is manifestly without legal merit, it shall render an award to that effect.

19. The arbitral tribunal may, if warranted, award the prevailing disputing party reasonable costs and fees incurred in submitting or opposing the objection. In determining whether such an award is warranted, the arbitral tribunal shall consider whether either the claim or the objection was frivolous or manifestly without legal merit, and shall provide the disputing parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment.

20. (a) The arbitral tribunal shall at the request of a disputing Party, or may on its own account, request a joint interpretation of any provision of this Chapter that is in issue in an investment dispute. The Parties shall submit in writing any joint decision declaring their interpretation made by consensus to the arbitral tribunal within sixty (60) days from the date of receipt of the request. Without prejudice to subparagraph (b), if the Parties fail to issue such a decision within sixty (60) days, any interpretation submitted by a Party shall be forwarded to the disputing parties and the arbitral tribunal, which shall decide the issue on its own account.

(b) A joint decision of the Joint Committee on the interpretation of any provision of this Chapter under subparagraph 2(e)(iv) of Article 11 shall be binding on an arbitral tribunal, and any decision or award issued by an arbitral tribunal must be consistent with that joint decision.

21. Unless the disputing parties agree otherwise, the arbitration shall be held in a country that is a party to the New York Convention.

22. Each Party shall provide for the enforcement of an award in its territory.

23. An award made by an arbitral tribunal shall be final and binding upon the disputing parties. An award shall have no binding force except between the disputing parties and in respect of the particular case.

Article 51.14
General Exceptions

Subject to the requirement that such measures are not applied in a manner which would constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination between the Parties or their investors where like conditions prevail, or a disguised restriction on investors or investments made by investors of another Party, nothing in this Chapter shall be construed to prevent the adoption or enforcement by any Party of measures:

(a) necessary to protect public morals or to maintain public order, provided that the public order exception may only be invoked where a genuine and sufficiently serious threat is posed to one of the fundamental interests of society;

(b) necessary to protect human, animal or plant life or health;

(c) necessary to secure compliance with laws or regulations which are not inconsistent with the provisions of this Chapter including those relating to:

(i) the prevention of deceptive and fraudulent practices or to deal with the effects of a default on contracts;

(ii) the protection of the privacy of individuals in relation to the processing and dissemination of personal data and the protection of confidentiality of individual records and accounts; or

(iii) safety;