

Stephen Cogley KC and Simon Goldstone act in Contempt Application in Ahmad

This long-running US\$45m fraud claim (already the subject of decisions at [2022] EWHC 3087 (Comm) and [2023] EWHC 2666 (Comm)) took a new turn on 29 April 2024 when the Defendants were each sentenced to 9 months' imprisonment following their breach of a worldwide freezing order, granted by Mr Justice Jacobs following Simon Goldstone's without notice application. The contempt was admitted; the decision is notable because it shows that where a respondent does not attend court for cross-examination (even on matters of mitigation) they run the risk that little or no weight will be given to their evidence. The decision is also a reminder of how seriously the Court will treat the breach of a freezing order; the husband and wife contemnors were each sent to prison even though they are the parents of young children. A suspended sentence might be appropriate if there is a chance that the contemnors can remedy the breach, but that was not possible here, given that the house had been sold and the damage irreversibly done.

The judgment is available [here](#).