



Hon. Nazak Nikakhtar

Partner



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The Honorable Nazak Nikakhtar brings over two decades of experience in international trade and national security to help clients succeed in the domestic and global marketplace. Through leadership roles in the U.S. government and private sector, Nazak has leveraged her valuable insights into the expansive range of U.S. and international laws, regulatory and policy processes, and federal agency resources to achieve clients' business objectives.

From 2018 to 2021, with unanimous confirmation by the U.S. Senate, Nazak served as the Department of Commerce's Assistant Secretary for Industry & Analysis at the International Trade Administration (ITA). Nazak also served the duties of the Under Secretary for Industry and Security at Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS). In these roles, Nazak was the agency's primary liaison with U.S. industry and trade associations, and she shaped major initiatives to strengthen U.S. industry competitiveness, promote innovation, and accelerate economic and job growth. As one of the key national security experts in the U.S. government, she developed and implemented innovative laws, regulations, and policies to safeguard strategically important technologies, strengthen the U.S. industrial base, and protect the national security and foreign policy interests of the United States. As the Department's lead on the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS), she played a key role in shaping U.S. investment policy. As the head of the agency's trade policy office, she advised the U.S. government on legal and economic issues impacting critical technologies, advanced manufacturing, financial services, e-commerce, data privacy, cybersecurity, critical minerals/rare earths, and energy competition. Finally, as the federal agency's lead on supply chain assessments, Nazak spearheaded the United States' first-ever whole-of-government initiative to evaluate and strengthen

Practice Areas

National Security
International Trade
Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS)
Strategic Competition & Supply Chain
Artificial Intelligence (AI)
Digital Trade
Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG)
Team Telecom
Trade Policy and Trade Negotiations

Credentials

Education

J.D., Syracuse University, College of Law
M.A. in Economics, Syracuse University, The Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs
B.A., University of California, Los Angeles

Law Journals

Editor-in-Chief, *Syracuse Journal of International Law and Commerce*

Bar and Court Memberships

District of Columbia Bar
U.S. Court of International Trade
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit

Languages

Farsi
French

supply chains across all strategic sectors of the economy.

Representative Matters

- Led large legal and economic litigation teams, representing U.S. industry and international clients including multibillion-dollar organizations, in complex antidumping, countervailing duty, and customs matters before federal agencies, the International Trade Commission, and U.S. courts.
- Advised large multinational corporations on export control license matters and regulatory compliance systems; led internal investigations and implemented corrective actions for clients related to potential diversion and unauthorized exports of controlled sensitive items and technical data; and prepared and submitted voluntary disclosures to the U.S. State Department's Directorate of Defense Trade Controls.
- Represents domestic and international companies in national security reviews before CFIUS and Team Telecom.
- Advised manufacturing industries, technology firms, U.S. government agencies, and foreign governments on supply chain vulnerabilities and developed strategies to build cost-effective, sustainable, and resilient supply systems.
- Advised businesses and industry associations interfacing with the U.S. government and foreign governments on resolving technical standards and market access barriers, and represented and advised companies and sovereign entities with regard to World Trade Organization (WTO) dispute settlement proceedings and Generalized System of Preference (GSP) proceedings.
- Led large U.S. business delegations in international trade missions with high-level foreign government officials in Europe, Asia, South America, and Africa to expand global sales.
- Conducted extensive audits of domestic and foreign businesses for compliance with U.S. regulations and international laws.
- Broad industry experience handling international trade, national security, economic security, and policy matters across a range of industries including steel, aluminum, chemicals, aerospace, unmanned aerial vehicles, motor vehicles and automotive parts, semiconductors, medical equipment and devices, aquaculture, consumer goods, critical minerals and rare earth elements, solar cells and modules, advanced energy technology, nuclear energy, e-commerce, financial services, and travel and tourism.
- A prolific lecturer on law, economics, international trade, and national security to U.S. government officials, research institutions, and business associations.

Professional Experience

- U.S. Department of Commerce
 - Assistant Secretary, Industry & Analysis, International Trade Administration (2018-2021)

- Under Secretary for Industry and Security (2019)
- Senior Advisor to Senior Enforcement Coordinator, Non-Market Economy Office, International Trade Administration (2004-2007)
- International Trade Analyst, Import Administration, International Trade Administration (2003-2004)
- Industry Analyst, Bureau of Industry and Security (2002-2003)
- Syracuse University College of Law
 - Board of Advisors (2024-Present)
 - Distinguished Guest Lecturer, DCEX Summer Externship Program (2018-2019)
- Committee to Support U.S. Trade Laws
 - Executive Board, Co-Chair Lawyers Group (2016-2017)
- Georgetown University Law Center
 - Adjunct Professor, Law School (2009-2011)

Affiliations

- Purdue University
 - Commissioner for Export Controls, Global Technology Security Commission
 - Senior Fellow, Center for Technology Diplomacy
- Strategic Advisor, Silverado Policy Accelerator

Recognitions

- Included in *The Best Lawyers in America* directory for International Trade and Finance Law (2024-2025)
- Recognized by *The Legal 500 US* as a "Recommended Lawyer" in International Trade: Customs, Export Controls, and Economic Sanctions (2022-2025) and International Trade and National Security: National Security (2025)
- Named one of DC's "Rising Stars" (2014-2016) and one of DC's "Super Lawyers" by *Super Lawyers* magazine for International Trade (2018, 2023, 2024)
- Department of Commerce Award Medals (2004, 2005, and 2006)