1 2	UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA MIAMI DIVISION	
3	CASE N	O. 1:16-cv-21199-CMA
4	ANDREA ROSSI, et al.,	Miami, Florida
5	Plaintiffs,	October 14, 2016
6	vs.	8:34 a.m. to 9:38 a.m.
7	THOMAS DARDEN, et al.,	Courtroom 12-2
8	Defendants.	(Pages 1 to 60)
9	MOTTON HEAD!	NG AND STATUS CONFERENCE
10	MOTION HEARING AND STATUS CONFERENCE BEFORE THE HONORABLE CECILIA M. ALTONAGA, UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE	
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         (The following proceedings were held at 8:34 a.m.)
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              THE COURT: Good morning, please be seated.
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              ALL PARTIES: Good morning, Your Honor.
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              THE COURT: Please state your appearances.
 5
              MR. ANNESSER: Your Honor, John Annesser and Chris
    Perre on behalf of the plaintiffs Andrea Rossi and Leonardo
 6
 7
    Corporation. I also have my client with me, Mr. Rossi -- I'm
8
     sorry -- Dr. Rossi.
9
              THE COURT: Mr. Annesser and what was the second name?
10
              MR. ANNESSER: Christopher Perre is my associate.
11
              THE COURT: Spell the last name, please.
12
              MR. PERRE: P-E-R-R-E.
13
              THE COURT: Okay. Thank you. Good morning.
14
              MR. ANNESSER: Thank you.
15
              MR. PACE: Good morning, Your Honor, we have got a lot
16
    of Chris's in the house today. This is Chris Pace with Chris
17
    Lomax and Christy Mastrucci, all for the defendants Industrial
18
    Heat, IPH International, Cherokee Investment Partners, Tom
19
    Darden, and JT Vaughn.
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              THE COURT: Good morning.
21
              MR. NUNEZ: Good morning, Your Honor.
22
              THE COURT:
                          I -- you need a microphone, please.
23
              MR. NUÑEZ: Good morning, Your Honor, Rodolfo Nuñez on
24
    behalf of United States Quantum Leap LLC and Fulvio Fabiani,
25
    third-party defendants.
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1 MR. ARAN: Good morning, Your Honor, Fernando Aran on 2 behalf of third-party defendants for J.M. Products, Henry 3 Johnson, and James Bass. 4 THE COURT: Thank you. Good morning. 5 MR. ARAN: Good morning. 6 THE COURT: Okay. Before we address the motion to 7 strike the second amended affirmative defenses, I wanted to hear from perhaps the plaintiff whether all of the parties in 8 this action have been served. 9 10 MR. ANNESSER: Your Honor, actually I am going to turn 11 this to Mr. Pace. 12 THE COURT: Mr. Pace, all right. 13 MR. ANNESSER: The original parties in the action have 14 all been served. The third-party defendants have not. 15 THE COURT: All right. Mr. Pace. 16 MR. PACE: That's correct, Your Honor. There is one 17 defendant who is -- one third-party defendant yet to be served. 18 He is in Italy. His name is Penon. So all the third-party 19 defendants -- I'm sorry. 20 THE COURT: His name is Fabio Penon. MR. PACE: Fabio Penon. The defendants have been 21 22 served or have waived service. All of the third parties have 23 been served or waived service, with the exception of Fabio 24 Penon. We are doing The Hague Convention process for him right 25 now. And in all honesty, partially our mistake. The Hague

website said we didn't have to translate something that we then found out in Italy we have to translate. So we are getting the complaints and the counterclaims and third-party claims, everything translated into Italian in order to serve it. So we're expecting to be able to serve it, we think -- or I'm sorry -- file it with the court in Italy next week.

THE COURT: And that means we are going to have Mr. Penon served when, Mr. Pace?

MR. PACE: It is up to the Italian courts at that point, unfortunately. They won't give us a particular time. I am certainly hoping he will get served within the month, but I have to be honest, Your Honor, my experience is not consistent with that.

THE COURT: Right. And neither is mine. And that makes a problem for the case and for your ability to bring Mr. Penon into the case.

MR. PACE: We understand that, Your Honor, and I guess our request at this point would be to see how it progresses or to see how it proceeds. I mean I -- we would like the case otherwise to proceed. If Mr. Penon is served relatively quickly, that's great. If Mr. Penon is not, then we are going to have to address the issue of what to do with the claims against Mr. Penon.

THE COURT: You can bring those separately?

MR. PACE: We could. I mean, he is part of -- there

is a common claim that he is part of. And, you know, the parties -- the plaintiffs have already sent or attempted to send a subpoena to him. I don't know how they're going to do that, since he's in Italy. But I think people recognize that he's relevant to the case. So I wish I had a better solution for right now, but I guess I would ask for the Court to give us at least a little bit of time to see how it plays out. If, for example, it is sitting in the court system over in Italy for a month and nothing at all has happened, I am going to have to deal the issue of trying to figure out do I -- can I carve him out of the suit, sue him separately, dismiss him -- I just don't have an answer for you right now, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Well, Mr. Annesser, this affects your clients' claims that you are desirous of bringing to a resolution.

MR. ANNESSER: Yes, Your Honor, we do not wish to delay this any further than it has to be. As Mr. Pace pointed out, our subpoena may or may not effectively reach him. We are going to have to go through the same process, I'm sure, that he has to go through unless we can get Mr. Penon to agree to accept service, which he has not yet. We personally believe they should serve him or carve it out into a separate case. If they do carve it out into a separate case and then later can consolidate it back in --

THE COURT: We have the scheduling order in place,

1 don't we? 2 MR. ANNESSER: Yes, we do, Your Honor. But that was --3 4 THE COURT: What's our trial -- what's our trial date? 5 MR. ANNESSER: Your Honor, we were set, I believe, 6 for -- I do not have it in front of me -- I believe it was July 7 of 2017. 8 THE COURT: All right. 9 MR. ANNESSER: But that was prior to the addition of 10 the third-party defendants. And actually the other parties as 11 well as the plaintiffs have been working together to propose to 12 the Court a joint proposed scheduling order that takes into 13 account the late service of the third-party defendants and 14 allows us adequate time to conclude discovery on all of the 15 issues. 16 THE COURT: And what is that? 17 MR. ANNESSER: It has not been finalized yet, although 18 I believe we are substantially finished with it, and we 19 hopefully can propose that to the Court within a couple days. 20 THE COURT: What trial date are you envisioning? 21 MR. ANNESSER: We were -- Chris, do you recall? don't have it in front of me. 22 23 MR. PACE: Your Honor, if I recall correctly, it is 24 essentially about a -- somewhere in a three- to four-month 25 extension. I think it was still by the end of 2017, if I

remember correctly, but I don't actually have our notes from our negotiation, but we did actually have an in-person meeting with everybody to come up with a new schedule to propose to the Court.

THE COURT: What discovery has taken place to date?

MR. ANNESSER: Your Honor, there has been written

discovery between the plaintiffs and the defendants at this

point in time. There has been some third-party discovery

propounded -- I'm sorry -- nonparty discovery propounded by the

defendants. But we are at a very early stage, and we are in

the process of discussing deposition dates for at least one

deponent at this point in time, but we'll likely be discussing

numerous other deponents shortly.

THE COURT: Well, until I'm able to pull up our docketing, let's move on to the motion to strike.

What's your discovery cutoff date, Mr. Annesser?

MR. ANNESSER: Currently, Your Honor, I believe the discovery cutoff was in February or March of 2017. And I apologize, Your Honor, I did not bring the scheduling order with me.

THE COURT: All right. Well, let's address, if we would, then, the motion to strike.

MR. ANNESSER: Yes, Your Honor, would you prefer that I address the court from the podium or from the bench?

THE COURT: Wherever you are more comfortable. And

let's just go defense by defense as opposed to all of them. So you might want to stay there, if you'd like, and I will be hearing from defense counsel as to each one.

MR. ANNESSER: Thank you, Your Honor. As to the first affirmative defense that was asserted, it was a general defense of standing. There's actually two parts to the defense that I would like to individually address.

The first one is there is a claim that when Leonardo Corporation New Hampshire merged into the Leonardo Corporation Florida, that that merger was in violation of a nonassignability transfer provision within the license agreement that is at the heart of this case.

The defendants rely on a case Cincom Systems v.

Novelis Corp. out of 6th Circuit court, which was interpreting

Ohio law, similar to Florida law although not exact, on the

issue. And in that court, they found that a merger was a

transfer that would in fact violate that provision within a

contract, or actually in that case, it was a nonassignability

provision relating to -- to the transfer of a license for

intellectual property, which is not dissimilar to our case.

But in Florida law -- and I have cited a couple of cases in our brief -- a merger in Florida is seen -- and I'd like to quote -- "is like the uniting of two or more rivers; neither stream is annihilated but all continue in existence."

There is law that says if you want to specifically exclude

1 mergers, you can state that. You can say even a merger is a 2 violation of this provision. 3 They did not do that here. 4 But going just beyond that -- and again that's Florida 5 That's Celotex Corp. v. Pickett, 490 So.2d 35 --6 THE COURT: I'm sorry. Did you gentleman give my 7 court reporter the case cites? I think, if you look at the notice on the tables, it tells you if you are going to cite any 8 case law, to please give those --9 10 MR. ANNESSER: I apologize, Your Honor, I will retract 11 that. It is within the brief, and so I will retract the case citation. 12 In essence --13 THE COURT: I'm sorry. I don't understand that. MR. ANNESSER: I did not provide it to the court 14 15 reporter, and the case that I am citing to is within the brief. 16 THE COURT: I know. Do you want me to spell them out 17 as you say them? Or how do you want her to get the spellings? 18 MR. ANNESSER: Your Honor, I don't believe she even 19 needs to have it. I can argue without the direct citation 20 because I believe it is set forth adequately within our brief. 21 THE COURT: All right. 22 MR. ANNESSER: And so this is directly from the 23 argument in the brief. 24 The issue in Florida is there is no extinguishment. 25 The independent existence may cease, but it still exists as

part of a larger corporation, a merged corporation, and therefore there is no transfer. In fact, the model business code, which is also cited in the brief, likewise provides that a merger is not a transfer and it is not an assignment.

Florida's law -- Florida model business corporation act is based upon the model business code, adopted almost word for word with a very minor change which we don't believe affects the commentary at all.

But looking further beyond the competing law as to whether a merger is, in fact, a transfer in assignment, we'd have to ask ourselves in this particular case, unlike in the cases cited by defendants, we have a merger of the licensor, not the licensee. So what they're advocating is is that because the licensor merged, they can no longer enforce a contract that they were a party to. The company that merged into Leonardo Florida can no longer enforce that contract, yet at the same time maintaining the position that they can sue Leonardo Florida -- and they have -- under the same contract. It is an inequitable result that does not have any support in logic.

Moreover, the assignment in this particular case occurred after all of the obligations under the contract by Leonardo New Hampshire or Leonardo Florida had been completed. And as cited in the brief, Florida law provides that you can assign a claim at any time irrespective of an antiassignment or

antitransfer provision within a contract. So if a claim arises, money is owed or otherwise, you can assign that claim. In this case, our merger, even if it were seen as a transfer or an assignment, occurred after the completion of all of the obligations of the contract, and therefore would be permissible.

Lastly, under this portion of the argument on standing, the defendants are required to accept all of the allegations in the complaint as true. We have alleged that we have standing and that we have the -- that we have merged into the company and that we are the party at interest. By denying that, they have, in essence, created a denial as opposed to an affirmative defense, which has to accept as true and then offer a justification, excuse or avoidance of the claims in the complaint.

Now, the second aspect to the standing argument that they raise is that Dr. Rossi is not the beneficiary of the provision that we claimed a breach of. For instance, the contract was entered into by Dr. Rossi and Leonardo

Corporation. The payment, which we claim has not been made, of \$89 million was to be directed to Leonardo Corporation. On that ground alone, defendants argue and assert as a defense that we therefore don't have standing on behalf of Dr. Rossi to bring our claim.

The 11th Circuit has held that -- and this is within

our brief, Your Honor -- the 11th Circuit has held that a party to a contract for the benefit of another party is the party in interest and is not divested of standing as a result of the benefit being -- I'm sorry -- being inferred upon another party.

THE COURT: Why are you making an issue out of this defense, because quite frankly if it remains as an affirmative defense, the burden is on the defendants to prove it at trial.

MR. ANNESSER: Your Honor, I agree.

THE COURT: Why do you care?

MR. ANNESSER: I agree, and that actually could be said of a number of these defenses. This is a very complicated case. It's going to be complicated going along. And I think it's in the Court's best interests as well as my client's best interests --

THE COURT: Well, courts never like motions to strike affirmative defenses. I don't know if you knew, but the case law is pretty plain about that aspect of it. They're generally disfavored. But this is one where there's no downside to you. Let them say you have no standing, let them prove it, right?

MR. ANNESSER: Your Honor, yes, that is the alternative, although it is yet another issue that must be addressed as the case proceeds.

THE COURT: How? How? At trial, it would be the defendant's burden to get before that jury and say you have no

standing and you have no claim against them. It would be their burden of proof.

MR. ANNESSER: Yes, Your Honor. And, of course, if

they come up with any type of proof whatsoever, whether we believe it's adequate or not, we do have to respond to that. And that again clouds the issue. And frankly, Your Honor, we believe a number of the defenses and number of the statements, which we'll get to further in this motion to strike, have been inserted just to cloud the issue in this case. It is a fairly basic case at the heart, but with the affirmative defenses, it clouds the issues that are truly at the matter of the dispute as opposed to peripheral.

THE COURT: I mean, you have no concern that you have standing. You know you do, right?

MR. ANNESSER: Yes, Your Honor. Yes, Your Honor, we --

THE COURT: Much ado about nothing on this one, wouldn't you say?

MR. ANNESSER: Your Honor, again, it's do we deal it with now? Pay me now or pay me later. And we just -- it's been my experience that it's easier to get these things when there is no basis as a matter of law, for the defense to clear them out early, and so we can limit the labors that are required later.

THE COURT: All right.

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Mr. Pace, do you want to have this burden of showing
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 2
     these plaintiffs don't have standing?
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              MR. PACE: Certainly.
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              THE COURT: And what is the law that applies to this
 5
    case?
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              MR. PACE: Florida.
 7
              THE COURT: Florida.
                         This is going to end up being Florida law.
 8
              MR. PACE:
     I mean, there is some gimmicks here when it comes to it's a New
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10
    Hampshire corporation into a Florida corporation.
11
              But our point is -- and some of these things
12
    admittedly blend between affirmative defense and negating,
13
    but --
              THE COURT: Well, let's be clear, do you want to
14
15
    simply negate or do you want to take the burden on?
16
              MR. PACE: We would have the burden on standing,
17
    Your Honor. I'm not trying to waiver on that. There's some
    other ones that will come --
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19
                          I know, and I saw that. And you asked me
              THE COURT:
20
    to treat them as denials or what have and leave them there, but
     it really changes your burden of proof.
21
22
              MR. PACE: I agree, Your Honor. And again when we get
23
    to the next one and talk about failure to state a claim --
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              THE COURT: Well, that's not an affirmative defense.
25
              MR. PACE: Right. It's a -- averment is a denial --
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THE COURT: I think I already addressed that, didn't I, on the 12(b)(6) motion?

MR. PACE: You did. You did. We've raised it. We've preserved it. We are not asking the Court to rule on a motion to dismiss again. But let me just, if I can, just on this one on standing, because I do want to explain our basis for it, even though I agree, I believe in the posture we are in, it's really not necessarily the occasion for the Court to, you know, rule on the ultimate merits.

But the point is the case law is -- we feel the case law is clear that when you've got a contract that bars any assignment of transfer, including involuntarily and including by operation of law of this contract, that you can't just assign it to another -- you can't just transfer it to another corporation. You can't move corporations. And they can say all they want about licensor and licensee.

But if I can give you one concrete example of why
there's an issue here, my client -- one of my clients -- two of
my clients actually, but let's just say one of them, has the
control over any distribution or any disclosure of certain
information, certain intellectual property. One thing they
can't prevent is they can't prevent the Leonardo from
disclosing it amongst itself. Right? In other words, they can
say, Leonardo, you can't disclose it to any outsider, but you
can keep internally. Leonardo merges into IBM. Under their

theory, well, that's fine. IBM now can use all that information internally. Well, no, wait a second. We have a contract provision that says, little company Leonardo, you can't tell this information to anybody else. You know, and now all of a sudden you can merge into somebody else.

So we are in the same situation as the case that I've cited. I agree, in the case I cited one is a licensor versus a licensee. But they talk about the model business code.

Florida, there's a provision in the model code that refers to contracts. Florida cut that out. When he says it's a minor change, that's a huge change. Under the Model Business

Corporation Act, it says contracts are vested in the new company without any impairment. Florida says, we don't want that language. They consciously dropped it. They had to consciously drop it, and they just are referring to transfer of title.

So I think the law is actually relatively clear on this, but again I also don't know if this is necessarily the occasion that the Court has to tackle the issue. Their reference to obligations under the contract, just to be clear, the contract is continuing. They have continuing obligation of the contract. We disagree about that. They think it's over. We don't. But, you know, it's not so clear that the obligations under the contract are not continuing. There is a license in perpetuity -- well, maybe not in -- yeah, to some --

in some parts in perpetuity; in other parts for the duration of a patent, assuming we made all the payments. We feel we made all the payments. They feel we didn't make all the payments. But that's a dispute the Court will handle.

enforcement -- and we have cited our support for the issue -the payment, they don't dispute it, the payment was to be made
to Leonardo Corporation. That somebody is the shareholder of
Leonard Corporation or the sole owner of Leonardo Corporation
doesn't let them sue on behalf of Leonard Corporation. That
there are other obligations in the contract that may flow to
Rossi does not mean that he gets to enforce obligations that
flow to Leonardo. That's the case we cited for the Court for
the proposition that -- and mainly this does not arise often -but there are situations where there are multiparty contracts,
and if there is an obligation flowing to one particular party,
that party's the one who's supposed to enforce that. That's
the example that we've provided to the Court.

So do I feel on the standing issues we have the burden? We do have the burden. I would imagine these would never make it to trial because they are probably going to be decided on summary judgment one way or the other.

THE COURT: Unless the facts are disputed.

MR. PACE: Unless the facts are in dispute. And then there'll be -- you know, then there'll end up being issues for

1 trial. 2 THE COURT: Right. 3 MR. PACE: But we don't, you know -- that's -- we 4 don't have a concern about that. Or we recognize that. Maybe that's a better way of phrasing it. 5 6 THE COURT: It's certainly. I mean the standard here 7 is under Rule 12(f): Is the defense impertinent, scandalous, immaterial, redundant? 8 9 I don't see that it meets those descriptions on this 10 one affirmative defense, Mr. Annesser. 11 So let's move on to the next. 12 MR. ANNESSER: Your Honor, the second affirmative 13 defense which, I believe, the defendants have admitted is not a 14 proper affirmative defense, yet they ask the Court to treat it 15 as a denial, certainly we acknowledge that that is the proper 16 procedure where an affirmative defense fails to actually state an affirmative defense, it may be treated as a denial. 17 18 But in this particular case with this defense, I am 19 not quite sure how it could be treated as a denial --20 THE COURT: Failure to state a claim? 21 MR. ANNESSER: Yes, Your Honor. 22 THE COURT: Let me direct my question to Mr. Pace, if 23 I could. I have already found the plaintiffs stated a claim, 24 so I would agree that this is redundant, immaterial, and 25 impertinent.

MR. PACE: Well, Your Honor, the case law that 1 2 addresses it. 3 THE COURT: Um-hmm. 4 MR. PACE: It generally says the response, if it is 5 really a negative averment, is not to strike it but just to 6 treat it as a negative averment. 7 THE COURT: But I will be striking some other ones, so let's clean up your answer and let's remove that. 8 9 MR. PACE: Again, as long as -- from my standpoint, as 10 long as I haven't waived any rights to this position --11 THE COURT: I don't know how you waive it when you 12 filed a 12(b)(6) motion. 13 MR. PACE: Your Honor, I'm not necessarily 14 disagreeing, but --15 THE COURT: Okay. So that one is stricken. Next. 16 MR. ANNESSER: Thank you, Your Honor. The third affirmative defense, which is actually a 17 18 multiple-issue defense, they raise estoppel, waiver, laches and 19 I quote, other applicable equitable defenses without any 20 description as to what those defenses are. 21 Specifically, Florida law provides that on equitable 22 defenses such as waiver and estoppel and laches, to state the 23 defense, the party must state the elements of the defense and 24 allege facts to support those elements. They have failed to do 25 so, particularly in relation to other applicable equitable

defenses, which they fail to even identify. That doesn't even reach the standard of bare-bones pleading requirement much less adequate pleadings as required under the rules.

THE COURT: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Pace.

MR. PACE: Your Honor, I think this is quite to the contrary. We have pled -- if you look at these affirmative defenses, certainly the context in which I know historically people have thought of these are one-line affirmative defenses. They start, Your Honor, if you look at our answer on Page 21, this one that they are addressing right now is they are on Page 22. There is an explanation as to each -- the basis for each of the affirmative defenses. This is then a citation to portions of the counterclaims and third-party claims that provide additional context.

Given that the only issue here and the standard here is fair notice, we believe that this is certainly more than fair notice. In fact, I -- I have never seen an answer in affirmative defenses -- and Your Honor may very well have and will tell me to the contrary -- but that have this kind of detail. And --

THE COURT: I would agree -- I would agree, though, with the plaintiff. You can't just say, And other applicable and equitable doctrines. I don't -- I can only wonder what they might be, as would plaintiffs. So I would agree to

striking that part of your third defense.

MR. PACE: That's fine, Your Honor, as long as we have the estoppel, waiver, and laches, and then in all honesty, that is part of the "and other inequitable defenses" tends to be one of those things where you find out as discovery goes on, so we would have to come back to Your Honor and say we've discovered a new affirmative defense that we didn't have a basis originally to provide the detail on so --

THE COURT: And that we couldn't raise before the deadline for amending pleadings because we were really diligent in pursuing this in discovery and, nonetheless, did not discover it.

MR. PACE: I agree, Your Honor.

THE COURT: All right. So that part is stricken, though.

MR. PACE: So just that part is under equitable.

THE COURT: Correct. Yes. Next.

MR. ANNESSER: Okay. Your Honor, with respect to -and I believe we can address two of them together -- the fourth
and sixth affirmative defenses, which are for unclean hands and
unlawful actions, they're all predicated upon allegations
within the counterclaim and reference to the counterclaim that
allege fraud, fraud in the -- I'm sorry -- yeah, fraud in the
inducement as to the term sheet and other fraudulent actions on
behalf of Dr. Rossi, the Leonardo Corporation, the USQL,

Mr. Fabio Penon, and the other third-party defendants. In fact, with respect to those allegations, I believe they cite to the entirety of their second amended answers and affirmative defenses. This is a shotgun pleading that says, okay, you find within these allegations which ones may apply.

But moreover, because they are based on fraud, this

Court has held that where the allegations on a FDUTPA claim are
based on allegations of fraudulent acts, that it has to meet
the Rule 9 pleading requirements, the heightened standard of
pleading under Rule 9, as opposed to under Rule 8.

Specifically, in this case, they allege that there was a
scheme -- and that is the word that they use -- among the
third-party defendants and the plaintiffs to defraud them under
the license agreement and the term sheet. Those allegations of
fraud, which are addressed in our motion to dismiss in more
detail, we feel are -- well, they lack the specificity required
under 9(b). And so by simply stating "we rely on the entire
second amended affirmative answer, affirmative defenses, and
counterclaims and third-party claims," likewise this defense
lacks the requisite specificity required under Rule 9.

THE COURT: Thank you.

Mr. Pace.

MR. PACE: Thank you, Your Honor. I think he grouped the fourth and the sixth?

THE COURT: 4 and 6, correct.

MR. PACE: Because the sixth affirmative defense only refers to nine paragraphs, very specific. The fourth affirmative defense refers to some particular paragraphs in the counterclaim and third-party claim. Your Honor, there is very detailed counterclaims and third-party claims here. They're very clear. They talk about very specific actions. They cite e-mail documents, they cite memos, they give particular dates, they give particular people who were involved. That we cite multiple paragraphs to give context to it. This is not one of those things that we are abstractly saying go off to the library and try to find something. It is within the very same document.

Your Honor's aware -- I mean, this is a case that's only three or four months old from Your Honor recognizing that 9(b) does not apply to FDUTPA claims and that FDUTPA claims can involve not just fraud, but deception, manipulation, unfair practices. And you can use the word scheme in that context, as we, I think, appropriately have. It is a very involved scheme. It takes a number of paragraphs to plead.

I think Mr. Annesser is confusing what's a shotgun pleading with a detailed pleading. A shotgun pleading is I'm going to plead a few facts, and then out of that, I'm going to say there's RICO, antitrust, securities, ERISA violations, etc. That's a shotgun pleading.

When you have a pleading that has a lot of detail and

talks about particular meetings and quotes from e-mails and references to context of those meetings and gives -- you know, brings together all the multiple parties and multiple locations, that is not a shotgun pleading. That's a detailed pleading. That's what we have here.

Now, could we literally reprint those paragraphs in the affirmative defenses? I guess in theory we could. I just -- that seems to me to be a little bit ridiculous. And in all fairness, Your Honor, in the terms of structuring this, I'll just be honest, you know, we put it -- we kind of drafted the counterclaims and third-party claims first and then worked on the affirmative defenses and so didn't seem to make a whole lot of sense. They raised originally the issue of -- because I have to admit in our first version of this, they were the one-sentence affirmative defenses; I'll acknowledge that. And they said, you know, that's not good enough. And I went -- we went back, and we changed them all. And this is an example of changing them.

THE COURT: I agree that these are good enough, and if and when on the motion to dismiss I require more particularized pleading, then it would also similarly address any concerns as to these affirmative defenses. But I see no problem with directing the plaintiffs to those particular paragraphs that flesh out the factual bases for these defenses. This is -- this is certainly, in my mind, satisfying Iqbal and Twombly.

Otherwise, as Mr. Pace said, he is going to have to basically repeat and regurgitate everything that he's incorporating by reference, so that the motion to strike these two is denied.

I think you also wanted to address the seventh fraudulent representation, Mr. Annesser?

MR. ANNESSER: Yes, Your Honor. Certainly, there can be no argument whatsoever as to whether fraudulent misrepresentation falls under the heightened pleading requirements. In this particular case they have failed yet again to reach those heightened pleading requirements in the allegations.

Under Florida law, to reach that -- Your Honor, I'm sorry -- under the federal rules, to reach that heightened pleading requirement, they have to have specific alleged fraudulent statements, specifically state who made those statements, they have to state the individuals -- I'm sorry -- what the individual or entity obtained as a consequence of the fraud. That's not set forth either in the counterclaims and third-party claims or within this particular affirmative defense.

And to the extent that they relate to the entirety of the counterclaim, again there is case law in Florida that makes it very clear you can't leave a party -- it is not proper notice to a party to leave them guessing as to which allegations pertain to that defense and which ones don't.

There are allegations in the counterclaim of standing, of venue, etc., and identifying the parties. Certainly, those don't give rise to a claim for fraudulent misrepresentation.

so we are entitled to know more specifically what they are relying on and the individual statements that they are relying upon. And that's not set forth clearly. There is admittedly in the counterclaim, third-party claim, there is one e-mail which is attributed to Dr. Rossi, but everything else is identified as statements made by Dr. Rossi, Leonardo, USQL, Henry Johnson, J.M., etc., grouped together as one. And certainly, they're not talking in unison or singing as a choir. We are entitled generally to know individually what statements were made by each defendant in that particular claim and when those statements were made and the other requisite details required under Rule 9.

THE COURT: Thank you.

I will hear from defense.

MR. PACE: It's ironic for him to raise this, only because the complaint provides, quote, language that they say was by defendants, and obviously defendants being corporations and individuals could never have spoken at the same time. So they're literally applying a different standard than when he advocated to this Court on the motion to dismiss.

And, in fact, even if the correct standard were applied, we have satisfied it, even though their complaint did

not, because we do identify. We have e-mail from Dr. Rossi.

We will have a meeting where it was -- I am saying Dr. Rossi,

Mr. Rossi. We'll have a meeting where he will be in attendance
with one other person -- we've pled it with another defendant
here or -- I'm sorry -- a third-party defendant -- and we talk
about what the substance is that occurred at that meeting. We
have got e-mails from him that provide the substance of what
those e-mails are. I mean, look, it is not that hard to go
through in our counterclaims and third-party claims and find
the statements that are said to be false or fraudulent, because
there's a good indicator. They use the word "false" or
"fraudulent." They are in here.

Now, contextually, I still think it's appropriate,

I'll give, if I can, just as an example, there is a -- there

are allegations in the complaint about a company that was

created in Florida so that -- to provide an excuse for them to

move down -- for Mr. Rossi and Leonardo to move down here to

Florida and bring a plant, a piece of equipment that we bought

from them down here to operate in Florida and that the company

was not -- they -- it was pitched to us as a company that was

going to have a real manufacturing process, and, in fact, that

didn't occur.

Contextually, you should have all of that to understand when we cite in Paragraph 71, here is a long e-mail from Mr. Rossi that makes a number of statements, and then in

Paragraphs 72 and 73, we say they are false. I don't think there is any problem with including the prior paragraphs that say here is the setup for this whole -- you know, for these -- this whole series of communications. So that's pretty detailed and again much more detailed than the complaint ended up being, which said defendants say quote/unquote and it is impossible for five different parties to have said the exact same things in unison, which is literally what he just argued, as opposed to what we've pled, which actually does have a breakdown.

MR. ANNESSER: Your Honor, if I may just briefly respond. One of the confusions comes -- and they are claiming fraudulent misrepresentation, particularly in relation to the term sheet. To the extent they are claiming that Leonardo Corporation New Hampshire is the proper party as opposed to Leonardo Corporation Florida, that in itself requires a distinguishment as to which one they are alleging. If they are going to continue on the path and say that we don't have rights under the contract and that it was Leonardo Corporation New Hampshire the entire time and that that should be separate and distinct from us, then they need to state that because they are currently suing Leonardo Corporation Florida for a term sheet that they are claiming was entered into by Leonardo Corporation New Hampshire. So we are entitled to clarification at the bare minimum as to who the statements were made by.

And the plaintiffs acknowledge the one e-mail that

does attribute to Dr. Rossi. So as to Dr. Rossi, I do believe the defense could be adequately pled. But as to Leonardo, it is not because it fails to identify even a single instance where the Leonardo Corporation Florida made a statement by itself, this is what the statement was, this is when it was made, etc. Again, the only example of an individual allegation that has been made is that e-mail that we have referenced.

THE COURT: The motion to strike is granted in part, denied in part. Please amend it so that you are clear as to the actual fraudulent misrepresentation by the corporate entity.

All right? Next.

MR. PACE: Your Honor, may I ask just one thing on that, though, because -- just so we're clear -- and I can add the allegation if it's needed in here, but Mr. Rossi owns both Leonardo Corporation New Hampshire and Leonardo Corporation of Florida. To the extent he's dealing on behalf of Leonardo, everything he does is on behalf of every corporation. I mean, I don't know how there's necessarily -- he's the one who's created the confusion. He created two companies called Leonardo Corporation, one in New Hampshire and one in Florida.

THE COURT: Right.

MR. PACE: So everything that's said on behalf of
Leonard Corporation, he was talking about a contract Leonardo
Corporation was entering. It's on behalf of Leonardo. They

have created the confusion.

THE COURT: Well, there are two Leonardos, though, so you need to clarify.

MR. PACE: You want me just to provide that?

THE COURT: You need to clarify. You need to amend to clarify that.

MR. PACE: Then we will provide that clarification.

THE COURT: Okay. Next.

MR. ANNESSER: Your Honor, as to the ninth affirmative defense, merger, integration and ratification, in essence, the defense alleges that -- and the heart of this defense is that, because we entered into the license agreement and the first amendment thereto, then any claim for fraudulent inducement is vitiated. By entering into the agreement, we have merged every prior conversation, representation, or otherwise and integrated it into that agreement, and therefore, there could not be a claim for fraudulent inducement.

They have cited to a 5th D.C.A. opinion that just came out recently for the proposition that a merger clause negates a cause of action for fraud or fraudulent inducement. And specifically, with respect to that opinion itself, the court goes on -- had they read the rest of the opinion -- it states, that is an oversimplification and they don't accept it. In fact, they go on to say that such a conclusion would be superficial and in defiance of logic. Clearly, if there were

statements made to induce a party into a contract -- and this

Court as well as all of the Florida courts have held that where

those statements have been made to induce a party into the

contract, that is not vitiated by a merger clause that says we

are merging all prior agreements into this one.

Now, on the other hand, had there been a nonreliance clause, which we do not have in this case -- and that was what the Court, the 5th D.C.A. addressed in the court cited by the defendants, had there been a nonreliance clause saying the parties did not rely on anything outside of this agreement, that would be a different story, but we don't have that here.

THE COURT: Thank you.

Defense.

MR. PACE: First of all, I kind of agree with
Mr. Annesser's implication. I have read the case, and I give
the Court the context for the case in my brief, which is what
the 5th D.C.A. said is we don't like this -- we don't think
this is necessarily the right rule -- I say that in my brief -but this is the only way we can reconcile these two conflicting
Supreme Court -- Florida Supreme Court cases, one that he cites
and one that the court also cites. You know, the court
identified the cases, said here's the rule, we think it is kind
of a weird rule, but this seems to be the rule. So this -this -- Billington is a statement in 2016 of what Florida law
is.

But let me, if I can, just kind of talk about this in a slight bit more detail because I think it merits it. The agreement states it contains the entire agreement of the parties and it supersedes any oral representation. So it's not just a merger. It is kind of a merger -- you know, a merger integration/nonreliance, so it really does kind of cover the gamut here. The parties -- the allegations -- for example, one basis of fraudulent inducement is Cherokee said it was going to guarantee the payment.

Well, there is no guarantee by Cherokee. This is a long agreement. This is a long document. There's related documents to it. In total, there are a bunch of pages. None of them have Cherokee as a party. None of them have Cherokee as a guarantor. That should negate any fraudulent inducement. Otherwise, there is no ability in a written contract to prevent these things. This is one of the reasons you have these provisions.

So now admit -- I admit in this context on a motion to strike an affirmative defense, the Court doesn't need to reach this issue. It can simply say it's at least a defense. But we actually think it goes more than just being a defense. We think it's actually the right position on the law.

So -- but -- and again, that's -- we then make reference to in terms of how this is pled, obviously the affirmative defense clearly pleads here are the contract

provisions, here is how they apply. That's what I am explaining to the Court now.

Our view is and has always been, now, whether you say this is a matter of negating their claim or an affirmative defense, this is an example of one where I would say there is ambiguity. If your -- you can say statements in the contract expressly contradict what you are basing your fraudulent inducement claim on -- maybe that's negative. When you say I am relying on a merger clause, integration clause, nonreliance clause, maybe that becomes an affirmative defense. So there is some ambiguity there, I will concede.

But regardless of which way you go, we think that we prevail on the underlying issue.

THE COURT: I will not strike this defense. I think there is a slim chance of prevailing on it, but that doesn't mean it can't be there and that it's not supported at least by some law as cited by defense counsel.

The next?

MR. ANNESSER: Your Honor, defendants' tenth affirmative defense is speculative damages, and they state no factual support or basis for the damages being speculative. They do raise and they have raised in a motion that we have not provided enough information to allow them to determine whether they're speculative or not, I believe was their argument. At the end of the day, until we specify -- which we have not been

required to do yet -- the specific elements of our damages, I believe it's premature and there is no foundation to allege that our damages are speculative and therefore is improper at this time.

THE COURT: Defense.

MR. PACE: Your Honor, the complaint -- this is directed at their noncontract claims. We are clear that that's what we are talking about. The complaint identifies no damages. The only damages they identify are on the contract claim. The Court recognized that in the motion to dismiss order when we made this as a point, they can't identify any damages, and the Court concluded, you know, that they have not identified any separate damages, but it's possible discovery will reveal separate damages for plaintiffs' fraud claim, and you're allowing them discovery as a consequence. I understand that. But we should be entitled to raise a defense. We can't figure out what their damages could be. They haven't figured them out.

THE COURT: It is not a pleading defect, though. It is not a defect in the pleading. And you can certainly raise it at the appropriate time, a motion in limine, motion for summary judgment, any other way. But that -- this is not proper. Right now, I have given them, as you say, the ability to pursue this. They are going to do it. And if they can't prove up damages, you'll have that discussion at the right

1 time, but it is not to be an affirmative defense. 2 MR. PACE: Your Honor, as long as we haven't waived 3 it --4 THE COURT: You don't. 5 MR. PACE: -- we have no problem with it. We just --6 THE COURT: You never -- you never waive that a party 7 doesn't have sufficient evidence of damages. How would you waive that? 8 9 MR. PACE: Well, actually, Your Honor, it's a little 10 bit trickier, right, because when it comes to speculative 11 damages, it is not that you don't have damages. Think of the 12 new business, because we are dealing a little bit with a new 13 business issue, where the law will say there is limitations on 14 damages a new business can get because it is too speculative. 15 I can tell you what would happen mostly likely with the next 16 McDonald's franchise at a location because I've got all these 17 other McDonald's franchises to test it on. When Chris Pace 18 opens up the Chris Pace Restaurant, who knows? Would you have 19 succeeded? Would you not? And you want to -- I want to claim 20 I would have made \$20 million a year, I would have been prime 21 Somebody else comes along and says, no, you would have 22 been a terrible restaurant. So there is limits on speculative 23 damages that is different than no damages. 24 THE COURT: Right. That's a motion for partial 25 summary judgment.

MR. PACE: Again, 7, as long as we are not waiving that --

THE COURT: You are not.

MR. PACE: -- but that's why I'm saying there's some ambiguity where the burden lies with that. But as long as we are not waiving it, we are perfectly happy to take it out of the document.

THE COURT: You are not. You are not. Next.

MR. ANNESSER: Your Honor, as to the last portion that we are seeking to strike, it's actually a portion of the counterclaim claim, third-party claims that addresses eight paragraphs' worth of what I can only refer to as defamation against my client, claiming he has had tax problems in the past and that he has failed to pay taxes, etc. They have responded by saying, well, it comes back into an antecedent breach argument that they may have with respect to an affirmative defense on our clients.

But it is improper for a number of reasons, one of which is they fail to allege any facts that would be required to prove up even an affirmative defense of antecedent breach, much less the allegations that are contained with the counterclaim, specifically with respect to damages. They are claiming that my client didn't pay taxes. Well, in order for that to be a defense or an independent claim, two things have to happen. One is there has to be damages to them. You cannot

have a breach without damages. And second of all, they have to show that it was a material breach.

Certainly a provision in the contract that says he has to pay all his taxes does not go to the heart of this case or of this license agreement that was entered into by the parties.

A material breach goes to the basis of this license agreement, and it is clear that the basis was the licensing of intellectual property to a company within a certain geographic territory, not whether they pay taxes or don't. Even if the allegations were true, they would not give rise to a defense, because if Dr. Rossi did not pay his taxes, which is denied, but notwithstanding, even if it was true, there is no way that they could be harmed by that.

They had asserted this originally in their first counterclaim and subsequently withdrew it because we pointed out the fact that there was no basis. There is no damages that could affect them, and therefore they don't have a claim. And that equally applies to an affirmative defense. Without damages, they can't say, oh, well, he did something that was against the contract, even though it didn't hurt us and we should be able to get out of it.

THE COURT: Defense.

MR. PACE: To start, Your Honor, they have not challenged and I don't think they can challenge, but they have not challenged the fifth affirmative defense -- he acknowledged

that here -- which is the antecedent breach. So that question of is that a defense or not is not before the Court, doesn't need to be addressed. It is a defense, but in any event, what we have pled is the basis for -- we -- and they are not disputing this, you know, where they -- one part say you don't plead enough, now he is complaining we plead too much. It is an antecedent breach to violate provisions of the contract. We specified those provisions in the contract.

The prior tax problems that Mr. Rossi had is the reason -- is part of the reason for this being material. It is the reason they are being included in there. They were not only included in the license agreement. They were -- they actually -- the parties made them certify it a second time later on before the -- or at the time the \$10 million payment that was made. So it was always an issue because of the concerns that the implications it could have.

You know, this is an agreement where they are buying and licensing certain intellectual property, and there is additional intellectual property that might or could be created on an ongoing basis in the future. So they have a direct interest in it. And again, to me, the materiality is shown by the fact that there are certain provisions in this contract that deal with this issue. They brought it up repeatedly. As we said, there's a factual basis for it, which is the historical issues, which I don't even go into in the complaint.

1 They're far more detailed than we referenced in the 2 counterclaim and third-party claim. We're entitled to be able, at the very least, to assert it as an affirmative defense, and 3 4 we have asserted it in here is an affirmative defense. 5 THE COURT: This defense is not stricken. 6 MR. ANNESSER: Your Honor, we were not -- we were not 7 addressing the defense itself. 8 THE COURT: The actual paragraphs that you are challenging and seeking to strike will not be ordered stricken. 9 10 MR. PACE: Your Honor, can I raise one house -- almost 11 administrative matter. 12 THE COURT: Yes. 13 MR. PACE: There is a pending motion to dismiss by the plaintiffs. It does raise some of the same issues that the 14 15 third-party defendants raised. 16 THE COURT: Yes. 17 MR. PACE: Yesterday the Court struck the third-party defendant motion to dismiss --18 19 THE COURT: Yes. 20 MR. PACE: -- but not the plaintiff motion to dismiss 21 to require one motion, so I'm just a little bit -- I just 22 wanted to make sure we should still be moving forward with 23 responding to the plaintiffs' motion to dismiss and then there 24 is going to be another round of motions to dismiss with the

third-party defendants. Or did you want all that consolidated?

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because they do raise overlapping arguments.

THE COURT: I know that they are. But in terms of my work on my end, as opposed to having six sets of briefs addressing the third-party claims, I wanted to have three. On the plaintiffs' motion, it is going to be those three briefs that we work on.

MR. PACE: Perfect.

THE COURT: And I don't like to have parties incorporate arguments from your other papers, so please don't do that, having me go back and forth and figure out what you are incorporating or adopting from the other parties' arguments.

MR. PACE: Your Honor, from a timing standpoint, because there's one affirmative defense -- you struck the second, the struck certain words in the third and I think the tenth, but there is one where you said we have to provide some additional allegations. May I ask, at least at this juncture, to not have to amend the document quite yet because of the motions to dismiss, if there is going to be -- I would rather not -- I've already --

THE COURT: I agree. I agree.

MR. PACE: -- do it twice. Okay. So I will hold off doing that.

THE COURT: Let's hold off on your amended affirmative defenses until such time as I rule on the plaintiffs' motion to

dismiss.

Does that give you the clarity you are seeking?

MR. PACE: It will, because I actually imagine that

once the Court gets the third-party motions to dismiss, they're

very interrelated, so the rulings will probably be somewhat

similar or --

THE COURT: I am trying to keep this case simple. And you are all going to do your best to complicate it for me, so we're not going to do that, because complicating and papering the file is just going to make it go a lot slower, and we're not going to do that. I apologize to you gentlemen over there for having you do your work over again, but to the extent that we have parties filing -- it might come at summary judgment time as well where you're going to do it together and not in separate submissions, because that really multiplies my work on my end.

MR. PACE: Understood.

THE COURT: Okay. Now let's go back to the schedule, as soon as I am able to open up the docket. Now, the case was filed in April.

MR. PACE: It was.

THE COURT: And you were served shortly thereafter.

MR. PACE: We accepted service, and so we had --

THE COURT: Right. So you had knowledge of this case

from May?

1 MR. PACE: Yes. 2 THE COURT: Right. 3 MR. PACE: Yes. 4 THE COURT: Okay. Since April -- I mean, Your Honor, since it 5 MR. PACE: 6 was filed. I am not going to deny that. 7 THE COURT: All right. So we have the missing defendant needing to be served through The Hague Convention, 8 and I am going to give you one month to do it and get him 9 10 served, failing which, he will be dismissed without prejudice. 11 You can serve him later and sue him later, but it is not going 12 to be him dictating how this case gets resolved. 13 MR. PACE: May I ask this, only because -- remember, 14 this is a third-party defendant, it's not a defendant, so I 15 mean, if you -- from a timing standpoint of the case, it's not, 16 you know, April obviously isn't the relevant touchstone. April 17 was when the plaintiffs filed their complaint. 18 THE COURT: That's a relevant touchstone for you 19 knowing you needed to bring in a third party, and here we are 20 in October still talking about that third party. 21 MR. PACE: But in fairness, Your Honor, we filed a motion to dismiss -- to dismiss the complaint. If the 22 23 complaint had been dismissed, we wouldn't have been suing these 24 other parties.

THE COURT: But you could evaluate the merits of your

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motion to dismiss and say, well, what are the chances? And the
motion to dismiss and the pendency of it doesn't mean you can
sort of sit back and not do anything when you have a scheduling
order in place with deadlines and a trial date.
         MR. PACE: Well, yes, Your Honor, but we didn't have
to answer, and until we answered and filed our claims, we
couldn't serve anything on Penon. I mean, prior to us filing
our counterclaims and third-party claims, we couldn't have
served anything on Penon. What -- I am not sure what we were
supposed to do in April, May, and June as to this person in
Italy. We knew he was in Italy. I don't think we were
required to bring our claims while our motion to dismiss was
pending.
         THE COURT: When did you receive my order on the
motion?
         MR. PACE:
                   Your Honor, as soon as it came down.
                                                         And
I'm -- Your Honor's ruling was in July.
         THE COURT: July 19.
         MR. PACE: July 19.
         THE COURT: July 19.
         MR. PACE: Wow, I got that right.
         THE COURT: It's almost three months later.
                    I agree, Your Honor. I am not trying to
         MR. PACE:
claim -- all I'm asking --
         THE COURT: So you've had the 90 days envisioned by
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our rules for regular service. This is service on an international party. And when I have international parties clouding the issues and clouding our schedule, we can do one of two things and you gentlemen can tell me what you want to do.

I administratively close the case until all of the parties are before the Court and we can pursue a realistic discovery schedule and look at a realistic time table for trial case.

And the case goes away from my end, and I don't sit and have to handle these 12(b)(6) motions and other preliminary matters. We can do that, and you bring this gentleman and make him a part of this case and take six months, take a year to do so. That's generally how long it takes under The Hague, in my experience. Or, as you said, he's a third-party defendant. You can sue him separately and later, once you are obtaining your service under The Hague. So those are your options, because I'm not going to just keep this case sort of hostage to the gentleman in Italy.

MR. PACE: I understand. And I guess my request -- as I understood what the Court was just saying initially and maybe I overreacted to it, but was it -- I thought you were going to enter an order today that within a month, the case was going to be dismissed as to him.

THE COURT: I'm giving you one additional month to serve him. On July 19, you knew at that point, the very latest, you needed to get him served and made a party to this

case. And here we are, as I said, three months later: He is not here, and everyone else is.

So you all speak to each other. If you want to administratively close the case -- I think the plaintiff also wants to subpoen the gentleman and have him deposed. You tell me what your preference is, but it is not going to be piecemeal continuances and tinkering with the scheduling order, which is already in place and was in place before you impleaded him.

MR. PACE: I understand Your Honor's position. As I said -- and we will do everything we can to serve Mr. Penon. We will confer with the other parties.

I am not going to deny that ultimately what's very likely going to happen is that we're going to end up having to carve out the claims against Mr. Penon and do him separately. All I'm saying is I'm asking that the Court not today order or rule that 30 days from now, his claims are gone unless he's appeared before the Court. That's -- and I am sorry if I misunderstood where the Court was going --

THE COURT: Discovery closes February 27. He is not even here. The scheduling order gives you a February 27 deadline on discovery, and this third-party defendant hasn't even been served.

MR. PACE: I understand, Your Honor. The order was set before there was any third-party claims or counterclaims. It was based on the original complaint. I think this is what

Mr. Annesser was saying. The parties have actually all agreed they're going to come to the Court and ask for some additional time in light of there being counterclaims and third-party claims. But -- and if -- it is not a motion before the Court right now. The only other motion out there, I think, is our motion for a protective order, but -- a confidentiality order. But I understand what the Court is saying. And again, we will deal with the Penon issue, and within a month, we will --

THE COURT: The third-party defendants have been a part of this case since August 5th. The order, the scheduling order, was entered July 1st, and it gave you an August 11th deadline to join parties.

MR. PACE: And we did.

THE COURT: And you did. But it doesn't mean you join the parties and serve them six months or a year later, which is what we are looking at under The Hague Convention.

MR. PACE: I agree, Your Honor.

THE COURT: So, indeed, you will have one month to serve this Italian gentleman and make him appear here.

Otherwise, he will be dismissed without prejudice, and you can pursue your claims against him separately on a separate track whenever you get service on him under The Hague Convention.

MR. PACE: I understand -- again, I'm sorry and if I'm being hyper technical, Your Honor just said serve and him appear here.

1 THE COURT: Serve him. 2 MR. PACE: Okay. 3 THE COURT: Give me proof of service. 4 MR. PACE: That he has been served --5 THE COURT: Served under The Hague Convention, which you knew you needed to do when you received my order denying 6 7 your motion to dismiss, and that was back on July 19. 8 MR. PACE: Your Honor, I understand the Court's 9 position. We will move with absolute diligence, and I am 10 certainly not going to deny my experience is similar to the 11 Court's in terms of how long it's going to take, so I know 12 where this very likely will be heading, but we would like to 13 have the month to do our best. THE COURT: Right. And if you all want to agree to 14 15 put this case on the back burner for six months, a year, or 16 longer while you pursue the gentleman under The Hague, you let 17 me know that. MR. PACE: I think we understand the alternatives, 18 19 Your Honor. We appreciate that. 20 THE COURT: All right. And that's for the defense. I don't 21 MR. PACE: 22 believe we had any other issues, Your Honor. 23 THE COURT: Any issues from third-party defendants? MR. NUÑEZ: No, Your Honor. 24 25 MR. ARAN: On the scheduling aspect, I will try to do

1 everything possible, but I respectfully submit, we, as counsel, 2 didn't learn of this until September, and I have got a February 27th discovery deadline. I don't do well --3 4 THE COURT: It sounds like you are going to be getting 5 a continuance because, indeed, you just came into this case in 6 September, notwithstanding the fact that the main parties have 7 known about it since April, but I am looking at probably two additional months beyond that. 8 9 MR. ARAN: That would probably be enough. That would 10 probably be enough. 11 THE COURT: And given that all that has taken place is 12 paper discovery, not like depositions have been taken that you 13 missed out on, I think the third-party defendants can come up 14 to speed fairly quickly. 15 MR. ARAN: Understood. Thank you. 16 THE COURT: Okay. And I would ask that whatever 17 proposed, revised scheduling report you want to submit, to 18 please do that quickly so that we all know the dates that are 19 governing the case. 20 MR. PACE: Well, Your Honor, we will have it to you before the end of next week. 21 22 THE COURT: Okay. Anything else? 23 MR. PACE: That's all, Your Honor. Thank you very 24 much. 25 MR. ANNESSER: Thank you, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Thank you. All right. You all have a good day. MR. PACE: Thank you. (The proceedings concluded at 9:38 a.m.) CERTIFICATE I hereby certify that the foregoing is an accurate transcription of the proceedings in the above-entitled matter. 12/5/16 DATE McCARN, Official United States Court Reporter 400 North Miami Avenue, Twelfth Floor Miami, Florida 33128 (305) 523-5518

\$	51:15	23:24, 25:6	24:7, 24:8, 24:14,	12:25
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