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INTERNATIONAL BAR ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE 2026

A conference presented by the IBA Bar Issues Commission

19th Annual Bar Leaders' Conference

20–21 May 2026, Prague Marriott Hotel, Prague, Czech Republic

TOPICS INCLUDE:

What bars need to know about –

- Addressing the rule of law
- Ethics and international arbitration
- Climate change
- Artificial intelligence: the next level

ROUNDTABLES WILL INCLUDE:

- Bars and gender equality
- Anti-corruption initiatives: what can, are, and should bars be doing?
- Update: measuring the impact of the IBA's bar guidance on business and human rights
- What keeps bar leaders awake at night?

For more information and to book online visit www.ibanet.org/conference-details/CONF2756

Programme

Conference Chair

Steven Richman *American Bar Association, Washington, District of Columbia; Chair, Bar Issues Commission*

Wednesday 20 May

All working sessions will take place in the Bohemia Ballroom

0800 – 1730 Registration

Bohemia foyer, Marriott Hotel

0900 – 0930 Welcome and opening remarks

Monika Novotná *President, Czech Bar Association, Prague*

Steven Richman *American Bar Association, Washington, District of Columbia; Chair, Bar Issues Commission*

Claudio Visco *Lipani Legal & Tax, Milan; IBA President*

0930 – 1100

Addressing the rule of law: what bars need to know

Defending the 'Rule of Law' is one of the primary functions of the organised bar, but not all bars have the resources to address it. Even bars that do have such resources can learn from the experiences of other bars. This plenary will be an interactive session, highlighting the work of the BIC Policy Committee's guide for bars in addressing the rule of law. The BIC has updated its existing guide in concise fashion to provide a checklist and resources for practical approach. The session will focus on audience commentary and interaction for a broader discussion as to particular experiences and suggestions for engagement by bars, so that the project might gain from those insights before being finalised.

Session Co-Chairs

Christina Blacklaws *The Law Society of England and Wales, London; Co-Chair, Bar Issues Commission Policy Committee*

Riccardo Cajola *Cajola & Associati, Milan; Co-Chair, International Commerce and Distribution Committee*

Speakers

Claudia Amore *Camara de Servicios Legales – ANDI, Bogotá; Officer, IBA Bar Issues Commission*

George Artley *Legal Manager, Legal Projects, International Bar Association, London; IBA Professional Wellbeing Commission*

Jonathan Herman *Federation of Law Societies of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario; Officer, IBA Bar Issues Commission*

1100 – 1130 Coffee/tea break

Bohemia foyer

1130 – 1230

Ethics and international arbitration: what bars need to know

International arbitration is a gigantic global operation, both in terms of number of cases and their commercial value. It takes place in institutional and non-institutional settings, involving both lawyers and non-lawyers. In certain cases, such as in Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) cases, lawyers have come in for criticism from the UN and the EU. In other cases, there is a patchwork of ethical obligations, sometimes conflicting. The IBA has taken a central role in promoting ethical guidelines. This panel will look at some of the ethical issues arising, which do not appear to be on the radar of the Bars whose members are participating in international arbitration.

Session Co-Chairs

Jonathan Goldsmith *European & International Legal Services Consultant, Brussels; Co-opted Member, Bar Issues Commission Policy Committee*

Iain Sandford *Iain Sandford Legal & Dispute Resolution Nyon, Switzerland; Chair, BIC International Trade in Legal Services Committee*

Speakers

Petr Bříza *Bříza & Trubač, Prague*

Nadine Debbas *Independent Arbitrator, Beirut*

Dietmar Prager *Debevoise & Plimpton, New York; Co-Chair, IBA Arbitration Committee*

1230 – 1400 Lunch

Bohemia foyer

MOBILE TELEPHONES

Delegates are requested to ensure that mobile telephones and any other portable devices are switched to silent in working sessions.

Wednesday continued

1400 – 1530 Roundtables: Session one

Roundtable Chair

George Artley *Legal Manager, Legal Projects, International Bar Association, London; IBA Professional Wellbeing Commission*

Topic one: Bars and gender equality

Moderators

Alessandra Nascimento S F Mourao *Nascimento e Mourao Advogados, São Paulo; SPPI Council Member*

Tshepo Shabangu *Law Society of South Africa, Pretoria; Vice Chair, IBA Bar Issues Commission*

Tania Wolff *Law Council of Australia, Braddon, Australian Capital Territory*

Topic two: Anti-corruption initiatives: what can, are, and should bars be doing?

Moderators

Sara Carnegie *Director, Legal Projects, International Bar Association, London; Council Member, IBA Diversity & Inclusion Council*

Fiona McLeod AO KC *Victorian Bar Association, Melbourne, Victoria; Officer, Bar Issues Commission*

Topic three: Update – measuring the impact of the IBA's bar guidance on business and human rights

Moderators

Kosuke Oie *LPA Law, Tokyo; Scholarship Officer, IBA Human Rights Law Committee*

Berit Reiss-Andersen *The Norwegian Bar Association, Oslo; Vice Chair, IBA Bar Issues Commission*

Topic four: What keeps bar leaders awake at night?

Moderators

Mark Evans *President, Law Society of England and Wales, Cardiff*

Jonathan Herman *Federation of Law Societies of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario; Officer IBA Bar Issues Commission*

1530 – 1600 Coffee/tea break

Bohemia foyer

1600 – 1730

What bars need to know about climate change

Climate change is no longer an academic discussion limited to a few. Indeed, it has been said 'we are all climate lawyers now'. The session will discuss the work of the BIC Climate Change Working Group (CCWG), including its work supporting lawyer competency and capacity building by developing a climate engagement toolkit for bars and a model curriculum on continuing legal education on climate change and related legal education. During the session, the CCWG convenors will invite contributions from bar leaders and representatives, who will have an opportunity to highlight the work and experience of their associations in supporting member engagement on climate change issues, and helping their members advise on climate change in an informed and competent manner.

Session Co-Chairs

Dominique Hogan-Doran SC *Australian Bar Association, Sydney, New South Wales; Chair, Bar Issues Commission Regulation Committee*

Fiona McLeod AO KC *Victorian Bar Association, Melbourne, Victoria; Officer, Bar Issues Commission*

Speakers

Matthew Baird *College of Law, Sydney, New South Wales*

Ana Chagas *Motta Fernandes Advogados, Sao Paulo; Membership Officer, IBA Water Law Committee*

1800 Conference reception

The Residence of the Mayor of Prague

Mariánské nám 1, Staré Město, 110 00 Prague

All registered delegates are welcome to attend.



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Thursday 21 May

All working sessions will take place in the Bohemia Ballroom

0830 – 1300 **Registration**

0900 – 1030 Roundtables: Session two

Roundtable Chair

George Artley *Legal Manager, Legal Projects, International Bar Association, London; IBA Professional Wellbeing Commission*

Topic one: Bars and gender equality

Moderators

Alessandra Nascimento S F Mourao *Nascimento e Mourao Advogados, São Paulo; SPPI Council Member*

Tshepo Shabangu *Law Society of South Africa, Pretoria; Vice Chair, IBA Bar Issues Commission*

Tania Wolff *Law Council of Australia, Braddon, Australian Capital Territory*

Topic two: Anti-corruption initiatives: what can, are, and should bars be doing?

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Sara Carnegie *Director, Legal Projects, International Bar Association, London; Council Member, IBA Diversity & Inclusion Council*

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Topic four: What keeps bar leaders awake at night?

Moderators

Mark Evans *President, Law Society of England and Wales, Cardiff*

Jonathan Herman *Federation of Law Societies of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario; Officer, IBA Bar Issues Commission*

1030 – 1100 **Coffee/tea break**

Bohemia foyer

1100 – 1230

Artificial intelligence: the next level

Following the publication of the IBA's The Future is Now report on AI, the BIC has continued to focus on ethics and the impact of AI on core values of the profession. The BIC Working Group on AI has developed an extended survey of guidance for lawyers around the world and has focused on synthesising the common denominators of ethics issues. For bars that have not yet addressed such issues, and for those in more advanced stages of engagement on the issue, the programme will highlight best practices and address how bars can develop road maps for development in this area.

Session Chair

Steven Richman *American Bar Association, Washington, District of Columbia; Chair, Bar Issues Commission*

Speakers

Anurag Bana *Senior Project Lawyer, Legal Projects Research Unit, International Bar Association, London*

Louis Degos *President, Ordre des Avocats de Paris, Paris*

Derya Durlu Gürzumar *Kolcuoğlu Demirkan Koçaklı Attorneys at Law, Ankara; Officer, Bar Issues Commission*

Sherry Levin Wallach *JustaNovus, Somers, New York*

1230 – 1300 **Closing remarks**

Steven Richman *American Bar Association, Washington, District of Columbia; Chair, Bar Issues Commission*

1900 **Conference dinner**

Municipal House Café

Náměstí Republiky 1090

110 00 Staré Město, Prague

Like many European capitals, Prague is famous for its historic cafés, long at the heart of the city's cultural and social life. Among them, the Municipal House Café stands out as a true gem. While the golden era of Prague's artistic avant-garde has passed, the spirit of the 1920s still lingers. Municipal House Cafe invites you to unwind in an exquisite Art Nouveau setting, where the stunning historic interiors transport you, if only for a moment, far from the 21st-century bustle.

Price: £124

One place per registered delegate is permitted.

The IBA, its officers and staff accept no responsibility for any views expressed, presentations or materials produced by delegates or speakers at the Conference.

MOBILE TELEPHONES

Delegates are requested to ensure that mobile telephones and any other portable devices are switched to silent in working sessions.

PLEASE NOTE

THE IBA MID-YEAR MEETINGS WILL TAKE PLACE FROM 20–23 MAY 2026 AT THE PRAGUE MARRIOTT HOTEL, PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC.

YOU MUST REGISTER SEPARATELY FOR THE MID-YEAR MEETINGS AND DETAILS ON HOW TO DO SO HAVE BEEN SENT TO THE RELEVANT PARTIES SEPARATELY.

LISTED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE IBA MEMBER ORGANISATIONS WILL BE INVITED TO ATTEND THE FOLLOWING AS PART OF THE MID-YEAR MEETINGS:

Thursday 21 May

BAR EXECUTIVES PROGRAMME – BY INVITATION ONLY

1430 – 1730 TBC **Bar Executives Programme**

*Czech Bar Association
Národní 16, 110 00 Prague*

The Czech Bar is a 15-minute walk from the Marriott Hotel.
Transport will not be provided.

Keynote speaker

Veronika Bílková *Professor of Public International Law, Faculty of Law, Charles University, Prague; Member, Venice Commission, Council of Europe*

This programme is for chief executive officers, bar association executives, international liaison officers and others who are responsible for the day-to-day running of their association and international project work. It is a programme made by our 'Bar Executive Officers' Committee which will go forward to plan its own agenda and future programmes.

Friday 22 May

1400 – 1600 **BIC Bar Leaders' Forum**

An open forum for all IBA member organisation representatives and BIC members.

1900 – 2100 **Reception**

Join us at the National Museum for the Mid-Year Meeting reception hosted by the Czech Bar.

Saturday 23 May

0900 – 1230 **IBA Council meeting**

Sign in from 0830.

MOBILE TELEPHONES

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International Bar Association

the global voice of the legal profession



About the IBA

The International Bar Association (IBA), established in 1947, is the world's leading organisation of international legal practitioners, bar associations, law firms and law societies.

The IBA influences the development of international law reform and shapes the future of the legal profession throughout the world. It has a membership of more than 80,000 individual lawyers and more than 190 bar associations and law societies spanning over 170 countries.

Inspired by the vision of the United Nations, the IBA was founded in the same spirit, just before the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was proclaimed in 1948.

The IBA covers all practice areas and professional interests, providing members with access to leading experts and up-to date information, enabling them to better represent their clients' interests.

Through its various committees, fora, and task forces, the IBA facilitates the exchange of information and views among its members as to laws, practices and professional responsibilities relating to the practice of law around the globe.

Bar Issues Commission – Bar Associations

The Bar Issues Commission (BIC) supports the interests of the IBA's member organisations which consist of bar associations, law societies and similar bodies from around the world. This includes arranging events to discuss issues that affect the legal profession globally; working groups that develop resources and guidelines for bar associations and a Policy Committee advising IBA Council on key IBA resolutions and statements.

For more information please visit the **Bar Issues Commission – Bar Associations home page**.

International Bar Association

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IBA 2026 COPENHAGEN 4-9 OCTOBER



ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL BAR ASSOCIATION

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BELLA CENTER, COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

The 2026 IBA Annual Conference will take place in Copenhagen, Denmark. As a gateway to Scandinavia and a thriving hub for start-ups in Europe, the entrepreneurial culture in Denmark is booming in a range of sectors, including IT, life sciences, and cleantech and clean energy.

With this emphasis on innovation, the city has a robust and stable economy – making it an attractive place for investment. As a leader in sustainability and green initiatives, Copenhagen consistently ranks top on various sustainability indexes, such as the Global Green Economy Index.

Copenhagen is also home to a number of prominent global companies in a diverse range of industries including Carlsberg Group, AP Moller-Maersk, Novo Nordisk, Danish Crown, Vestas Wind Systems and, of course, Lego.

There are many historical sites to explore, including the Little Mermaid, Rosenborg Castle, Christiansborg Palace and Nyhavn waterfront, as well as the famous Tivoli Gardens amusement park, Designmuseum Danmark and the National Museum of Denmark (Nationalmuseet). Or take a boat tour of the city's beautiful waterways.

Experience Copenhagen's world-class dining and cosy café culture. The culinary scene is world-class. A core Danish concept is *hygge*, which means creating a warm atmosphere and enjoying life's simple pleasures with good people. This ethos enriches the city's vibrant culture and welcoming ambiance.

As a centre of sustainability, innovation and rich culture, Copenhagen promises to be an ideal host city, offering a memorable location for the 2026 IBA Annual Conference.

WHAT WILL IBA 2026 OFFER YOU?



Access 5,000+ attendees representing over 2,700 law firms, corporations, governments and regulators from more than 130 jurisdictions



Save time and money by meeting all your legal contacts under one roof



Opportunities to win more work and referrals at the world's best networking and business development event for lawyers and law firms



Expand your professional network and meet legal professionals and practitioners from around the world



Hear from leading international figures, government officials, general counsel and experts from across all practice areas and continents



Participate in sessions that offer practical strategies and tools to apply directly to your practice



VISIT: WWW.IBANET.ORG/COPENHAGEN2026

To receive details of all exhibiting and sponsorship opportunities for the IBA Annual Conference in Copenhagen, email andrew.webster-dunn@int-bar.org