

Mexican Bars welcome BIC



The Asociación Nacional de Abogados de Empresa (ANADE) is the Mexican Bar association that hosts in-house and private practice lawyers whose professional practice is focused on companies and corporations.

Our vision is to offer our members high-quality academic events, which are organised by our specialised working committees across all legal areas. We generate value in society by seeking the free and ethical practice of our profession, defending the rule of law and encouraging our members to participate in pro bono activities. ANADE balances institutionality with networking and social activities, which generates an excellent environment.

For us, it is a great honour to have BIC members from all around the world attending the IBA Annual Conference in Mexico City. Thank you and see you in September!

Nuhad Ponce Kuri

President, Asociación Nacional de Abogados de Empresa



Mexico warmly welcomes you to the IBA Annual Conference 2024, which will take place from 15 September in our nation's capital.

As President of the Mexican Bar Association, I would like to welcome all members of the IBA, whether individuals or members of Bar associations around the world. I hope you enjoy participating in the conference and delving into its exhaustive academic programme while experiencing the beauty and culture of Mexico.

The Mexican Bar Association was founded over 100 years ago with 40 Study and Professional Practice Commissions and 27 Chapters throughout Mexico. Undoubtedly, we have become the national legal conscience.

Therefore, it is with great pride for us that, for the first time in the history of the IBA, its Annual Conference will take place in Mexico during our Independence Day celebrations.

Víctor Olea

President, Mexican Bar Association

Ken MurphyChair, IBA Bar Issues
Commission

Heads down or speak up – what should Bars do during national elections?



From left to right:
Ian Jeffery, Deborah Enix-Ross,
Ken Murphy, Anne Ramberg
and Hung Ou Yang.

No one was scrolling on their phone. Or their tablet. Or their laptop.

It was the biggest attendance ever at a BIC Bar Leaders' Conference and everyone in the room was giving the discussion their full attention. The topic was a tricky one, posing difficult questions and choices. But it was relevant. Every Bar leader must try to get the balance right. Right for their organisation, in their country, in their time.

The importance of the profession's voice being heard on certain issues is high but so is the risk, particularly at election time. And the ground is shifting underneath the feet of all of us, as politics becomes more polarised and social media more intolerant.

The discussion's chair, Ken Murphy, described the problem. Crucial decisions are being made in this 'global year of elections'. Human rights, the rule of law and democracy itself are at risk. How can the independent voice, expertise and value system of the legal profession play an appropriate role, in the public interest, at any time, but particularly at election time?

Anne Ramberg, Co-Chair of the IBA's Human Rights Institute, reported that in her experience as Secretary General of the Swedish Bar Association for 20 years, a Bar can achieve a respected position in society by speaking up regularly and actively participating in public debate, even at election time.

She gave a list of examples of the techniques she had employed successfully for doing so, with a particular emphasis on her Bar providing expert input to government commissions proposing new

legislation, as well as frequently writing articles in newspapers and contributing on social media. The Bar needs to be in very close contact with the government, in her experience. But it also needs to be, constantly and crucially, 'educating' the Bar's members on the issues.

Hung Ou Yang of the Taipei Bar Association outlined to the audience the approach that his Bar had taken in the Taiwan general election of January 2024 – an election of great importance that had set a strategic direction for the future of his country. His Bar had invited speakers from differing sides to the Bar's premises to debate publicly the great issues of the election from a legal perspective.

The Bar has to be prepared to speak up publicly, he insisted, to support the rule of law and democracy.

Deborah Enix-Ross, Immediate Past President of the American Bar Association (ABA), openly acknowledged the difficulty of leading her organisation, perhaps any organisation, in an election year in a nation as politically polarised as hers is at present. Even issues that in the past might have been seen as non-partisan matters of public interest, such as educating the public on voting rights, were now alleged by many as politically partisan.

The ABA has historically been as progressive on social issues in the US. It is a voluntary membership Bar, which, she agreed with Anne Ramberg, may make it easier to adopt policy positions to which some members – often those with more conservative views – might object.

The previous year, after a lengthy and at times fractious debate, the ABA had democratically adopted a policy position on the controversial topic of gun control. As a result, she acknowledged, the ABA had lost some members. However, a Bar could not stay silent on important public interest issues such as this one, she believed.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Law Society of England and Wales, Ian Jeffery, described his organisation's carefully calibrated approach to public pronouncements depending on where the time happened to be in the electoral cycle. Between elections, an 'anything goes' approach could be taken and the wide array of techniques that the Law Society uses to influence public policy, and those who make it, can be deployed. It will often be critical of government policy on politically controversial legal issues such as the proposal to send political asylum seekers, who had arrived illegally in the UK, to Rwanda.

A particularly important time in the cycle is when political parties are preparing their election manifestos. The Law Society prepares and publishes a 'manifesto' of its own, making its case on issues such as the need to increase investment on legal aid and in the justice system in general.

Once a general election is called, however, the Society tends to avoid making public statements on new issues or, by and large, any public statements at all. Indeed, the level of 'noise' during elections makes it particularly difficult to cut through and obtain coverage in any case.

When opened to the floor, numerous members of the BIC audience in Bucharest shared valuable experiences and insights of their own on these issues.

There was a consensus, it appeared, that there is an expectation, indeed an obligation, in the modern world for Bars to speak up, even at election time. 'Heads down' is no longer an option these days.

Of course, the topics on which a Bar 'speaks up' must be within the profession's area of expertise as well as being focused on the public interest. They must be appropriate issues for comment, broadly relating to matters of law and the administration of justice, to human rights and to the rule of law.

The risk of the Bar being accused of 'political partisanship' is always real and dangerous. But it can be minimised by your Bar having a long and honourable record, during and between previous elections, as an independent, fair-minded and unbiased commentator on such matters.

Some of your members may not like it, but their numbers should remain relatively small if you work hard to keep your membership well-briefed on what you are doing and why.

So don't be afraid. Speak up whenever necessary, even at national election time – although naturally even greater care and skill than usual is required from Bars when political tensions are at their peak.

But it's a tightrope that we can walk successfully, if we are careful.

Steven Richman

Vice-Chair, IBA Bar Issues Commission

Artificial intelligence and professional ethics: old wine in new bottles?



From left to right: Harvey Cohen, Riccardo Cajola, Dominique Hogan-Doran, Hanim Hamzah, Derya Durlu Gurzumar, Julie Couturier and Steven Richman.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is currently the most discussed and least understood technology that has changed society in the same way that the telephone, television and computers changed the world in their respective times. The legal profession has been affected in multiple ways, ranging from corporate due diligence practice

to contract drafting to the writing of legal briefs. Beyond ethical issues, the nature of the practice of law is undergoing significant change.

At the BIC session on this in Bucharest at the Mid-Year Meeting in May 2024, a panel representing multiple jurisdictions discussed these topics. The panel included: Steven

Richman, BIC Senior Vice Chair (US); Riccardo Cajola, BIC Officer and Senior Vice Chair of the IBA International Commerce and Distribution Committee (Italy); Harvey Cohen, LPD Council Member (US); Julie Couturier, Chairperson, Conseil National des Barreaux (France); Derya Durlu Gurzumer, Chair, Artificial Intelligence Working Group, IBA Alternative and New Law Business Structures Committee (Turkey); Hanim Hamzah, SPPI Council Member (Singapore); and Dominique Hogan-Doran SC, Vice Chair, BIC Regulation Committee (Australia).

As part of the IBA Presidential Task Force on artificial intelligence and technology, the BIC was tasked with reviewing the impact of AI on regulatory and ethical rules regarding lawyers. Several jurisdictions have issued guidelines and best practice commentaries relating to the professional conduct of lawyers. The panel focused on four core questions:

Does AI really change the ethical rules or is it just ‘old wine in new bottles’? What are your jurisdictions doing in terms of rules of professional conduct? Or best practices?

How much competence should we require from lawyers in terms of AI? Jurisdictions are starting to develop competency requirements for technology, but is AI at an entirely different level?

The BIC is looking at the deontological issues. What about the practical side of managing it? What are some of the law firm management issues?

What about cross-border concerns – can a ‘one size fits all’ approach work across different systems and cultures? What can be done to establish uniformity and predictability but still recognise unique systems?

The panel turned the title on its head, considering whether instead of old wine in new bottles, the issue is really new wine (this relatively recent technology) essentially being contained in old bottles. As such, the panel noted the commonality of many of the best practices in terms of professional ethics being out by Bars. For example, Australia has a general governmental policy framework addressing ethical issues separate from legal ethics in the context of rules of professional practice. The New South Wales Bar Association issued a guidance in 2023 that focused on ‘generative pretrained transformers’ (GPT) and identifies various barrister rules that focus on: independence and exercise of independent judgment; preclusion of deceiving or misleading the court; zealous advocacy; transparency in costs charged to clients; confidentiality and legal professional privilege; avoidance of bias; intellectual property considerations; and privacy considerations.

Various organisations in the US have also issued guidance touching on comparable rules, such as the California Bar, which identified the



California versions of American Bar Association (ABA) model rules in areas covering: duty of confidentiality; competence and diligence; duty to comply with law; duty to supervise lawyers, non-lawyers and subordinates; communication obligations; charging for work produced by AI; candor to tribunal; meritorious claims and contentions; prohibition on discrimination, harassment and retaliation; and responsibilities owed to other jurisdictions. Other jurisdictions that have issued reports or guidance include, but are not limited to, the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe, Dubai, Dubai International Financial Centre Court, New Zealand, Singapore and the United Kingdom.

Among the most identified rules was the one relating to competence, which the panel discussed. While the wine may be new, the bottle remains the same. The IBA recently adopted an amendment to its ethical principle on competence to recognise the need for technological awareness, as have certain other jurisdictions. The panel discussed the practical nature of this, in terms of the expense and the need to pay attention to the ‘small firm versus the large firm’ dynamic. The panel also noted the importance of other ethics issues – eg, supervision – that have been impacted by other crosscurrents, such as remote practice or the challenge in training and building camaraderie with new lawyers. Generally, while the panel agreed that there is not necessarily a ‘one-size fits all’ approach given different legal and societal cultures, there was general agreement on the need to focus on core principles, such as competence, as they are addressed in different jurisdictions.

The panel’s input helped shape the BIC contribution to the overall report that forms part of the presidential project on AI.

Jonathan Herman

Officer, IBA Bar Issues
Commission

Independent regulation of legal services under the microscope: current threats and opportunities for Bars and law societies

At a session that explored the changing landscape for legal regulation in a number of jurisdictions, Bar leaders were reminded that the independence of the Bar can never be taken for granted. Session moderator Jonathan Herman, Chief Executive Officer of the Federation of Law Societies of Canada, reminded audience members that the reforms introduced in England and Wales in the wake of the 2004 Clementi Report were gamechangers and raised many concerns about government incursion into legal regulation in a way that would threaten the very idea of an independent Bar. Twenty years on, though the sky may not have fallen in England and Wales, the march toward new regulatory structures around the world continues, and concerns about independence persist.

Panellists from four jurisdictions laid out their respective government's reform initiatives, the drivers for bringing change in the first place and the way the debates over the need to preserve independence have or are in the process of being played out. In turn, speakers explained how the system of regulation has been reformed or is or is about to change. The audience heard from Susan Murray, President of the Law Society of Scotland, about an almost ten-year effort by the Law Society to work with the Scottish government to shape a modern approach to reforming legal regulation. She was followed by Erin Kleisinger KC, President of the Federation of Law Societies of Canada, who spoke of recent developments in the province of British Columbia where the government tabled and quickly enacted a bill to replace the Law Society of British Columbia with a new, single legal regulator of lawyers, BC notaries and paralegals. The 2014 reforms to the regulatory landscape in South Africa were explained by Tshepo Shabangu, Officer of the Bar Issues Commission and a lawyer from South Africa, followed by a presentation by Frazer Barton, President of the New Zealand Law Society, about the law society's embrace of a review calling for the creation of a new independent regulator in that country.

Several common themes emerged from the presentation. First, that public confidence in the legal profession depends in part on the need for the regulatory function to be seen to be in the public interest and not in the interest

of the profession itself. The perception of potential conflict in regimes – specifically where the regulator is jointly the representative of the interests of the individuals being regulated – was a common driver to government action toward reform.

Second, that governance structures need to be modern and effective, and responsive to the needs of the public. The question of access to legal services, and the role of the regulator in fostering greater access – or not – was also a recurring theme.

In all cases, the overarching concern facing the legal professions was and continues to be the extent to which governments understand, and then reflect in legislation, the importance of preserving an independent Bar. In a number of cases, the concern is underscored by legislation that would have the government appropriate to itself considerable regulatory power over the profession rather than leave such power in the hands of an independent body. In at least two of these case studies (British Columbia and Scotland) vigorous efforts have been undertaken to attempt to persuade governments to respond to these concerns. In the former case, concerns are so great that the constitutionality of the legislation is being challenged in court in the face of government resistance to the Law Society's claims. The structure of the government body and the place of lawyers within it was also identified as a risk to independence.

Panellists spoke of their experiences engaging with governments and attempts to 'get ahead of the curve' in order to lead reform initiatives rather than wait for reform to be imposed. The risk of inaction where sentiment was beginning to point to the need for reform was a lesson for all Bar leaders as well. If nothing else, the stories of how reform has taken, or is in the process of taking, shape in the panellists' jurisdictions was a wake-up call to any other jurisdiction that believes that the status quo will always be preserved. Time and again, governments will see the advantage of stepping in if the existing legal regulatory framework is perceived to serve members of the profession more than the public.

The final takeaway from the session was that in all four of the jurisdictions, the story continues,

and it remains to be seen where it will end. A key message was that whatever the merits may be of worthy legal regulatory reform initiatives, the

preservation of an independent Bar must never be compromised on the road to reform. The risk of undermining the rule of law is too great.

BIC roundtable sessions in Bucharest

George Artley

Legal Manager, IBA
Legal Policy & Research
Unit

The 2024 Bar Leaders' Conference in Bucharest saw the return of the popular and successful roundtable sessions, which had first been trialled in Helsinki the year before.

Once again, the format allowed for in-depth discussions on issues both familiar to Bar leaders, as well as on subjects that may at first have appeared novel, but which soon turned out to be both highly engaging and thought-provoking.

With thanks to the chairs of the various tables, a summary of some of the key takeaways from those discussions follows.

Legal ethics and anti-corruption

Discussions covered the value of continuing professional development (CPD) points and ongoing mandatory training for lawyers on corruption and anti-money laundering (AML) issues, with the number of hours varying across jurisdictions, and some Bars even offering an ethics 'hotline' for their members. In particular, the Paris Bar referenced their novel system for holding client funds – the 'CARPA' – which is controlled solely by the Bar, with a view to guaranteeing the safety of client funds and frustrating any attempts at money laundering or fraud. The interest payments on the monies cover the running costs of the system, with the remainder going towards public interest activities undertaken by the Bar.

Concerns were also raised by some Bars that ethics concerns might lead to the prohibition of legal services being offered to certain members of society, something which it was pointed out goes against the UN's principles on the role of the lawyer. The issue of mandatory reporting requirements continued to rear its head, with Australia in particular facing a new regulatory reporting regime in the near future.

Some Bars noted that AML training and regulations do not feature at all in their jurisdictions, with some leaving this solely up to the law firms themselves. Yet for most, AML training and awareness raising featured highly on the Bar's list of priorities, including the requirement for lawyers and barristers to make annual declarations that they have undertaken the requisite training during that period.

Who speaks for the Bar? Presidents, executive leadership or its members?

The answer to this question was, perhaps predictably, varied. In general, it is the president who speaks for the Bar. However, this could change depending on whether there was a particularly difficult media engagement that needed to be faced, or when there was a subject-specific comment or announcement that needed to be made, perhaps by a committee chair. Some Bars share the role between presidents and executive leadership (depending on the level of trust that exists between them), with many providing media training for all involved in communications for the Bar.

Many Bars highlighted the need for a clear media engagement strategy, and understanding, about who speaks for whom, and when, though some Bars mentioned the need for flexibility depending on the nature of the matter that needed to be spoken on, or where there was a conflict of interest in the president speaking. Particularly sensitive or controversial issues were often passed to the Bar's council for a decision on what should be said, with one Bar suggesting that taking the position of an 'owl', highlighting the pros and cons of a particular situation, rather than a 'hawk' or a 'dove' was often the best way forwards. All agreed that poor communication or media literacy, especially when faced with threats to the rule of law or independence of the profession in a particular jurisdiction from government, could be fatal.

Bars and the climate crisis

As a starting point for discussion, six courses of action that Bars might take in relation to the climate crisis were posited. Those were:

- the adoption of a resolution or statement on the climate crisis by its senior governing body;
- provision of information and/or training to its members on climate-related issues;
- the setting of regulation or ethical rules engaging climate-related issues where the Bar is competent to do so;
- participating actively in legislative and policy dialogue with government, regulators and other authorities;

- developing precedents, templates and other knowledge materials for members; and
- demonstrating commitment to environmentally responsible behaviours in the management of the Bar itself.

With colleagues from many jurisdictions taking part in the dialogue, we saw a wide variety of approaches. Some characteristics of the host economies tended to correlate with approaches taken, but it is important to note that there were variations around those patterns.

Common law jurisdictions, particularly those attached to island and coastal economies with a high economic exposure to natural hazards, tended to have a more developed and active view of the role of lawyers and their Bar associations on climate-related issues. This was particularly true of jurisdictions with a significant indigenous population, whose connection to the land and natural resources needed recognition and reflection in the approach taken.

One particular development we heard about in a number of jurisdictions was the conferring of legal personality or standing on certain natural features, such as rivers or mountains.

Civil law jurisdictions (and Bars with cab rank rules or equivalent) tended to have a more restricted view of the role of lawyers in relation to climate-related issues, particularly in relation to any directions on the ethics of client acceptance and the extent to which lawyers should be advising on the climate science implications of client matters.

The additional point was made that in imposing further rules and regulations on the profession relating to this topic, care needed to be taken about the cumulative effect of adding to the large existing body of professional regulation. That said, almost all those contributing saw environmental risks associated with transactions or other matters as being within the remit of the advising lawyer, noting that additional advice from experts may well be needed.

Turning to the six categories of initiatives, a number of Bars had adopted statements on the climate crisis which had then informed the issue of guidance notes to members and, in some cases, knowledge products. The knowledge products were generally of two types, the first being materials for use on client matters, and the second being relevant to the running of firms themselves.

There were no examples of specific regulations or rules of ethics being introduced to address the roles and responsibilities of lawyers on the climate crisis, although many noted that existing rules extended to cover these issues. For example, rules on competence could extend in appropriate cases to building relevant knowledge of climate-related legal risks.

Some Bars engaged actively with the legislative and policy process, making submissions on draft legislation and building dialogue with relevant

politicians and officials, drawing on the expertise of members and working parties or committees. The extent to which this took place also depended on how open legislative processes tended to be in each jurisdiction.

The voice of members was often referenced in discussions, capturing the range of expectations that they had of their profession and their Bar associations. Although not the only such view, particular recognition was given to the strength and weight of the views of younger lawyers, who were, in the words of one colleague, demanding action of those leading their professions. As a balance to that, examples were given of strong differences in views on governing bodies preventing or delaying the taking of action by Bars.

A final point of consideration was whether Bars could and should seek to influence members and others through efforts within their own organisations to act in ways which mitigated climate change risks. At least one association had adopted a public commitment to net zero and others described relevant initiatives. It was recognised that more could and should be done over time, taking care not to overclaim in ways which amount to greenwashing. It was also recognised that challenges in this area might be greater for Bars in less developed nations, where resources were scarcer.

Improving the engagement of Bar associations and law societies with the work of the IBA

Each round of discussions began with (1) showing the current and completed Legal Policy & Research Unit (LPRU)/BIC projects section of the IBA website; and (2) asking who around the table was familiar with them. The results were surprising, in that the attending Bar representatives were overwhelmingly unfamiliar with these projects, and most of them had no knowledge about the IBA online content and material that is available. Better clarity around the structure and contents of the IBA and BIC website were therefore a major area of interest for delegates, as well as a clearer insight into how the IBA operates and is structured.

All agreed that the BIC is a vital forum for sharing information between Bars at a global level, with many asking for closer involvement and cooperation within their jurisdiction. There were concerns raised though about the volume and targeting of IBA communications with Bars, with many feeling that often the right people were not being contacted, or that there was overlap and duplication of work going on between the IBA and their organisation that could be avoided.

Overall, the vital roles of the IBA and BIC were recognised and celebrated, but the deficiencies in the layout and structuring of the IBA's website, and poor access to and awareness of the resources

that are available, were the major takeaways from the discussion.

Bars and lawyer wellbeing

In brief, the vital importance of lawyer wellbeing is now almost universally accepted as an issue for Bars around the world, in a way that was very much not the case only a few years ago. Many Bars are offering specific training and resources for their members with regards to supporting their wellbeing and targeting the causes of poor mental health in the profession.

Delegates also appreciated the immense work demands that lawyers are increasingly being

placed under, despite the growth of the wellbeing movement. Particular reference was made to the shocking inflation of newly qualified (NQ) wages in some jurisdictions and what firms might be expecting in return for such salaries. There was some debate over whether lawyers should be expected to leave their home lives 'at the door' when they come into work, with others questioning what can realistically be done to alter the business model of law.

Overall, lawyer wellbeing is being increasingly seen as more than just a personal issue for lawyers, with it instead being recognised as an existential matter for the future health and prosperity of the profession itself.

Economic impact of the legal profession valued at \$1.6tn, states new IBA study

According to a **ground-breaking report** from the IBA, countries that firmly uphold the rule of law experience greater socio-economic benefits from the everyday contributions of lawyers than governments that impose restrictions on legal rights. In this first known study to comprehensively quantify the legal profession's socio-economic influence, *The IBA report on the social and economic impact of the legal profession* (the 'Impact Report') reveals that the legal profession directly contributes \$1.6tn to the global economy, or 1.7 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP), via the work of more than 20 million lawyers, paralegals and support staff alongside a further 14 million workers in the supplier sector, including notaries and translators.

The Impact Report also states that, as threats to the rule of law become more serious in many parts of the world, action must be taken to improve access to representation, strengthen advocacy, improve education and pursue the highest ethical standards.

Other findings in the Impact Report include:

- countries with the best access to justice have 25 per cent fewer cases of governmental overreach;
- countries with a strong independent legal profession can hold governments to account, attract more investment, provide better healthcare and improve gender equity;
- by increasing legal aid to the same standard seen in the top quartile of countries, inequality could be reduced by five per cent;
- a robust rule of law can help countries to achieve: a higher life expectancy; 30 per cent more girls completing secondary education; 53 per cent less pollution; 34 million fewer youths that do not engage in education, employment or training; and greater



- protection of minorities including LGBTQI+ communities;
- innovation levels were higher in the top quartile countries with the rule of law, which could generate an additional \$83bn in research and development investment;
- improving civil justice effectiveness could reduce informal employment by \$34m globally;
- armed conflicts, the rise of autocratic states and anti-globalisation movements threaten the rule of law, which declined in many countries in 2023;



At the BIC Open Forum in Bucharest in May, prior to the publication of the Impact Report, a presentation on its contents was made, and questions answered, by IBA President Almudena Apron de Mendivil and Gloria Macias of the consultants McKinsey.

- North America and Europe continue to dominate legal services, accounting for 80 per cent of the market; and
- there is a perception gap regarding the legal profession's contribution to society, with only 54 per cent of the general public believing lawyers have a positive economic and social impact, compared with a 78 per cent positive perception among legal professionals themselves.

With the publication of the Impact Report, the IBA aims to increase the general public's understanding of the rule of law, the role of lawyers and the legal profession's social and economic contribution to society. As an example of the latter, the breakdown of the data on the legal services sector's \$1.6tn contribution to global annual GDP is comprised of \$787bn in legal service revenues, \$191bn of tax contributions and \$637bn of 'ecosystem effects' in supply-side services such as administration and broader economic systems. Of the world's legal services, corporate law contributed \$222bn and litigation \$193bn – the two largest elements of the profession.

It is known that the functioning of society depends heavily on the day-to-day work of legal professionals. Examples of the broadness of lawyers' work includes: purchasing homes; employment arrangements; online purchases; insurance agreements; promoting business relationships; protecting intellectual property rights; instrumenting investments; and defending individuals inter alia. However, the most relevant contribution of the legal profession is in regard to support of the rule of law.

Where the rule of law is upheld, countries saw major benefits from legal checks and regulations in areas including government policymaking,

environmental standards and economic growth, as well as education, health outcomes and human rights.

Almudena Arpón de Mendivil, President of the IBA, said: 'This landmark study demonstrates, for the first time, in a comprehensive manner, the true contribution of the legal profession through its sustaining of the rule of law. It shows how effective legal systems, supported by robust and independent legal professionals, can limit the overreach of governments, whilst also supporting economic growth, promoting innovation and education, and combating inequality. But the rule of law is under threat in many parts of the world, including through subtle attrition in many countries with democratic governments.

Our profession should take more action to educate the public about the rule of law, increasing awareness of its importance and its significant benefits, as well as denouncing examples of lawlessness. The world's legal profession makes a clear financial contribution to global GDP, worth \$1.6 trillion a year. We must now match that economic impact with increased ambition to enhance access to legal representation, engage in advocacy, strengthen access to education and legal literacy, and to promote the highest standards of professional conduct.'

Several areas of improvement to preserve and strengthen the legal profession's impact are also identified in the study. Together with ongoing initiatives to promote equality, diversity and well-being in the legal profession they include:

Enhancing access to legal representation: The IBA will continue to disseminate research on how to lower barriers to access and collaborate with international institutions including the World Bank and the United Nations on this important

topic. The IBA will also continue to raise awareness, through its annual Pro Bono Award, of lawyers supporting citizens, while the IBA-founded eyeWitness to Atrocities app continues to be used to gather potential critical evidence for national and international institutions investigating and prosecuting alleged perpetrators of atrocities.

Advocacy and support of policy making: The IBA will continue to issue public statements condemning state actions that undermine the rule of law; build and disseminate research, guidelines, best practices and legal advice on issues such as human rights violations (mainly through the work of the IBA's Human Rights Institute), media freedom, modern slavery, arbitration and artificial intelligence (AI) regulation, as well as continuing crucial work addressing the abolition of criminal punishments of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, intersex or other (LGBTQI+) people. In addition, the IBA specialist committees will continue to make submissions to

authorities, such as the European Commission, in areas such as tax, antitrust and insolvency.

Education and communication: As the 'global voice of the legal profession', the IBA will redouble efforts in these areas, whether by providing educational programmes for young lawyers, technical assistance to legal practitioners and institutions or materials to broaden public awareness of the rule of law.

Ethics stewardship: The IBA will reinforce guidelines and best practices to help legal professionals uphold the highest possible ethical standards.

'This study underlines the need for law societies, bar associations, law firms, law departments and other professional stakeholders to work collectively to uphold the rule of law', said Ms Arpón de Mendivil. 'It is an important step in gaining a better understanding of the profession's social and economic impact, the factors that drive it, and potential ways to improve it.'

All smiles in Bucharest



Left: Pictured in front of the Parliament Building in Bucharest, constructed in the Ceausescu-era and reputed to be the second largest administrative building in the world after the Pentagon, are (left to right) Ken Murphy, Susan Murray, Sam Townend and Diane McGiffen.



John Stefaniuk and Ken Murphy



From left to right: Christina Blacklaws, Mei-Nu (Dagmar) Yu and Tshupo Shabangu.



Kitomoshi Yabuki and Riccardo Cajola



Berit Reiss-Andersen and Deborah Enix-Ross

Two new IBA member Bars

Two new member organisations of the IBA, and therefore of the BIC, were unanimously approved at the IBA Council meeting in Bucharest. The Taiwan Bar Association became a full member of the IBA and the Afghanistan Independent Bar Association in Exile became a sustaining member. Both membership applications were strongly supported by the BIC.

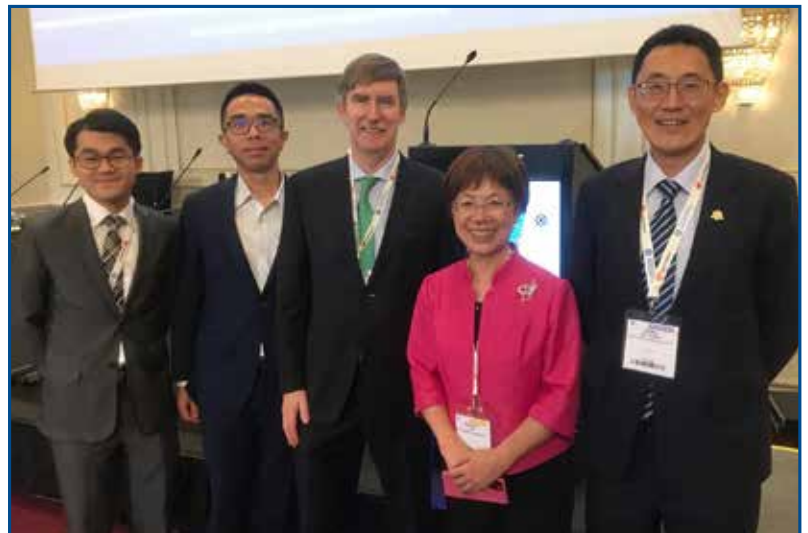
Following approval at the Council meeting, representatives of the two new member organisations were invited to join the meeting where they were greeted by a standing ovation from Council members.

The Taiwan Bar Association, which has approximately 12,000 members, was founded in 1948. It now joins the Taipei Bar Association, which became an IBA member organisation a few years ago. The Taipei Bar Association held a well-

attended two-hour online seminar for its members in January 2024 with the BIC Chair about the IBA and how to obtain maximum value from membership.

When the Afghanistan Bar Association was created in 2008, with the heavy involvement of the IBA, it was an extraordinary achievement. Perhaps the most remarkable element of the project was the inclusion of women in the Bar for the first time in the history of the country.

In 2021, when Afghanistan fell to the Taliban, the Bar was forced into a critical position and the IBA undertook the vital work on getting the leadership of the Bar out of Afghanistan. The administration of the Afghanistan Independent Bar in Exile is now kindly hosted by the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) in their headquarters in Brussels.



From left to right: Tzu-Shuo (Joseph) Liu, Commissioner, International Affairs Committee, Taipei Bar Association; Hung-Ming Hsieh, Chairman, International Affairs Committee, Taiwan Bar Association; Ken Murphy, Chair, BIC; Mei-Nu (Dagmar) Yu, President, Taiwan Bar Association; and Hung Ou Yang, Vice Chairman, International Affairs Committee, Taipei Bar Association.



From left to right: Maliha Zaheer, Women's Committee, Afghanistan Independent Bar Association in Exile; Ruhallah Qarizada, President, Afghanistan Independent Bar Association in Exile; and Ken Murphy, Chair, BIC.

IBAHRI monitors potential threats to the independence of the judiciary in Colombia



The IBA's Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI) is monitoring a pattern of recent incidents that appear to undermine the independence of the judiciary in Colombia, and therefore threaten the separation of powers, a cornerstone of democracy. These incidents include: continued derogatory comments made by President Gustavo Petro against the judicial branch and individual judges, which might have influenced the siege of the Supreme Court of Justice by demonstrators in February 2024; allegations of state intelligence surveillance of the judiciary through interception of communications; and President Petro's proposed reform of the Colombian Constitution.

Derogatory statements against the judicial branch and individual judges

The IBAHRI notes with concern President Petro's continuous disparaging comments against the judiciary. Petro has claimed in many instances that he has been a victim of an institutional coup orchestrated by the Attorney General to oust him from power, and that he has been the target of lawfare by the judiciary against his government. The President's verbal attacks against the judicial branch are usually issued where the courts have made judgments rejecting his proposed reforms or presidential mandate. It's to be noted, however, that none of the relevant judgments by the high courts of Colombia have been reported as being in contrast with the country's constitutional order.

Conclusion

In light of the above, the IBAHRI calls on:

- President Petro to reflect on his duty to protect the independence of the judiciary and refrain from disparaging judges for carrying out their duties. The legitimacy of his presidential mandate is only strengthened by a functioning separation of powers and strong institutional independence;
- President Petro to abandon the proposed constitutional reform plan;
- all public powers in Colombia to respect judicial rulings, to use the appropriate legal channels to challenge them and guarantee independence and security of the judiciary;
- the Attorney General of Colombia to conduct serious and prompt investigations into the alleged intelligence surveillance of the judiciary; and
- the international community to monitor the situation in Colombia and offer support for the preservation of judicial independence.

Anne Ramberg Dr Jur hc

IBAHRI Co-Chair and Immediate Past Secretary General of the Swedish Bar Association

Mark Stephens CBE

IBAHRI Co-Chair

Two former BIC Chairs conferred with Honorary Life membership at IBA Council meeting in Bucharest

Two former Chairs of the BIC, Michael Kutchera from Austria and Margery Nicoll from Australia, had their many years of outstanding IBA contributions recognised at the IBA Council meeting in Bucharest by each being conferred 'Honorary Life Member of the Council and the

Association'. Photographed on the occasion, with the years in which they served as BIC Chair, are (left to right) Michael Kutchera (2009–2010), Margery Nicoll (2015–2016), current Chair Ken Murphy and IBA Vice-President Claudio Visco, who was BIC Chair 2017–2018.



BEX – the IBA network for law society and Bar association senior staff members



The Bar Executive Exchange (BEX) is a network that kicks into action twice a year: in May, when IBA Bar leaders gather somewhere in Europe, and in the autumn at the IBA Annual Conference. The network comprises Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), heads of international and other senior staff members of law societies and Bar associations attending either of these meetings. At the May meetings, the BEX is scheduled for Friday mornings including lunch; at the Annual Conference, it is scheduled for the Tuesday morning including lunch.

Almost everything that takes place at IBA meetings and conferences focuses on lawyers, the judiciary and the law. The BEX is the only gathering where we focus exclusively on topics pertinent to running a law society or Bar association. At the BEX we want to create an atmosphere of mutual trust amongst senior staff at law societies and Bar associations who are often in their role for a fair number of years. The scope of attendees is therefore exclusively limited to this group.

The meetings are organised by its two Co-Chairs, Paul Mollerup and Merete Smith, together with the host Bar association. Our last meeting in Bucharest was hosted by the Bucharest Bar. The special topic of the day was ‘Can lawyers go on strike?’, where we heard experiences from the Bar Council of England and Wales as well as the Bar of Northern Ireland. Further insight was shared from France, Ireland and Norway. The answer, by the way, seems to be: ‘Yes, lawyers can go on strike. But the planning, the framing and the message – all that goes before the actual “strike” – is at least as important as the manifestation itself.’

The next BEX meeting will be held in Mexico City at the IBA Annual Conference.

Paul Mollerup
Co-Chair, BEX

Merete Smith
Co-Chair, BEX

International legal practice: what Bars need to know

International legal practice, having lawyers from different jurisdictions working together or facing each other for the benefits of their clients, is at the heart of the IBA, its values and its purpose. International legal practice is also something of great interest to Bars and law societies, whether we look at the issue from a regulatory perspective, as an opportunity for members to develop their legal practice, or in our relations with our counterparts from other jurisdictions. That is essentially why the BIC has its own committee devoted to international trade in legal services the BIC International Trade in Legal Services Committee (BIC ITILS).

This is not about having a pro- or anti-liberalisation agenda but rather about educating and supporting Bars and law societies on the issue, raising awareness of the multifaceted aspects of international legal practice, the sharing of experience and best practice.

One of our major recent outputs has been the updated [IBA Guide to International Trade Agreements for IBA Member Bars](#), which we discussed at one of the 'hot topics' roundtables in Bucharest.

Responding to practical requests for assistance from Bars and law societies is a key priority for the Committee. We have partnered with a growing number of them in a series of globalisation-themed conferences and are currently working on our next event with the Taiwan Bar Association. We are always keen to hear expressions of interest from other Bars and law societies who think they and their members would benefit from these discussions.

Monitoring relevant developments in international trade is another important activity of our work. We regularly engage with the World Trade Organization (WTO) and regional trade organisations to raise awareness about our work.



We attended the most recent WTO Ministerial Conference in Abu Dhabi during which WTO members painfully reached an agreement on the extension of a moratorium on applying duties to electronic transmissions. The consequences of failure are difficult to fathom but could have seen individual states apply duties to the digital provision of cross-border legal advice!

We very much look forward to seeing you in Mexico. Our session on the Tuesday morning will explore the state of play in cross-border legal practice and where we are heading next, taking stock of significant developments around the world, including in India, Saudi Arabia and the African continent.

Mickaël Laurans
Chair, BIC ITILS

An introduction to the BIC Regulation Committee

The BIC Regulation Committee supports the interests of the IBA's membership organisations, which consists of Bar associations, law societies and similar bodies from around the world.

The Committee monitors, researches and exchanges information about developments in lawyer regulation with a particular focus on the importance of maintaining the independence of the legal regulators which is being increasingly undermined in certain countries.

At the Bucharest conference in May the BIC Regulation Committee had its inaugural 'retreat' to focus on three distinct issues.

The main issue was the role of regulators in addressing the increasingly common problem of a lack of lawyers and legal services in certain parts of the world. The issues are territorial, financial and dependent on the availability of certain legal services in certain parts of the country. The question for regulators is, should they be doing more to make legal services more accessible? Does that mean opening up to non-lawyers or allied professionals? Would that mean 'diluting' the lawyer brand? Should the regulators be working with governments to provide enticements to lawyers to work in certain areas? There are many questions, and this will be the focus of the BIC Regulation Committee's main conference session in Mexico City.

The BIC Regulation Committee is also working with the IBA's artificial intelligence (AI) project. The Committee feels that there needs to be a demystification of what is involved with AI and technology, and there needs to be more transparency and accountability from lawyers in relation to the use of AI within their practices. The Committee will continue to work with the IBA Task Force on this matter.



Finally, and in tandem with what is happening within the AI world, there was a discussion at the conference on the IBA's launch of a **legal technology competency paper**. The IBA hopes that this could be incorporated into the international principles of the IBA and suggests that a lawyer has a duty to keep abreast of technological changes. It was reported however that this is not going to change the principles but will simply provide an explanatory note. This is something that the Committee will keep under review in the run up to the Mexico conference.

The Committee is always looking for new members. If anyone is interested in joining us, feel free to contact me at john.guerin@clydeco.com.

John Guerin
Chair, BIC Regulation Committee

We're all in this together



The Chairs of the BIC, LPD and SPPI met in Amsterdam for two days in July. They did so, on their own initiative and time, to seek further ways to increase understanding and cooperation between their three sections of the IBA. The IBA is a vast and complex organisation. The great majority of its work is done by the Officers and committees of these three sections. It is to the benefit of everyone involved that their strategic coordination is increased, and that whatever may still remain of the Association's so-called 'silos' is dismantled. Myra Garrett, Carola van den Bruinhorst and Ken Murphy are photographed above in Carola's law firm office in Amsterdam.

In June, the SPPI's Professional Ethics Committee held a very successful Symposium in the 240-year old headquarters building of the Law Society of Ireland in Dublin. Pictured at the end of the Symposium are (left to right): Babatunde Ajibade, SPPI Vice-Chair; Steven Richman, BIC Vice-Chair; Myra Garrett, SPPI Chair; Alessandra Nascimento Mourao and Tracy Calvert, both SPPI Council Members; and Ken Murphy, BIC Chair.



Legal Practice Division update

It is a pleasure to be invited to contribute to BIC News as Chair of the IBA Legal Practice Division (LPD) about the continuing activity of the LPD. This is now more appreciated than ever as the LPD continues to work more collaboratively with other parts of the Association. We have seen committees working together across the constituencies again in the planning of sessions for the Annual Conference, on projects and on various other initiatives. Just recently, Ken Murphy and Myra Garrett, Chair of the Section on Public and Professional Interest (SPPI), met in my offices in Amsterdam to discuss opportunities to work together more closely. This was the second meeting of this nature, and it helps to understand what each of us is doing and learn about initiatives that will benefit all of us.

An area where we intend to collaborate more closely is around our regional fora. The fora form part of the LPD but in our activities in the various regions, there are many opportunities to work together. We already do so at the occasion of our biannual regional conference where, besides the core programme, a Bar leaders' summit is typically organised by the BIC. Likewise, a Young Lawyers' training programme and a Women Lawyers event are hosted by the respective SPPI committees. We are exploring other possibilities to enhance cooperation.

I am sure that many of you are already familiar with the most important part of our activities – the high-quality specialist conferences that our 70 committees and regional fora organise every year. Those conferences continue to be hugely successful – in 2024 already some 50 specialist conferences have been held that together attracted about 7,500 delegates. The level of engagement that our committee officers manage to raise through these events among our members is extraordinary.

Our committees are working hard on the events to be held at the IBA Annual Conference in Mexico City. There will be close to 200 sessions across all five days of the conference week run by LPD committees including those in cooperation with others. The online programme is live on the **IBA website** for all to view the schedule of sessions and I'm delighted to see an impressive range of topics as well as such a high calibre of speakers being offered by the LPD committees.

This year the LPD Showcase has been put together by the Financial Services Section, the Insolvency Section and the Criminal Law



Committee with support from the IBA Legal Policy & Research Unit (LPRU). The topic will focus on digital assets and the future of financial services.

I am also delighted to announce that Luis Fernando de la Calle Pardo, former Director General of Public Strategies for Mexico and Undersecretary of International Trade Negotiations of the Ministry of Economy, will be the keynote speaker at the LPD lunch on Wednesday 18 September.

We run many other activities. We contribute to the IBA's support for Ukraine and are involved in many projects, including those that were started under President Almudena's leadership. We also write books, reports and other publications and submit our contributions to consultation procedures held by the EU, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and other international organisations.

I work closely together with our LPD Vice-Chair, Daniel Del Rio; the LPD Secretary-Treasurer, Pascale Lagesse; the LPD Assistant Treasurer, Amir Singh Pasrich; and, of course, the IBA Divisions Director, Ronnie Hayward, and other IBA staff. I am grateful for the tremendous support they have provided and for their commitment to the advancement of the work of our committees, our division and the IBA.

Carola van den Bruinhorst
Chair, IBA Legal Practice Division

Update from the Section on Public & Professional Interest (SPPI)

Dear BIC colleagues,

Thank you to Ken Murphy, BIC Chair, for this opportunity to update you on activities from the IBA Section on Public & Professional Interest (SPPI).

Through its 18 committees and fora, the SPPI deals with issues that are essential to our profession such as legal education, law firm management, the welfare of judges, young lawyers, women lawyers, LGBTQI+ lawyers, diversity in the profession, protection of human rights, increasing access to justice and the supremacy of the rule of law.

In delivering projects relevant to our profession, we look to collaborate with other IBA divisions, particularly the BIC as we have a lot of common interests.

Examples of our activities are included below.

The IBA Human Rights Law Committee, supported by the Japan Federation of Bar Associations, held the IBA Human Rights Conference, subtitled 'Climate, justice and law – challenges and opportunities', in Tokyo this April. The conference was attended by 158 delegates from over 23 countries. Thank you to Kimitoshi Yabuki for his exceptional support of this conference.

The IBA Professional Ethics Committee held the 2nd IBA Global Professional Ethics Symposium in Dublin this June with great support from senior officers of the BIC, including Ken Murphy and Steven Richman. There were around 100 attendees from 19 different jurisdictions. The content covered important legal practice issues including:

- artificial intelligence (AI) and professional ethics;
- ethics as a criterion for selecting lawyers (How) should law firms react to grave situations – eg, war and terror attacks?
- ESG (environmental, social, governance) and legal practitioners' ethical role.

Before the Professional Ethics Symposium, the IBA Young Lawyers' Committee led a training event for young lawyers with over 70 young lawyers participating from multiple jurisdictions including India, Ireland, the UK and US. The topic was 'From NQ to partner: how to navigate and stay well on the journey' and had a great reception and vibrant debate.

The IBA Law Firm Management Committee held its 3rd Academy for Leaders programme this July at King's College, London. This training programme is aimed at equipping future law firm leaders to be effective and successful leaders in a new, fast-changing environment.



The IBA Academic and Professional Development Committee, in conjunction with BARBRI and other IBA committees, held a recent online event titled 'Communications Masterclass'. Over 250 lawyers participated with enthusiastic chat and engagement and innovative suggestions. [Watch the recording here.](#)

The SPPI has a diverse programme of over 55 panel sessions for the IBA Annual Conference on topics ranging from law firm culture and compensation to the impact of AI on the legal profession to fair trials in wars. We invite you to join in the important discussions at our panel sessions and events on SPPI Thursday including:

- the SPPI Showcase on how to create a great pro bono programme;
- the SPPI Annual Awards, a free and uplifting breakfast event presenting awards for (1) Outstanding Young Lawyer, (2) Outstanding Contributions by a Lawyer to Human Rights and (3) Outstanding Pro Bono lawyer; and
- the SPPI Lunch, a great way to relax and unwind as the conference nears its close.

The Rule of Law Symposium, organised by the IBA Rule of Law Forum, takes place on Friday 20 September. It offers free entry to the public and will begin with a posthumous award for the late, great Stephen Denyer. The theme of the Symposium is 'Defending and restoring the global rule of law'.

I hope this gives you a good overview of SPPI activities. I look forward to meeting as many as possible of you at the IBA Annual Conference in Mexico.

Myra Garrett

Chair, IBA Section on Public & Professional Interest

Happy faces at the BIC Bucharest dinner



Above:
Erin Kleisinger and
Jonathan Herman



Left:
George Artley and
Sara Carnegie



Top left: Alessandra Nascimento Mourao, Nuhad Ponce Kuri and Riccardo Cajola

Top right: Christine Martin and Stefan Von Raumer

Left: Some words of welcome and thanks to everyone from the BIC Chair.



President Almudena congratulates the BIC on its highest ever attendance numbers at a Bar Leaders Conference.



Pierre Hoffman



President of the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE), Pierre-Dominique Schupp, and CCBE Secretary-General Simone Cuomo



Left: The BIC Chair with one of the dinner's honoured guests, President of the Bucharest Bar Association Professor Aurel Ciobanu.

Below: Jesper Rothe



Berit Reiss-Andersen and Kimitoshi Yabuki

Sternford Moyo: memories of an IBA icon

Those of us who had the privilege of knowing Sternford Moyo spiralled with shock on hearing the appalling news of his sudden passing on 5 July 2024. For many, like me, our memories will have turned to when and where we first encountered this remarkable colleague and friend.

I first met Sternford not at an IBA event, but at a seminar in Edinburgh in 2007. We were both there as guests of the Law Society of Scotland. The Society had organised that their seminar be held in a very beautiful and prestigious venue: the National Gallery of Scotland, overlooking Princes Street Gardens.

Sternford had been invited to speak as a former President of the Law Society of Zimbabwe. He was already a noted international speaker on the independence of the legal profession. Speaking slowly and without ever raising his voice, he gave a spellbindingly passionate, powerful and insightful keynote address on that topic.

As always, Sternford spoke from conviction and from the heart. His speech absolutely transfixed the audience, lawyers and non-lawyers alike. You could have heard a pin drop. I remember clearly the deep impression he made with the purity of his vision and his absolute commitment to the core values of the legal profession.

The seminar seemed designed to persuade the media, and in particular the relatively new Scottish Government Minister for Justice – who was also a speaker that day and of whom the Law Society seemed wary – of the vital importance for the public interest of maintaining the Law Society’s absolute independence of government. Access to justice, human rights and democratic freedoms depended on it.

The independence of the Law Society, of the profession and of the judiciary were interdependent. Accordingly, the Law Society’s independence must not be eroded, Sternford argued, by any aspects of the regulatory legislation that the government had in mind. Whether as a result of his speech or not, the elements of the proposed legislation that were causing concern to the Scottish profession were subsequently dropped.

Sternford’s address drew heavily on the Law Society of Zimbabwe’s experience of, and brave resistance to, their authoritarian government’s sinister efforts to undermine the profession’s independence, and thereby the rule of law, in his native country. The examples he gave, of the abuses of government power and their consequences, were vivid and chilling.

I made a point of sitting close to him at lunch. In the end there were just the two of us left. We found that we each had a couple of hours free for an interesting conversation before we needed to head to the airport.

At one stage he reached into his jacket pocket to check the flight time on his ticket. As he extracted



A meeting in Miami

his ticket, his passport also partly emerged. This prompted him to make a wry remark about his relationship with his passport.

Because his name was on a list of critics of [former President of Zimbabwe] Robert Mugabe’s regime, every time he returned to Zimbabwe he was required to hand over his passport to the state authorities. They kept it. When planning to travel abroad again he had to apply in advance to the authorities for its return. He never knew, often up to the last minute, whether he would be given back his passport so that he could travel. I asked why he thought the ZANU-PF regime ever returned his passport in the circumstances. He said he genuinely didn’t know.

This led him to mention some further shocking examples of the harassment, arbitrary arrests and physical intimidation, including kidnapping, he had suffered personally at the hands of Robert Mugabe’s thugs. He wasn’t seeking my sympathy and I could see he wasn’t by any means telling me everything. But I now understood more deeply the terrible price that his Law Society colleagues, and in particular he as their leader, had been required to pay in trying to defend the rule of law. But he seemed genuinely undaunted by it all.

When I sought to compliment him on the special kind of courage that this took, he modestly declined to accept it. It was the duty of every lawyer to be prepared to pay such a price, he claimed, and he encouraged me to believe that I would do the same in similar circumstances.



Sternford Moyo, as IBA President, addressing the IBA Annual Conference opening ceremony in Miami on 30 October 2022.

When he had left for the airport I had a further hour or so before doing the same. It was high summer and an unusually warm, blue-skied afternoon in Edinburgh. I remember walking in the sunshine in beautiful Princes Street Gardens at the back of the National Gallery and reflecting on what I had heard. Most of all I reflected on what a remarkably impressive individual I had just met.

In the 17 years that have passed since that sunny afternoon in Scotland, Sternford and I met a great many times at IBA annual conferences all over the world. I got to know him much better. I'd say that we became friends, but in fact I believe we were already friends by the time we had parted in Edinburgh in 2007.

I noted with approval his rise to prominence in the IBA, most particularly as the Co-Chair for six years of the Human Rights Institute. I noted also the huge respect with which he was heard whenever he spoke. And I was delighted when he was deservedly elected President of the IBA for the years 2021–2022, the first African to have achieved that distinction in the Association's history.

By then I was a representative of the BIC on the Management Board, so our paths crossed, in person and online, much more frequently.

As President he was exceptionally supportive of the BIC and often reminded me that, very unusually for a President of the IBA in the modern era, he had served as President of a national Bar or law society earlier in his career and that was where his roots lay. Solidarity, whereby more developed Bars should help their less developed counterparts, was one of his many strongly held ideals.

Sternford was always very encouraging of me personally within the IBA. But he was such a naturally warm and kind human being that I'm sure he was encouraging to a great many others in addition. Indeed, when he was President and chairing Management Board and IBA Council meetings, both tended to overrun their allotted time in part because Sternford would take up so much of the meeting expressing his support and gratitude to everyone for their work.

In September 2023 I had the honour of chairing a meeting of African Bar leaders in Kigali, Rwanda, and I was delighted that Sternford chose to attend. The meeting was at the beginning of the biennial conference of the African Regional Forum, of which Sternford had been Chair in the past.

It was striking, although unsurprising, to observe the esteem in which the first IBA President from Africa was held by his colleagues from across the African continent. It had the height of Kilimanjaro. He said little at the meeting, allowing others to talk first, until near the end when his quiet contribution was packed with wisdom, insight and, of course, encouragement.

Earlier this year I was honoured to be invited to make the formal proposal that the IBA Council make Sternford Moyo an 'Honorary Life Member of the Council and the Association'. The process requires a form be completed setting out the qualities and achievements of the proposed honoree, together with their contribution to the IBA, which justifies the award of the IBA's highest honour.

I checked with Sternford at the IBA Council meeting in Bucharest in May to make sure he had seen my proposal form and was pleased when he assured me he had.

I took the drafting of the form seriously and while I was working on it, my mind flew back to a sunny day in Edinburgh in 2007, a day that seemed like only yesterday. On that day I heard a truly inspirational speech and then spoke with a truly inspirational individual – one who I would subsequently come to view as an icon for all members of the IBA, not just those in Africa.

I concluded the proposal form with the words 'Sternford Moyo, in his inspirational life as a lawyer, didn't just talk the talk for the rule of law. He had the courage to walk the walk'.

May his gentle soul rest in peace.

Ken Murphy

*Chair, Bar Issues Commission
Law Society of Ireland*



Programme of BIC sessions and activities at the IBA Annual Conference in Mexico City

Monday 16 September

1430 – 1545

Lawyers and corruption: a global review

1615 – 1730

Legal deserts: what is the role of regulators in addressing the increasingly common problem of a lack of lawyers and legal services within our countries?

Tuesday 17 September

1115 – 1230

Cross-border legal practice: what is the state of play and where are we heading next?

1615 – 1730

Pillars of democracy programme

1115 – 1230

Spotlight on the role of the legal profession: principles, problems and future projection

Wednesday 18 September

1030 – 1230

Bar Leaders Open Forum

1430 – 1730

Bar Issues Commission Showcase: beneficial ownership

Thursday 19 September

1115 – 1230

Technology: AI and bar associations

2000 – 2200

Committee dinner (ticketed – see below)

In addition to a substantive programme of sessions, the BIC will also be holding a committee dinner at Hacienda de los Morales on Thursday 19 September from 2000. This dinner will provide you with the opportunity to network with colleagues in a very relaxed atmosphere. You can register for this social function by logging into your MyIBA account.

The IBA App has been updated to include additional functionality to help you get the most out of the Annual Conference and make networking easier. Simply download the App via the Apple App Store or Google Play Store before the Conference.

I look forward to seeing you in Mexico City.

Kind regards,

Ken Murphy

Chair, IBA Bar Issues Commission

Law Society of Ireland, Dublin