

Dear IPBA Members,

The strength of the IPBA derives from the commitment and dedication of its members to the IPBA's purposes as stated in the IPBA Constitution. These include providing opportunities for its members to contribute toward the development of the legal profession in the Asia-Pacific Region and the development and improvement of its status and organisation, to contribute toward the development of law and legal structures within the Region, to meet and exchange ideas with other lawyer who reside in or are interested in this Region, to study and discuss legal issues involving the Region, and to share information about legal developments affecting the Region. The two remaining purposes are to serve IPBA members fairly and equitably and to promote the rule of law.

In the almost two decades since its founding, the IPBA has successfully fulfilled these purposes as it has evolved in response to pervasive changes within the Region and in each of the jurisdictions in the Region. Globalisation is transforming not only the economics within the Region but has also spurred the growth of law schools, bar associations and law societies, and increasing numbers of lawyers and legal professionals. They now play critical roles a cross-border business, investment, trade and commerce have increased exponentially within the Region in recent decades, in part due to foreign direct investment from outside the Region, and today increasingly from within the Region itself. As the Asia-Pacific regional economies continue to expand and deepen their own economic integration, the legal profession meets increasing business and commercial needs within economies as most of the Region's countries continue programs of economic and social development.

The IPBA has benefitted from, but also helped to support and facilitate, these expansive dimensions of globalisation. Its very purposes highlight the developmental role that it foresaw as its fundamental contribution to this Region. The IPBA's founders thus determined that the IPBA should have as members only practising lawyers involved in transnational business activities within the Region. They then worked hard and continuously to promote and strengthen the opportunities for IPBA members to form not only productive professional relationships and networks, but perhaps more important, long-lasting friendships based on mutual respect, trust and shared human interests. As the IPBA's membership grew over the years and successive generations of lawyers strengthened its organisation and expanded these professional and personal relationships, so too did those members grow and benefit from their association with the IPBA.

To ensure its continuing success into the future, the IPBA follows a systematic process to provide members with opportunities for active participation and leadership within the organisation, and to identify potential leaders who could assume key positions in the IPBA. The formal process occurs approximately six months before the Annual Conference and Meeting when the Nominating Committee presents its nominees for those positions to be filled to the Council at its mid-year meeting. The final list of nominees approved by the Council is then presented to the IPBA membership for its decision at the Annual Meeting. The informal process involves a continuing search for

and assessment by the IPBA leadership, including committee chairs of members who express a desire to assume leadership roles and/or who show promising leadership capabilities. Such members are then suggested to the Nominating Committee for consideration.

For many members, the *IPBA Committees* are attractive opportunities for participation, particularly for new members. This is especially true for the practice area committees that develop and conduct substantive programmes at the Annual Conference, the Mid-Year Council Meetings, as well as other venues. These provide speaker and panelist, as well as publication opportunities, and also committee vice-chair and chair positions. Other committees administer special programmes, such as the IPBA Scholarship Committee and the Legal Training and Development Committee, or provide special networking fora, such as the Women Business Lawyers Committee. The Publications Committee prepares the *IPBA Journal*, which is the IPBA's official publication.

The IPBA Council is the IPBA's administrative body and directs and acts on behalf of the IPBA on matters not specifically reserved to the Annual Meeting of the IPBA members. It comprises Council Members from each of the IPBA jurisdictions (i.e., a jurisdiction with an autonomous and distinctive legal system which has at least 25 IPBA members; these are the Jurisdictional Council Members); six At-Large Council Members (who represent regions that are not jurisdictions but wish to contribute to, and benefit from, the IPBA), the IPBA Officers and Deputy Officers, the Committee Chairs, and the IPBA Regional Coordinators.

Finally, the IPBA Jurisdictional Leadership Committees comprise IPBA members who are prominent within their key jurisdictions and work with the IPBA Jurisdictional Council Member to promote IPBA programmes and activities within that jurisdiction and on a regional basis. This is particularly important and valuable for geographically large jurisdictions.

As many have found to their great satisfaction and professional and personal benefit, serving in any of these positions provides important and often unique opportunities to work with leading and upcoming members of the legal profession throughout the Asia-Pacific Region, contribute to and benefit from IPBA programmes and activities, develop lasting collegial personal relationships with other lawyers, and let to other opportunities to serve in leadership positions within the IPBA.

We are continuously looking for those members who want to be part of IPBA's succeeding generation of leaders and strongly encourage you to let your Committee Chair, IPBA Officer, or other Council Member or Nominating Committee member know of your interest and desire. Many have done so over the years with very mutually rewarding results. We welcome your interest and participation.

With all best wishes,

Gerald A. Sumida  
Secretary General