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IPBA Scholar 2015

Report on IPBA 25th Annual Meeting and Conference, Hong Kong, 6-9 May 2015

The 25th IPBA Conference was held in Hong Kong from 6 to 9 May 2015. Being selected as a scholar for this Conference, it was a great opportunity for me to meet a legal society from Asia-Pacific region and get acquainted with lawyers from all over the world.

Visit to the High Court

As a part of the scholarship program, on the first day of the Conference all scholars had a tour to Hong Kong High Court. We had a brief introduction about how a court hearing is held and were given brochures describing the seating scheme for all court hearing participants, which was very useful. We attended two court hearings (unfortunately we did not stay until the end) on criminal cases related to drug trafficking. In both hearings the judges were foreigners (not of Asian origin) and held the hearing in English. This fact surprised me as we do not have such practice and options under the Russian law. Because my specialization as a postgraduate student was criminal law, I have really enjoyed our attendance of criminal proceedings.

Visit to Deacons law firm

After the High Court, our next visit was to Deacons law firm – the largest full-service independent law firm in Hong Kong and the longest established. Charlie Liu and Emily Wong from Deacons' Intellectual Property Practice conducted for us a presentation on Hong Kong legal system and legal profession in Hong Kong. After the presentation, we had a chance to see a daily life of a Hong Kong law firm. Deacons has a lot of lawyers working in the Intellectual Property area and it was exciting to speak with them on the differences between our legal systems in this sphere of law.

Many Deacons' professionals with whom we met at their office were supporting and helping the scholars during the Conference, and I am very grateful for that.

Meeting with the Scholarship Committee and Scholar Committee Session

On the first day of the Conference all scholars also had a meeting with IPBA Scholarship Committee where we could learn and share information about legal profession in each scholar's country. The most surprising for me was the fact that there are only about 200 lawyers in LAO PDR. As a result of this meeting only 5 scholars from 10 were elected as speakers for the Scholar Committee Session which took place May 8, 2015. Considering that the Poland and Russian legal systems and regulation of legal profession are mostly the same, it was decided that there is no need to have two speakers in the Scholar Committee Session from countries with almost identical legal systems. Notwithstanding that I was not elected as a speaker, I had an opportunity to speak about specifics of legal profession in Russia during the Session. It was pleasant to see that not only scholars and Scholar Committee were interested in our session, but other lawyers who attended the Session also took an active part in the discussion.

Sessions

During the Conference I attended several sessions and receptions, such as “Women Business Lawyer’s Reception”, Plenary Session, Session “Promoting and/or Undermining Labour Rights through International Trade”, Sessions “Big data” etc. However, there were no sessions closely related to my general law specialization, so I had a chance to look at my specialization from the viewpoint of other law areas.

Social events

The most memorable part of the Conference was social events such as Welcome Reception, Japan Night, Cultural Night and, of course, Gala Dinner. These events allowed me to get acquainted with lawyers from other jurisdictions, as well as to tell about me and our law firm. The Japan Night gave me as a member of Japan desk in our law firm an opportunity to make contacts with Japanese lawyers and Japanese law firms which, I hope, I will have a chance to use in my work. At the Gala Dinner all scholars were introduced to the attendees and received a scholar’s certificate. Afterwards we were very glad to receive many warm congratulations from Conference’s participants.

I hope I will keep participating in IPBA Conferences. It was a great experience and I would like to thank the IPBA Scholarship Committee for the opportunity they provided.