

INTRODUCTION

The birth and Young Age of AIJA

**A dream which became reality,
by George-Patrick LANGLOIS, First President and Founder.**

How many times have I been asked, with the passage of time, the same question: "Did I believe when I created AIJA that it would be that successful?" Well, I must admit that yes ! I did no doubt it at all because it was fulfilling a need that many of us deeply felt. Besides, I and Alain CAILLE were already surrounded by those whom I knew I could pass the flame.

But how did I get them together ?

This is not another story which I have to recall, because AIJA was borne from the conventions of National Federation of young Lawyers of France.

In the thirties, young lawyers of Paris joined together to create the Union of Young Lawyers (UJA), a first UJA which was to multiply all over the country.

During the war and the occupation, the UJA of Paris entered into history when its president and founder Joseph PYTHON died under the torture of the Gestapo rather than violate a professional secret.

A few years after the liberation, when I became a past president of the UJA of Paris, I continued my action within the national federation which comprises the UJA of France and overseas.

When in 1958 I was elected president of the National Federation I enjoyed exceptional circumstances. The first congress over which I had to preside was to take place in the prestigious area of Nice and the Rivière. That was only a few weeks after the return to power of general DE GAULLE and it was to take on a special dimension.

Monsieur MICHELET, Minister of Justice of the new government, had immediately accepted my invitation to come personally in order to show his interest in our work. For several years, we have invited not only the presidents of the neighbouring young bars but also other young people from various countries to join us and inform us about their own national experience.

I must admit that, at the beginning at least, tourism was as much an incentive to come to our congresses as the thirst of knowledge. But it was getting to be an habit, contacts were being made, stronger and stronger friendships were forming between us and those coming from Belgium, Switzerland and Canada to speak in our conventions.

Already, with my friend and vice-president Alain CAILLE of Lille, I was dreaming that someday an international union of young lawyers would be born. Because, in order to insure the future of this new association in formation, all my future successors were already there: Fernand PROBST from Luxembourg, Vincent CARDINAUX from Geneva, Roger DALCQ from Brussels, Nicolas ANTONOPOULOS from Athens, Antonio PLASENCIA from

Barcelona, Mario SCALMONI from Milan, Jacques HOCHSTAETTER from Geneva and Philippe JACOB from Paris.

I must also talk about my friend Georges POULLE who was our first General Secretary and about Daniel MEINERTZHAGEN from Antwerp, our first Treasurer. How could I have any doubt about our success with such a powerful team.

During my two years of national presidency, we kept on discussing it and when my friend Alain CAILLE became my successor at the head of the FNUJA, we invited our foreign colleagues to join us at our Toulouse convention for an historic meal after which we decided to take action.

Amid the general enthusiasm, there was a consensus formed in my favour, to make me the first president and founder in charge of what at the time we called the International Union of Young Lawyers.

We had even made an agenda of its birth by making an appointment on the 1st of July 1962 in Luxembourg to have our constituting general assembly on the occasion of the rentrée of the conference of the Young Bar of Luxembourg.

But when I returned to Paris, I realized that the hardest was still ahead of us.

The first and important difficulty was the disagreement of the past president of the International Union of Lawyers (UIA), Mr. WIRZ, who refused the creation of an association as being directed against UIA.

I then went to Lisbon to the UIA convention in order to try and convince him of the purity of our intentions by showing him that in France the UJA's were perfectly accepted by bars and were in fact the meeting place for young lawyers whose action was to modernize and unify our professional rules as well as the organization of our firms!

I reminded him that the UIA was made of groups and of representative personalities, where I was trying to create an association based on individual members allowing all our young members, from any and all countries, even those deprived of fundamental democratic freedoms, to be protected by their membership in our new international association.

“There could not be any possible competition”, I added, “because when they grow older our members will be at the heads of their respective bars and will be a remarkable input for UIA.”

I must confess, in this small history, that in February 1962 I was over age forty and this is the fundamental reason for fixing the age limit on forty-five, but I also had to foresee the future of my successors.

Nevertheless, President WIRZ was stubborn and did not want to understand anything. As he was going as far as threatening to bring court proceedings, I asked Mr. LUSSAN, Batonnier of Paris, and past President of UIA, to calm down his successor and I, for my part modified the name we had foreseen by replacing the word “Union” by “Association”.

From there on, our relationship became excellent but during the constitutive assembly held in Luxembourg, I had to face a last difficulty.

Whereas I could count on the secretaries of the Paris and Luxembourg conferences as members, I could not, despite a whole night of discussion, overcome the sudden unwillingness of the young bar of Brussels. I do not know what had scared our Belgian friends by the fear of a competition which only existed in our opponents' minds.

But AIJA was born and after the great success of the first Congress in Geneva, with more than an hundred and fifty participants in the rooms of the Grand Conseil and the Court of Justice, the change of position of our Belgian colleagues was so total that after having become members in a large number, they organized in 1964 our second Congress at the Brussels Courthouse in the presence of their highest political and legal personalities.

Such were the beginnings of AIJA, and our congresses then took us in the following years to Munich, Athens, London, Barcelona, Beirut, Rome, Washington, Paris etc. In 1966, we adopted the "Declaration of Athens" which still defines the major objectives of AIJA.

In 1969 in Beirut, I had been impressed but also scared by the predominant atmosphere of luxury in contrast with a deteriorating political situation. The situation was extremely tense between Syria and Lebanon. I had nevertheless decided that on a professional field nothing opposed the organization of a visit of the congress to Damascus. We were surprised to be warmly welcomed not only by the bar in this city but also by the Syrian Minister of Justice in person, a former lawyer.

As in the welcome address he was saying that he did not know how to thank us for our visit, I very simply asked the Syrian authorities accept to free a Jewish scholar who had been confined for months after the hijacking of the airplane in which he was a passenger.

Where the efforts of diplomats didn't succeed, AIJA obtained his liberation. Finally, in 1972, at the Congress of Paris, as a president founder I had the honour of introducing each of my successors to the President of the Republic Georges POMPIDOU in a very beautiful reception at the Elysée Palace.

I shall end my memories of the first ten years of our association without forgetting the Washington Congress which was an evidence of our expansion to the new continent.

So, since its birth, AIJA never ceased to increase its influence. At the time when AIJA is going to celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary in Copenhagen, may I remind you that your Past Presidents had met in Copenhagen, around Rolf MEURS-GERKEN, to prepare a report on professional secrecy and privilege of the lawyer. One should never forget that the liberties and privileges that we are legitimately demanding in the practice of our profession can only be justified if we put them at the service of justice above all national rules and private interests.

As my dream of 1962 has become reality, why should I not dream again of a day where, if all young lawyers of the world were ready to shake hands, you young people would create this chain around the world.

G.P. LANGLOIS
First President and Founder
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Un peu d'histoire



Congrès de Barcelone (1968)

Jacques Hochstaetter, Pierre Berrandier, Philippe Jacob, Antonio Plasencia, Mario Scamoni, Gérard de Gubernatis

A la fin des années 50, le Barreau de Genève était un petit barreau et les jeunes avocats peu nombreux.

Ils avaient besoin de contact avec l'extérieur et souhaitaient nouer des relations pour conforter leurs préoccupations de jeunes avocats en début de carrière.

Ils établirent des contacts avec les UNIONS DE JEUNES AVOCATS (UJA) des barreaux limitrophes et participèrent à des journées régionales à Grenoble, Lyon ou Dijon.

Par la suite, ils furent invités aux Congrès annuels de la Fédération Nationale des Unions de Jeunes Avocats (FNUJA) ce qui fut pour eux l'occasion de rencontrer des avocats étrangers, français, bien sûr, mais aussi espagnols, belges, luxembourgeois, allemands, grecs ou autres avec qui des liens d'amitié se sont peu à peu établis.

En 1962, au Congrès de la FNUJA de Toulouse, un repas réunissait un groupe de jeunes avocats de plusieurs pays.

Constatant les différentes origines des convives, l'idée fut lancée par l'un d'eux d'officialiser ce caractère international.

L'idée fut applaudie, adoptée et arrosée : l'AIJA avait vu le jour.

Rendez-vous fut pris pour le 1^{er} juillet de la même année à Luxembourg pour la constitution officielle de notre Association.

Pourquoi Luxembourg ?

Tout d'abord le caractère international de ce petit pays situé au milieu de l'Europe était symbolique.

D'autre part, le critère économique ne fut pas étranger à ce choix car, dans sa politique d'accueil aux organisations internationales, le gouvernement luxembourgeois accordait assez facilement des subventions, ce qui n'était pas négligeable pour le lancement de notre jeune activité ...

Le premier Comité était déjà international puisque le Président (Patrick LANGLOIS) et le Secrétaire général (George POULLE) étaient français, le trésorier (Daniel MEINERTZHAGEN), belge, et le premier vice-président (Fernand PROBST), luxembourgeois.

Rendez-vous fut pris pour le Congrès de 1963 à Genève.

Lors de ce premier Congrès, les organisateurs furent très vite surpris par le nombre de congressistes car s'ils étaient un peu moins d'une centaine, c'était quand même plus que ce que les plus optimistes pouvaient imaginer un an seulement après la Fondation de l'Association.

L'idée de l'AIJA avait donc très vite fait son chemin.

Ce premier Congrès fut une réussite, comme tous ceux qui suivirent.

Au gré des Congrès les idées s'affinèrent et un des points marquant fut, le 27 août 1966, l'adoption de la Déclaration d'Athènes, chartre de l'activité de l'AIJA qui figure toujours en bonne place dans nos documents.

Avec mon ami Alain CAILLE, nous avons travaillé la moitié de la nuit pour peaufiner ce texte adopté à l'unanimité à l'Assemblée Générale du lendemain.

Le Congrès de 1971, à Washington, a été marqué par un événement important.

Jusque là, l'usage était que la 1^{ère} vice-présidence était confiée au candidat national qui avait été une des chevilles ouvrières de l'organisation du Congrès.

Le candidat américain ne faisait, de loin, pas l'unanimité et j'ai été sollicité de me présenter.

Une élection était donc inévitable, mais, à l'ouverture du scrutin, le confrère américain a retiré sa candidature.

C'était la première fois que le candidat national organisateur du Congrès n'accédait pas à la première vice-présidence. Mais l'usage antérieur a repris pendant encore plusieurs années.

* * *

Pour moi, comme pour tous les présidents successifs, cette période a été marquée par de multiples activités, beaucoup de travail, beaucoup de déplacements, des joies, des déceptions, des émotions aussi.

Ma plus grande émotion a été, je pense, en entrant dans la salle du Tribunal Militaire de Kenitra, au Maroc, de croiser le regard stupéfait de notre ami Mohamed BENNANI qui était poursuivi pour opposition au régime et qui, par la suite, a été libéré de cette inculpation.

Lorsqu'il m'a accueilli, avec beaucoup de courtoisie, le Président du Tribunal Militaire m'a indiqué, dans un français impeccable, que la procédure se déroulerait en arabe ...

Deux journalistes qui suivaient les débats m'ont alors proposé de me résumer, en français, les déclarations des parties et des témoins.

Assis entre ces deux « interprètes », je recevais « en stéréo » des traductions qui étaient souvent contradictoires.

J'ai bien vite compris que l'un des journalistes était le correspondant d'un journal officiel et l'autre, le correspondant d'un journal d'opposition ...

* * *

On pourrait encore raconter d'innombrables anecdotes. D'autres le feront, je pense.

* * *

Cette période m'a laissé un souvenir lumineux par le réseau d'amitiés personnelles qui se sont nouées, développées et qui persistent encore aujourd'hui.

Voir le bébé que nous avons porté sur les fonds baptismaux devenir cette Association de réputation mondiale, réunissant des jeunes avocats de tous les horizons, dynamiques et compétents, produisant des travaux de qualité dans tous les domaines et perpétuant ce climat de partage qui a régné depuis le début, est émouvant et gratifiant pour les anciens.

Merci à tous ceux qui ont successivement porté le flambeau et tous mes vœux pour l'avenir.

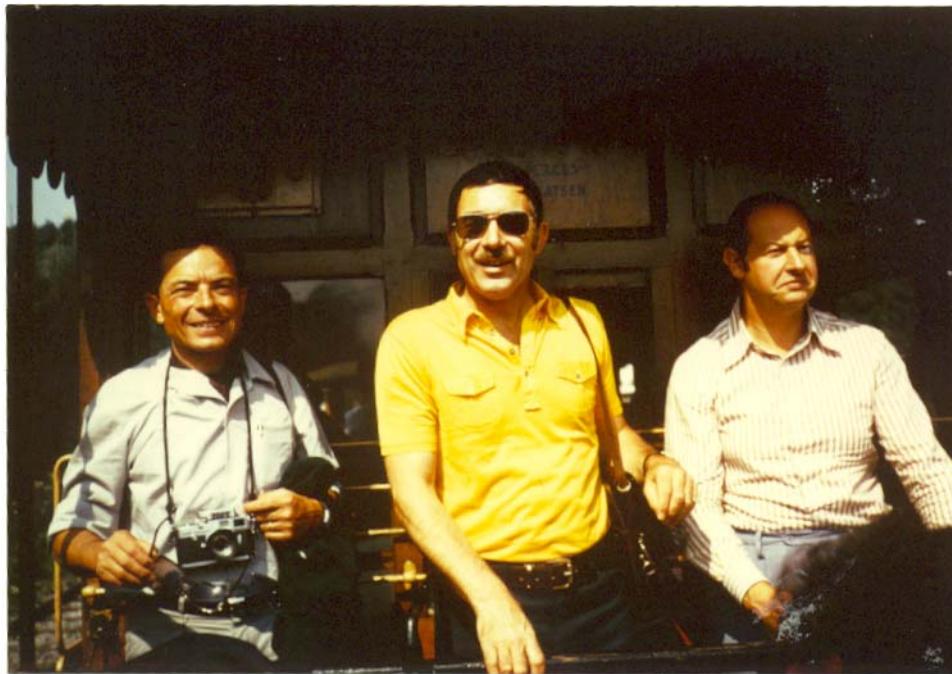
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En conclusion, et comme le disait notre regretté Président Moussa PRINCE avec son inimitable accent libanais :

« Vive notre AIJA bien-aimée ».

Jacques HOCHSTAETTER
Président d'Honneur (1973)

AIJA.CONGRES DE LIEGE : 1973



CONGRES DE LIEGE – LE PETIT TRAIN D'EGHEZEE
Marc WILLEMART, Jacques HOCHSTAETTER, Philippe JACOB

Ceux qui en furent se souviennent surtout je crois de la joie et de la lumière dans lesquelles ces quelques jours d'août 1973 se sont passés sous un soleil radieux.

J'en ai retiré quant à moi la certitude que la jeune association que nous étions- il y avait 200 congressistes environ- avait besoin pour se construire dans la durée d'être solide à l'intérieur et reconnue à l'extérieur et que la base de cette solidité était l'amitié dans l'unité de vue au stade de l'action

De ces réflexions sont issues les deux idées suivantes que j'ai pu mettre en oeuvre par la suite :

-- mieux vaut n'être que quelques centaines de convaincus participant activement à la vie de l'AIJA qu'un annuaire débordant de noms, - pour être reconnus et agissant, appuyons-nous sur les organisations professionnelles représentatives des jeunes avocats en créant pour elles la catégorie des membres collectifs

Et pourtant, ni le congrès de Liège ni ma présidence qui en a résulté n'avaient été planifiés. Le congrès de 1973 en effet devait se tenir en Hollande et c'est ainsi que, d'une manière tout à fait imprévue, le comité exécutif réuni à Londres fin février a confié aux quelques belges venus avec moi, après une joyeuse traversée Ostende Douvres en ferry, proposer de l'organiser à Liège puisque nos amis hollandais venaient d'y renoncer.

En 2 mois le comité organisateur (Francis Bidder(+), Louis Haenen+), Colette Laurent-Neuprez(+), Joseph Colle(+), Jaques Maisse, Jean-Marie Defourny et moi) avait au prix de réunions quasi hebdomadaires peaufiné dans une amitié toute aijienne et une gouaillerie typiquement liégeoise le programme que Jacques Hochstaetter, alors président, n'eut plus qu'à approuver en venant sur place.

De ce programme permettez-moi de ne rappeler ici que le mémorable déjeuner sur l'herbe des cours intérieures du palais de justice et l'excursion du petit train de la vallée de l'Aisne.

Au fil du temps et des congrès, parfois après quelques années d'absence mais non d'oubli j'ai retrouvé ces caractères d'amitié de joie et d'unité qui caractérisent l'AIJA et sont la clef de sa force et de son efficacité.

Permettez-moi de croire, sans oublier bien sûr tout ce que nous devons aux plus anciens encore, que Liège fut pour beaucoup dans la cristallisation de cet état de chose à nul autre pareil.

Marc Willemart
Président d'Honneur (1975)

A glance on AIJA 1975 / 76



"living chess" at Baden Baden 1987: Common Law (black king Anthony Slingsby, black queen Marie-Anne Bastin) against Civil Law (white king Konrad Meingast, white queen Jeannine Delwart). Konrad Meingast is dubbing Philippe Xavier Bender a knight.

Nowadays, the invitations to events of AIJA have the labelling "the only global association devoted to young lawyers". In fact, this was already the character of AIJA in 1975, when AIJA had more than 1200 members from 48 countries. Therefore, I could proclaim at the regional AIJA Congress of the Mediterranean Countries 1976 in Alicante, Spain (organized by Joaquim Galant-Ruiz), referring to Emperor Charles V (Carlos I in Spain): "In the Empire of the AIJA, the sun does not set."

For the first time, AIJA was represented at the annual meeting of the American Bar Association and at the European Conference of the Presidents of the Bar Associations in 1976.

We worked hard on the exchange of young lawyers through the SPES (Secrétariat permanent pour les échanges des stagiaires), founded by my predecessor Marc Willemart in 1975 and headed by Christian Dieryck. We hoped that this program would increase the mobility of young lawyers across the world.

In 1976, we inaugurated the AIJA law courses. The first course was a course on English Law held in London (organized by John Maycock and Richard Rawlence in cooperation with the Law Society). This was the start for a series of law courses and seminars. A discussion in Paris with the famous US lawyer Ralph Nader on consumer protection, organized by Christiane Tchang-Benoît in cooperation with the Paris Bar, brought great public interest to our association.

We tried to improve the organization and the communication by the additional nomination of secretaries for the English, German and Spanish language.

The most important and busy commission we had at that time was the Commission for the Protection of the Rights of Defence.

In this commission, we tried to help colleagues unfairly detained for political reasons in various countries. Thanks to diplomatic interventions and sending an observer – our fantastic Secretary General Albert-Louis Dupont-Willemin - to a trial, we might have saved the life of one of our members in a country of the Maghreb. This colleague said: “When I saw the AIJA observer in the court room, I knew I would not be shot and I would see my family again.”

At Christmas 1975, I read in the papers that our colleague and member Srdja Popovic from Belgrade was accused of hostile propaganda because of his pleadings in the defence of a Yugoslav writer. This was a test case for the freedom of defence and the freedom of speech. I personally intervened as an observer at the trials. In the first instance, our colleague was condemned to one year in prison without suspense. As I did not receive a positive answer on my request for an audience with the Yugoslav Federal Minister of Justice in time, I went with the AIJA National Vice-President for Luxembourg, Louis Schiltz, to a conference of the Ministers of Justice of the Yugoslav Republics in Cavtat, Croatia. There, we succeeded to discuss the case with the Yugoslav Federal Minister of Justice. The appeal court changed the verdict to one year imprisonment with suspension for three years.

As a result of these interventions, we created a Contact Committee UIA-IBA-AIJA for Urgent Actions in the “Defence of Defence”.

Furthermore, we suggested on our congress in Québec City in August 1976 that a convention for the protection of the immunity of defence counsels should be established. On this congress, the “Past Presidents’ Award”, invented by my predecessor Marc Willemart, was inaugurated.

This marvellous congress in the “belle province”, organized by Anne-Marie Trahan, was the second step of AIJA over the Atlantic Ocean – this time very successful.

In Québec, I handed over the Presidency to Harro Gurland and I could state that the abbreviation AIJA meant as well “Amitié des jeunes avocats” – as it still does today.

*Konrad Meingast,
Gmunden, Austria
AIJA-President 1975/76*

AIJA in its early years seemed a very French speaking affair ...



AIJA in its early years seemed a very French speaking affair and that, it has to be said, was its great attraction to the few intrepid, francophone English who were tempted across the Channel and beyond.

My first AIJA congress was in London in 1967 as an articled clerk. The highlight was a voyage through London's Dockland, in and out of locks, and docks and ships with derricks. I can barely believe as I go now to Canary Wharf or fly from City Airport that all this first became a wasteland after containerisation and then a sparkling new hub of economic activity. 40 years is a long, long time – let alone 45!

We went to Beirut the year after to a fantastic casino show and John Young and I tried our hand at simultaneous translation of the AGM into English – the casino show was easier both on the eye and the ear!

Presidents were elected in those days by acclaim, not votes. Acclaim was won because the candidate organised a conference one or two years before. Mine was at Oxford. We stayed at Merton and Christ Church and the sun shone perfectly on the honeyed stone throughout the week. Less serenely I had to place for sale 400 tickets for the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stanford on the front page of the Times for sale. In those days its front page was advertisements. The Committee unwittingly had changed the night for private hospitality in the long months of planning and forgotten the date we booked for the theatre. They clashed! At the moment of discovery my chances of presidency hung by a thread!

The presidency came, and with it a light touch of the tiller to steer us into more Anglo-Saxon waters. They seem how happy, simple times where personal rapports and friendships were everything and progress depended now – but as pioneers we are so proud of how our early initiatives have turned out!

Vive AIJA – a lovely “French” girl who is now at home, linguistically, in so many countries of the world. It was not always so!

Anthony Slingsby
Past President (1979)

QUARANTE-CINQ ET PAS UNE RIDE !



L'AIJA souffle quarante-cinq bougies, qui l'eut cru?

« 45 » est un chiffre clé à l'AIJA, mais c'est une clef de sortie, la fin du droit de vote et des mandats. Et si passés les quarante-cinq piges on n'a plus droit au statut de jeune avocat, il reste assez de souvenirs pour remplir les quarante-cinq ans à venir.

Mes souvenirs d'AIJA ne sont pas d'hier, comme on peut s'en douter. Et je ne les relaterai pas tous ici, discrétion oblige...

Mes premiers pas dans cette joyeuse association remontent à 1974, soit copieusement plus d'un quart de siècle.

En marge du congrès qui se tenait à Salzbourg, nous avions rapidement constitué un groupe d'amis qui se considéraient plus jeune que les autres et entendait participer, non seulement aux travaux du congrès mais également, et plus assidûment peut-être, aux activités périphériques. Pour se distinguer du groupe plus respectable nous nous considérions comme très jeunes au point de choisir un sigle particulier dénommé AITJA. Quelques esprits inquiets ont attribué à ce groupuscule des intentions séparatistes auxquelles nous n'avions jamais songé. Rentrés dans nos barreaux respectifs nous avions la ferme intention de nous revoir, ce qui fut fait à l'occasion de la première saison de ski où nous sommes retrouvés avec femmes et enfants, tous des très, très jeunes, et pas encore avocats. Cette initiative est à la base des rencontres de l'AIJA à ski qui se sont généralisées peu après, d'année en année.

Impossible d'évoquer les seventies à l'AIJA sans mentionner la tornade qui nous arriva du Canada avec Anne-Marie Trahan. Il est difficile de concevoir un cocktail plus effervescent de dynamisme et d'efficacité agrémenté de gentillesse. Ceux qui ne voyaient que ses prouesses de French Cancan endiablées sur les tables des bistrots étaient effrayés. Elle ne tarderait cependant pas à concentrer ses énergies sur les activités et les structures de l'AIJA en commençant par le congrès de Québec en 1976. Sa présidence qui s'en suivit fut un souffle de jeunesse qui fit le plus grand bien. C'est à cette époque qu'on a lancé l'échange des stagiaires par delà les frontières sous le sigle prometteur de S.P.E.S (Secrétariat Permanent pour l'Echange des Stagiaires).

En ce qui me concerne l'évolution prit une tournure plus sérieuse lorsque, élu à la présidence, je me suis engagé à partir à la conquête des jeunes avocats d'Amérique du Nord. Ainsi « mon » congrès fut celui de Philadelphie en 1980. Nous avions déjà une bonne base de sympathisants au Canada et il fallait étendre la présence de l'AIJA aux barreaux des Etats-Unis. J'étais assez seul lorsque je débarquai pour la première fois à Philadelphie avec un fameux jet-lag afin d'y exposer qui nous étions et ce que nous voulions. L'idée leur a plu et avec un petit noyau dur acquis à notre cause, nous avons pu élaborer un programme conciliant les aspirations européennes et le mode de vie américain. Il s'en suivit une conquête de l'Ouest en passant par San Francisco, Los Angeles et les îles

Hawaï où l'ABA tenait son congrès annuel. En fin de compte tout s'est bien passé et à l'issue du congrès notre AIJA avait de solides points d'ancre aux Etats-Unis.

Le Bureau de l'époque travaillait jour et nuit et je lui en sais gré. Merci à Antony Slingsby, Albert-Louis Dupont-Willemin, Marie-Anne Bastin, et Eduardo Ruiz-de-Luna qui nous a malheureusement quitté quelques années plus tard.

Quelques souvenirs de nos respectables commissions de travail...

Au dessus de la mêlée trônait la sacro-sainte commission des droits de la défense, apanage du président qui la couvait jalousement afin d'éviter qu'elle ne s'égare dans les dérives de l'une ou l'autre tendance trop enthousiaste, pour ne pas dire extrême. Elle a fait du beau travail et l'AIJA lui doit, entre autres, un vote sur l'abolition de la peine de mort en 1979, en avance sur la plupart des pays européens. Préparée au comité exécutif de Cannes en 1979, cette résolution eut l'honneur d'une conférence de la presse locale avant d'être votée en assemblée générale à Philadelphie.

Les autres commissions connaissaient des succès variés et variables selon la popularité de leurs animateurs. La commission des doits de la famille suivait un cours tranquille jusqu'à ce qu'on y traite de la famille nucléaire, concept révolutionnaire à l'époque où les familles monoparentales cherchaient à se frayer un chemin. Les résolutions de cette commission faisaient débat en assemblée générale et comme d'habitude, c'étaient ceux qui n'avaient pas suivi ses travaux qui faisaient le plus de bruit.

La commission du droit des affaires prit un départ sur les chapeaux de roue, avec l'effet immédiat de vider les autres commissions de leurs participants. La business law avait la cote et on se bousculait à son portillon jusqu'au moment où une équipe prit l'initiative de sortir de terre la commission de l'arbitrage international en organisant quelques cours d'initiation à cette matière. La nouveauté faisait recette tant et si bien que le flux qui avait suivi les premiers élans de la business law se retrouva aux sessions d'arbitrage en privant les autres commissions de leurs adeptes.

Ainsi les heurs et malheurs des commissions entraînaient les jeunes avocats avides de savoir de l'une à l'autre, au rythme des innovations comme un jeu de chaises musicales soutenu par une bonne java.

Quand par hasard il m'arrive de me pointer à une activité aijiiste contemporaine, je suis émerveillé par l'ordre qui règne et les rouages qui baignent dans l'huile. A moins que ma perspicacité se soit émoussée au point de ne plus voir les défauts de la cuirasse...

Une qualité première est toujours présente : il y fait bon vivre et les phases sérieuses alternent avec les plus joyeuses et l'amitié n'y est pas un vain mot.

Il me semble toujours que l'AIJA vécue intensément est une source de relations professionnelles de qualité mais avec une valeur ajoutée qui la distingue des autres organisations. Les cartes de visite y circulent, comme ailleurs, mais la marque AIJA en sus fait la différence.

Et à quarante-cinq ans elle n'a pas pris une ride. What a wonderful world !

Christian Dieryck,
Président d'Honneur (1980)

45TH ANNIVERSARY OF AIJA: A REMINISCENCE



Opening speech in Copenhagen with Prime Minister looking on:
“In home of Hans Christian Anderson an AIJA Fairy Tale.”

I first met AIJA in 1980 when she came to Philadelphia for her 18th annual Congress. It was love at first sight. We have been together now for 26 years, and AIJA has enriched my life and the lives of all the members of my family in so many ways.

Over the years, through AIJA, we have become close with many wonderful people we might otherwise never have met. We feel privileged to have AIJA friends in Europe, Asia, South America and Africa whose homes we have visited and who have visited us. I'm happy to say that our two daughters now share friendships with many of our AIJA friends and their children as well.

On the occasion of AIJA's 45th birthday, I thought I would reminisce a bit about a special memory or two from the time I was honored to be the President of AIJA during 1987, the 25th anniversary of AIJA.

Let me first pay tribute to Rolf Meurs-Gerken and his organizing committee team, who put on the splendid 25th AIJA Congress in Copenhagen. Among the memories I cherish are the opening ceremony with Denmark's Prime Minister and the ever active, ever helpful AIJA sweat suit clad group of youngsters Rolf unleashed to serve us at every turn. We assembled several display cases at the Congress Hotel and many AIJA members contributed 25TH Anniversary memorabilia – photos, old Congress posters and brochures and the like. I hope we can do this again.

Successes have many fathers, and in what I will next recount, I am only one of many. As the first American President of AIJA, I was strongly in favor of expanding AIJA beyond its primarily western European base. This is particularly interesting in light of AIJA's present aspiration to be “the only global association of young lawyers”, a goal I wholeheartedly subscribed to and one made all the more important in this era of globalization.

Accordingly, I worked with lawyers from Dakar, Senegal and New Delhi, India to promote and back in the first instance an executive committee and seminar in Africa and later a Congress on the Indian sub-continent. There was sizeable opposition to both for reasons which can well be understood. The venues were too far away, too expensive and we wouldn't get a good turnout and participation.



In Senegalese village with Hans-Erik and future AIJA President Nicole

I well remember heated but friendly discussions in the Bureau which finally led to agreement for a 1987 AIJA event in Dakar, Senegal. Bara Diokhane was instrumental in helping to persuade the Bureau to visit Senegal and thereafter in organizing a team of local lawyers that made our visit so spectacular that in succeeding years we happily returned to sub-Saharan Africa for events in Zaire (now the Congo), Mali and Cameroon. Parenthetically, I regret that the participation of sub-Saharan African lawyers does not seem to have expanded in recent years, and AIJA would do well to try to re-invigorate our presence there.

Some of the highlights of our Senegal trip which AIJAists will recall included the warmth of our hosts, several unique musical treats, and visits to the Rose Lake and the slave prison at Goree. We put on a high quality scientific program with Emmanuel Hayaux du Tilly providing simultaneous translation into French. Who can forget François Ruhlmann and Hugo Callens interacting with many Senegalese locals in the market place! Who can forget our farewell meeting where the same Rolf Meurs-Gerken offered closing remarks in the native Wolof tongue?

The 27th Congress in New Delhi presided over by Thierry Garby as President and with a triumvirate of local organizers, Deepjot Singh Narula, Nitin Thakker and Gautam Philip was a striking memorable success. For me, it all began in 1985 on the long train ride in Portugal to Hugo Pinheiro Torres' alma mater at Coimbra. The Indian AIJAists spoke to me, then a candidate for First Vice President, to suggest their interest and readiness to host a Congress. In somewhat the same way as happened in the case of Senegal, heated but friendly Bureau discussions finally led to an agreement later ratified by the executive committee to bring AIJA to New Delhi in 1989.

And what a Congress it was. Many longtime AIJAists still remember the Delhi Congress as one of the very best AIJA events ever. From the opening procession over flower petal strewn paths to excursions to the Red Fort and the Taj Majal, many felt as if they were on a magical tour. I will never forget serving as Captain of Murray's Maharajas, an elephant polo team that included Xavier-Jean Keita and Susannah Knöös. In our match against Walter Semple's team, which included Philippe Xavier-Bender and Gabi Kötschau, our four elephants marched and trod heavily up and down the field doing battle with Walter's four elephants, and, after 45 minutes, we were all happy to celebrate a tie – zero to zero – neither team having gotten even close to scoring a goal.

People join AIJA for many and varied reasons – the legal seminars and scientific work, the possibility of creating legal business relationships, the opportunity to visit interesting locations all over the world and be hosted by knowledgeable, fun, local friends. For me, the number one reason has always been the people of AIJA – many of whom I look forward to seeing early in June, 2007 in Brussels, where together we will celebrate AIJA's 45th anniversary.

Murray
Honorary Past President (1987)

S.

Levin

December 4, 2006

I have 3 Announcements !

The going away speech



Chers amis,

Je viens aujourd’hui rendre devant vous mon tablier de Secrétaire Général de l’AIJA. Ce n’est pas une mince affaire, mais sommes toutes, faut-il un âge pour tout, même celui de la retraite !

Au lieu de vous remémorer toutes les annonces très importantes que j’ai pu faire avec autant de sérieux qu’elles étaient souvent vaines, comme de préciser que telle Commission devait se réunir « sharp », suggérer de ne pas venir en maillot de bain à un Comité Exécutif, refuser de fournir à un tel le numéro de chambre d’unetelle, ou encore rappeler...pour la troisième fois que le petit Robert attend toujours son Papa au desk de l’AIJA, je vais aujourd’hui me donner le beau rôle, celui du narrateur détaché : après avoir beaucoup écrit (348 pages de procès-verbaux en 4 ans, je viens de recompter !), j’aimerai pour la toute première fois, enfin simplement dire !

C’est vrai, j’aimerai simplement dire, and this is not a scoop, combien AIJA prides itself of having created a new language, applauded in all international circles : this new language is called « **Aijas** ». **Aijas** is not English, it is not French, it’s no German nor Spanish or Italian, neither Portuguese or even any known language: it’s **Aijas**.

Aijas is half way between pidgin talk and our worst dreams: it's the language members automatically get after a Congress or two on the third night of a long working session...at the bar of the hotel, and the more empty bottles left, the better **Aijas** they speak.

Examples anyone? Let's see what we have here:

Je me souviens d'un Président qui, ouvrant les travaux du Comité Exécutif de Palerme, n'a pas hésité à dire: « Depuis très peu, mon don du français est beaucoup plus mieux! » Ce à quoi un de ses petits camarades qui ne parlait pas encore très bien, lui a répondu : « C'est bien plus meilleur ! »...

Le même Président avait d'ailleurs souvent des raccourcis saisissants : « Viens, on se fait une téléphonade, car, you know, il faut liaisonner souvent, c'est bon pour all of us ! » Edo, tu es quand même le seul qui m'ait fait écrire dans un procès-verbal du Bureau : « Je dois avoir une liaison avec ce type ! » Ma femme l'a lu et ne m'a jamais pardonné...

Edo had a predecessor who was even more fluent in **Aijas**: Murray actually was so keen in learning the language quick that he one day famously translated the following sentence : « the courts are jammed, damned ! » by « les cases des courts sont en marmalade, dammit! »

Sky, my Aijas !

J'en connais un autre qui voulait toujours faire des « massages » à ceux qui n'étaient pas d'accord avec ses brillantes idées. Je dois vous dire qu'il avait un succès fou auprès des filles du Bureau ! Sacré Siegfried, quel talent !

Nous avons même eu une Présidente qui voulait toujours vérifier « si ce garçon-là est bien de matière AIJA, car ses instruments sont très performants »... Il est vrai qu'Elisabet chantait à merveille !

And even somebody one day told me: « il faut assouvir l'objet de l'AIJA, car j'ai vu de l'argent marcher là sous la table » ! Michael, je ne dévoilerai pas mes sources, sois rassuré, mais cela fait longtemps que tu n'as pas alimenté mon compte à Vaduz !

Isn't that great ? Vous tous, all of you, nous speakons très bien **l'Aijas** !

Tout ceci « n'était pas grave » si ce n'est que mon ami Hugo a voulu aller en éclaireur voir si là-bas il n'y a pas une even better AIJA...

De tout ceci, je garde « un souvenir très précis », car les rires hénaurmes de Thierry et les sourires malicieux de mes deux vieilles complices, Marie-Anne et Suzy, derrière leurs lunettes « have made me heureux so tellement » !

Si j'ai commencé par le passé, c'est pour nous rappeler que nous sommes une faune bizarre : malgré tous les prétextes professionnels les plus sérieux que nous donnons à notre contrôleur fiscal, nous avons toujours envie d'être ensemble partout : c'est suffisamment rare pour qu'au moins une fois on le reconnaîsse entre nous – quelle que soit l'heure du jour ou de la nuit, chaque Aijiiste peut en joindre un autre en tous les points du globe et lui dire non seulement qu'il a besoin d'un coup de main sur un dossier, mais aussi qu'il préfère les bières fraîches,

deux croissants plutôt qu'un au petit déjeuner ou que le lit de la chambre d'amis était un peu dur. Et ça, c'est l'AIJA !

Voilà pourquoi j'ai été actif à l'AIJA, voilà pourquoi un jour j'ai voulu me faire élire au Bureau: j'y ai trouvé beaucoup plus que ce que je n'y cherchais et pour le surplus, merci de me l'avoir donné.

Alors aujourd'hui, je rends mes crayons, mes procès-verbaux et mes announcements. Aujourd'hui aussi je pardonne à ceux qui ont dit tant de mal de moi : ils ont eu tort, car s'ils avaient su ce que moi je pensais d'eux, ils en auraient dit bien davantage ! Mais je garde la liste : on ne sait jamais, car le jour où ils me rejoindront au cimetière des éléphants de l'AIJA, ce jour-là, on en rira encore...en **Aijas** !

Merci à vous tous, c'était super...and see you there !

Philippe Xavier-Bender
Past Secretary General

Amsterdam
Août 1992

Avec les années, il est devenu Honorary Secretary General et cela ne s'est pas arrangé : il est même devenu un peu poète (enfin un tout petit poète et ses rimes sont bien minces) et en 1999, il a commis ces lignes un peu stupides, d'ailleurs empruntées à un autre (un vrai !), mais elles résument bien ce qu'a été pour lui l'AIJA :

L'AIJA, c'est un Mot, mais c'est aussi une Chose :
Quand on en parle, c'est un bon Mot
Et quand on y est, c't'une sacrée Chose,
Mais c'est la Chose avec le Mot
Et c'est le Mot avec la Chose,
Car sans la Chose et le Mot,
Ce s'rait une tout'p'tite Chose !

Moi, j'veo dans l'Mot
Plus d'avantages que dans la Chose :
En parlant Aijas, on s'y croirait Déjas
Et en disant tous le même Mot
On pense tous à la même Chose,
Car on n'a pas fini le Mot
Qu'on est déjà prêt à la Chose !

Alors quand je dis que le Mot
A mes yeux vaut plus que la Chose,
Croyez-moi à demi-Mot
Et j'ai déjà vécu la Chose :
Le jour où le Mot
Vient malheureusement sans la Chose,
Il ne reste plus que le Mot
Pour se consoler de la Chose !

La fortune sourit aux audacieux



Florence 1997: Opening Ceremony

L'AIJA est un trésor de richesses à la portée de tous les jeunes avocats du monde.

J'avais du mal à le croire lorsqu'après le Congrès de Vichy en France en 1994, Douglas Hornung (Ancien Président suisse) au nom du Bureau de l'AIJA, présidée par notre chère Marie Anne Bastin m'a proposé de présenter ma candidature à la présidence de l'AIJA...

J'avais un challenger de talent en la personne de Winfried SCHMITZ ... (Allemagne) un grand spécialiste de M&A.

Mon anglais était très faible, qu'à cela ne tienne, j'ai pris des cours d'anglais avec un journaliste au téléphone tous les matins.

Mon challenger (Winny) était brillant et très impliqué dans l'organisation des séminaires de l'AIJA, de plus le dernier round serait pendant le Congrès de Washington aux USA ...

Qu'importe je plongeais dans l'organisation de l'AIJA porté par un optimiste audacieux et suivait à la lettre les précieux conseils d'Helena DE BACKER (Belgique) excellente « directrice de campagne » et de Marc-André FABIEN avocat et homme politique de talent (Canada) et de Louise LEVESQUE (Canada) précieuse amie dévouée depuis de longues années à l'AIJA.

J'étais adhérent à l'AIJA depuis 1985 mais de Séminaires en Congrès je n'avais jamais accepté de responsabilités jusqu'à ce qu'Olivier BINDER (VP France) à l'issue du Congrès de VICHY en 1994 me fasse confiance en me proposant de devenir VP pour la France.

Représenter les confrères de son pays n'est pas chose facile !

Ceux dont nous sommes les plus proches vous accordent difficilement leur confiance d'autant plus qu'à l'époque je n'étais pas encore inscrit au Barreau de Paris mais celui de Versailles qui m'a toujours soutenu...

Anxieux sur mes réelles capacités je demandais leur avis à quelques confrères dont Rolf MEURS GERKEN (DANEMARK) pour savoir s'il pensait que j'étais capable de diriger le navire AJIA...

C'est à cette époque que pour la première fois de ma vie il m'a expliqué que j'avais « un certain charisme »...

Ce fut une véritable découverte pour moi !

La situation lors du Congrès de WASHINGTON a tourné à mon avantage mais sans les prières du regretté Moussa PRINCE (Président d'honneur libanais) et de Pierre N'THEPE (Cameroun) je ne serais sans doute pas arrivé à convaincre nos chers aijiistes de m'élire comme futur Président.

J'avais parcouru le monde avec mon cher ami Jean Frédéric MAURO (Rédacteur en chef de notre Gazette) pour « vendre notre Congrès de VICHY » et d'évènements AIJA en évènements nous avons parcouru le monde AIJA en Europe bien sur mais aussi au Brésil, en Inde...et le message de l'AIJA « *c'est la meilleure chose qui soit arrivée à un jeune avocat* » passait bien.



Bois-le-Duc Comité Exécutif mai 1997

Mark Bannenberg, Frits Mutsaerts, Anne Degimbe, Jean-Yves Feltesse, Helena De Backer,

Horacio Bernardes-Neto

Bien sûr « les Cassandres » étaient toujours présents donnant mille et une raisons pour ne pas me présenter....sans parler des membres de mon cabinet qui redoutaient les conséquences de mon absence sur le chiffre d'affaire.

L'histoire démontra le contraire, non seulement le chiffre d'affaire a nettement progressé pendant mes 3 ans au bureau de l'AIJA (le réseau a très bien marché...) mais l'AIJA m'a donné plus que je ne pourrais jamais lui rendre.

C'est grâce à l'AIJA que j'ai pu acquérir une véritable « expertise internationale » très utile dans la vie professionnelle permettant de tenir des rendez-vous avec des partenaires d'origines et de cultures fort différente mais aussi d'avoir de l'audace....aucune porte ne pouvant demeurer fermée pour vous-même au plus haut niveau des Etats de notre planète.

De culture occidentale franco-belge ayant vécu plus de 12 ans hors de France j'avais une forte sensibilité internationale mais l'AIJA c'est d'abord et avant tout des avocats...

Un certain sens éthique, de la défense des clients petits et grands, en tant que consultant ou plaideur devant les tribunaux et vous êtes jugés par vos pairs.

Le début de ma tache fut difficile car Marie-Anne Bastin avait tellement bien organisé les choses depuis de nombreuses années qu'il nous était difficile de faire sans elle et aussi bien qu'elle.

Pour être sincère j'ai du « couper le cordon » avec celle qui était devenue un peu la mère de l'AIJA et de nombreux présidents successifs.

Les jeunes présidents et bureaux du futur avaient sans doute besoin de voler de leurs propres ailes tout en conservant certains grands principes de professionnalisation de l'AIJA que Marie-Anne avait mis en place pour doter l'AIJA de structure de fonctionnement pérenne.

Le Bureau de l'AIJA c'est un rythme, un agenda, des réalisations et des projets mais c'est aussi trouver un consensus avec parfois de fortes personnalités.

J'ai bénéficié de l'énergie de Ron ALLEN (Président d'honneur USA) qui avait ouvert la voie de l'AIJA vers l'Est ; de la rigueur de notre secrétaire général Jérôme DEPONDT, de l'extrême gentillesse et de la compétence de Bernard VAN PARYS (Trésorier d'honneur Belgique) et de Etienne ROCHER (Secrétaire général d'honneur France).

J'ai apprécié cette vie trépidante et parfois passionnée du Bureau avec Horacio BERNARDES NETO (Brésil) répliquant à Guy HARLES (Luxembourg) et à Felix EHRAT (Suisse).

Mais aussi ces centaines de courriers avec les services administratifs de Bruxelles où bat le cœur de l'AIJA jour et nuit...merci Anne DEGIMBE , Danièle, Faty...

La vie au Bureau de l'AIJA est très intense mais aussi au sein du Comité Exécutif qui à l'époque semblait penser qu'il n'était « *qu'une chambre d'enregistrement* » mais dont les réflexions nous ont formidablement aidé à créer une dynamique d'accroissement de nos membres.

Curieusement, celui qui m'a le plus stimulé c'est Winfried SCHMITZ (Allemagne) qui avec mon ami californien Malcolm MAC NEIL (Président d'honneur USA) a permis à l'AIJA d'aller en CHINE et d'organiser en dépit des obstacles administratifs le premier séminaire de l'AIJA en CHINE.

Me voici en direct m'adresser avec quelques mots de chinois pour accueillir nos confrères (futurs fondateurs de structures importantes d'avocats en Chine) et découvrir la pratique du droit à SHANGHAI.

C'est encore avec Winfried SCHMITZ que nous avons eu l'audace d'organiser un séminaire à JERUSALEM et à TEL AVIV où nous avions exigé la présence de confrères palestiniens en dépit du contexte politique.

Le thème « DOING BUSINESS IN MEADLE EAST » était consensuel mais les échanges très nourris...

Cela ne s'était jamais vu et le Président du Barreau Israélien m'a décerné la médaille de membre d'honneur du barreau de TEL AVIV ce qui m'a beaucoup aidé dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre du jumelage entre le Conseil National français et le Barreau Israélien.

Hélas nous n'avons jamais pu organiser une manifestation presque sans frais à Las VEGAS par ce que nos confrères ont considéré jusqu'à ce jour, que ce n'était pas « politiquement correct » de se réunir à Las VEGAS...alors que j'avais eu l'opportunité d'y accompagner des clients sans que ce la ne pose le moindre problème...

Chaque Président a «son Congrès» ; cette appropriation est sans doute exagérée mais en ce qui me concerne j'ai eu l'honneur de présider celui de Florence...un des berceau de la culture occidentale où il est très difficile de travailler au mois d'août !

La géniale équipe italienne présidée par Carlo MASTELLONE a organisé un sublime Congrès : tout y était...quelques flashs

- un débat avec une vidéo conférence avec les magistrats de la COUR INTERNATIONALE à LA HAYE en pleine instruction des procès des criminels de guerre en SERBIE
- une intervention de l'AIJA en Afrique au secours de notre confrère injustement incarcéré MOUNTAGA TALL ; notre motion a contribué à la libération de notre confrère !!!
- des discussions passionnées sur la protection juridique de l'embryon
- un instant extraordinaire porté par la majesté des lieux dans la Salle des CINQ CENT où j'ai pu prononcer mon discours au pied de la statue de DANTE !
- une soirée inoubliable sur le PONTE VECCHIO privatisée pour l'AIJA où les drapeaux claquaient au vent comme des bannières de l'éternité...

Si l'AIJA marche aussi bien c'est par ce que les confrères s'investissent véritablement dans ces échanges et ces évènements et je souhaite dans ce petit compte rendu les remercier car c'est surtout grâce à eux que l'AIJA a vécu et se développera.

La vie après la Présidence continue, la transition est parfois rude et le quotidien parfois harassant...

C'est dans doute pour cela que les membres du Bureau que je quittais m'ont nommé « Roi de l'AIJA » en posant sur ma tête à SYDNEY une couronne...lors de notre Congrès en Australie.

Je vous le disais « la fortune sourit aux audacieux » !

Jean-Yves FELTESSE
Président d'Honneur (1997)

Paris, le 3 décembre 2006

Diary of 3 years on the Bureau: September 1998 - August 2001" or Three Years Before the Mast"



Deciding to run for the First Vice Presidency of AIJA was a serious commitment. I joined AIJA in 1985 and was elected to the Executive Committee ("EC") at the London Congress in 1991. That was the next level of serious commitments to the Association. I wanted to participate and be involved in AIJA's continued growth. Later, I became a Presidential Delegate and eventually National Vice President for the U.S. There are typically two tracks that members get on to become involved. There is the administrative side, e.g., the EC, National Representatives and committeees. The other is involvement in the scientific work. I found the administrative side interesting because I thought AIJA could function more effectively. I had a keen desire to get the word out about AIJA to our peers outside the Association. I was later appointed President of SPES, the exchange program of AIJA, and "spread the word" to law students and newer lawyers.

In the Fall of 1997, we held the Prague EC Meeting. In Prague, there was a critical debate regarding the functioning of EC and how it should and did interact with the Bureau. In fact, the debate had been going on for some time and the real question was how to make the EC more relevant to AIJA and better suited to giving the Bureau input on decisions affecting the Association. A temporary Committee was formed to discuss the future of the EC and its relations with the Bureau. With the encouragement of many friends, I concluded the best way to work for the betterment of the Association would be to become a candidate for the First Vice Presidency. I announced my candidacy in Prague. My opponent was Girolamo ABBATESCIANI. The campaign was conducted in the true AIJA spirit and I was elected in Sydney in 1998. Although I had warm friendships with past presidents and we spoke about their unforgettable memories of their presidencies, it was impossible to imagine the impact of the Presidency on my life and career. We all knew that the presidency required a substantial time commitment, and as a volunteer association, the travels and work were personally funded. Each of the members of the Bureau demonstrates their commitment and dedication to the Association and to our profession by Bureau membership.

As a First Vice President, one of the first duties is to work with the national Vice Presidents to set an agenda to continue the growth or at least maintain the growth of AIJA. As we all know, our active membership ends at 45 and AIJA needs to continually demonstrate its relevance to new members so that they will join our ranks and fill the spaces left by our departing members who reach the dreaded age limit!

One of the first acts was to work to strengthen the collective identity of our members. One of the ideas was to develop the AIJA membership certificate which was introduced at the Brussels Congress in 1999. From the EC meeting in Copenhagen in 1998, throughout the first half of 1999, this was one of the tasks which was undertaken. Another was to reach out to regions that deserved greater AIJA presence. I knew one of AIJA's strengths was its ability to bring young lawyers together to discuss their careers, hopes, and expectations for the profession. Although every country has its own unique attributes, we share many similarities in our professional lives. These include the changing nature of the legal profession, the challenges faced by young lawyers in managing their work and private lives, and in keeping their productivity at high enough levels to satisfy their partners.

There was a proposal to hold a Congress in Jerusalem, and there was a unique and dedicated cooperation between our Israeli and Palestinian members in presenting the Jerusalem proposal in Copenhagen.

In March 1999 I traveled to Israel to meet and discuss the proposal with the proposed organizers. Additionally, I used the opportunity to meet with the Tel Aviv Bar Association and was awarded an honorary membership. Additionally, I met with Palestinian leaders and the trip included visits to Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Eilat, Jericho and Ramallah. This was at a different time than we presently see in the news. Everyone I met was encouraged and hopeful about the thought of a Jerusalem Congress. The richness of this experience was one of the highlights of my Bureau tenure.

Immediately after the trip to Israel, we held the Bureau Elargi meeting in Windsor. The Bureau Elargi meeting is an opportunity for the President to bring together the most active members in AIJA to discuss the challenges facing both the Association and the profession. Our President at that time, Felix EHRAT invited a speaker who was the President of the UIA, Stephen Hammond. A roundtable discussion ensued on many issues facing our profession and the debate was lively and informative.

It was clear to me that there were two sets of challenges. One group facing our profession and those facing AIJA. Naturally there was an overlap between the two and I began preparing the structure for my Bureau Elargi next year.



I received input and we moved forward with ideas and proposals through the Berlin Executive Committee meeting in May, 1999 which continued through the Brussels Congress in August. One of our tasks was to analyze the declining membership in Africa. We had loyal participation from our existing African members but there was a shortage of new members being developed. We explored ways of encouraging seminars and other activities in Africa and working with our active African members to spread the work of AIJA. We also broadened the analysis to look at ways of encouraging AIJA membership in other regions outside of Europe, namely the United States, Australia and Asia. We knew that it was a constant formidable challenge to encourage members to attend AIJA events primarily organized in Europe. Therefore, spreading the "AIJA spirit" outside of Europe was a task that required the dedication of our actively local members in each area.

As is tradition, I assumed the Presidency at the conclusion of the Brussels Congress, chairing the second EC meeting of the Congress. New items were on the agenda in an effort to generate discussion and develop a think tank with the EC members on issues of general concern and interest.

October and November, 1999 were busy months. October started with the Opening of the Legal Year in London. A dressy affair, with a lot of typically English pomp and circumstance but a blast of fun and a visit to the past with a march to Westminster Abbey for the ceremonies. In our desire to internationalize AIJA's activities, the EC meeting was organized in Beirut near the end of October. It was a splendid meeting which I characterized as "AIJA with Lebanese characteristics." The visit included meetings with the Lebanese President and Prime Minister. The US Ambassador to Lebanon spoke at a luncheon gathering of the EC. The Gala dinner included the participation of the Beirut Bar Association. All in all it was another memorable series of events but I was not going home just yet. From Beirut, it was off to New Delhi via Bahrain to attend the UIA Congress as the representative from AIJA. There were meetings and conferences galore but the most memorable occasion was an invitation to the Delhi home of Mac and Niti Sarin. They arranged an AIJA evening at their home for old AIJAists to come together and reminisce about their experiences. The Food was excellent, but the opportunity to listen to the old traditions of AIJA passed down from our older members was fascinating and gratifying. I realized that I was participating in the continuation of the AIJA tradition and making tradition as I participated

It was only then that it was back home to Los Angeles via Singapore and Tokyo.

But I was only home ten days because it was time to leave for Warsaw to give the Presidential introductory remarks to our seminar on Public and Private Partnerships. It was a cold, wintery time but the topic was sizzling. The seminar participants included attorneys and business leaders in the private sector. We also met and made friends with various members of the local government and the Warsaw Bar Association. The seminar culminated in an elegant dinner at the Belvedere Restaurant overlooking the snowy grounds of the Belvedere Park. I was encouraged to (although I did not need much encouragement!) to tell a few funny stories over our after dinner drinks. These included the three legged pig joke. Now for those of you who haven't heard it, I'll tell you when I see you!! It was then back to Los Angeles to get back to the pile work at the office and also prepare for the holidays and the upcoming Bureau Elargi meeting in Chicago.

I already prepared the Agenda for the Bureau Elargi meeting which was to take place in January, 2000. I worked with Douglas Hoffman, our then US Presidential Delegate, to help arrange and organize the logistics on the ground. At the same time, I worked on the presentation and organization of the meeting which was, to say the least, ambitious in itself.

We had four topic areas and broke into four work groups. They were first "Standing Commissions and Management Committees, Relevance and Function and Role." Second "The Executive Committee and the Bureau, Interaction, Whose Responsibility?" Third "Human Rights/SOS Avocats-What Should or Can We Do?"; and fourth "Organizational Matters- Officer Succession, etc." We discussed the specific challenges facing volunteer associations in the new millennium. I arranged a guest speaker, Dr. Jorge Rivera-Bernal who opened the meeting with a discussion on the challenges facing volunteer associations because of time commitments and other pressures in the workplace in the 21st Century. Dr. Rivera's firm, the Hamilton Consortium Inc. was experienced in providing consulting to volunteer and charitable associations. We also had a speaker from the American Bar Association William M. Hannay, III, Esq., who gave his impression of Bar Association participation as a past chair of the ABA Business Section.

The attendance was superb with 35 dedicated and interested members traveling from Europe, Africa, and South America to participate and be heard in the one day meeting. Everyone had their chance! These discussions allowed us, as a Bureau, to hear a lot of ideas at one time. Hopefully this would guide us and future bureaus. Fresh ideas and recycled old ideas make for new initiatives for the Association. The event concluded with our gala dinner and dance on the 95th floor of the John Hancock Building!

All along, preparations were still ongoing for the Helsinki 2000 Congress. Just prior to Chicago I traveled to Helsinki to meet with our dedicated friends and organizers to discuss the planning and the basics for the Congress. This visit coincided with the Opening of the Finnish Legal Year. AIJA was greeted grandly and I was given an opportunity to invite

our Finnish colleagues to the Helsinki Congress. Besides they didn't have too far to travel!! Between those festivities I was given an hour by hour breakdown of the Congress plans. If one has not been part of an organizing committee for such an event, you cannot imagine the countless details and preparation that goes into the preparation for a successful Congress. Fortunately, our organizers had their tasks set out for them and each was scrupulously adhering to those details.

After Chicago, I was looking forward to the next AIJA event which was our seminar in Florence on sub-contracting. The scientific work was extraordinary and it was collected and published by AIJA's publisher, Kluwer with a handy reference work. I was proud to have had the privilege to write the introduction to the publication and recognize all contributors for their fine work.

On a personal note, since before Beirut, I was having continued numbness in my right hand which required Carpal Tunnel Syndrome surgery two days (!) before the Florence seminar. My hand was bandaged and it looked like I was carrying a roll of paper towels. The flight was late from Los Angeles to Orly airport from where I was to catch the connecting flight to Florence. I was pulling my heavily laden "catalogue case" which held client files that may get worked while flying, after the Cabernet. As I maneuvered myself going from gate to gate, I was pulled the case with the bandaged hand. I was not the only one late getting to the gate. Another traveler, imitating a sprinter, ran behind me and kicked the case out of my hand. I felt a sharp sting and pop. It was at that point that I realized that the incision popped open and there was nothing to be done. I tried my best to keep incision together throughout the trip. When I got home, the doctor told me I should have taken better care of myself. Oh well. This was just one of hazards of the Presidency, being wounded in action!

Now, back home spending some time with the family, spending a lot of time at the office I was looking forward to the next trip which would be held in Vienna. Annually, Austria is the home of the Juristen Ball where lawyers congregate for a ball in the finest Viennese style. The Juristen Ball coincides with the meeting of European Bar leaders. Each of the international bar leaders has an opportunity to address the congregation where I was AIJA's ambassador for the meeting. I submitted a paper which was inspired by the Chicago meeting. The report discussed the phenomenon of declining voluntary bar association membership and how best to invigorate interest in membership. I encouraged all of the bar leaders to work harder at explaining the benefits of such memberships beyond the obvious business reasons. I talked about the camaraderie and friendship that are a significant part of AIJA and which are indeed a part of our humanity. Making friends at these social events makes us better human beings and enriches us as lawyers.

The Juristen Ball followed the meeting and the next day we had lunch with bar leaders from four different countries. We became friends, shared experiences and agreed that we should keep in touch.

In between all of the official events, the Bureau meets in various location including the AIJA Brussels office. These meetings involve practical as well as strategic planning for the association. It was now time to prepare for the Luxembourg EC meeting which schedule for the May, 2000. Via these Bureau meetings, we report to each other the activities, significant events and ideas for future activities. We also deal with a lot of administrative details and engage in lively debates among ourselves. The debate is healthy and assures the vibrancy of AIJA. Our April meeting was devoted partially to the preparation for the Luxembourg EC meeting. Typically, we contact the organizers to make sure that everything is on schedule and help if there are any problems in the organization.

It is May, 2000 and I now found myself in Luxembourg meeting with the organizers who arranged the event with style and precision. We stayed at the Hotel Royal, had a visit to the museum and the gala evening was attended by the Minister of Justice for Luxembourg who made everyone feel at home and welcome in Luxembourg. We danced the night away at a local disco and the next day was the typical city tour. That evening Veronique deMeester and her husband, Michel, invited me to their home for a relaxing evening of conversation, excellent food and drink.

At this time there were already three trips to Helsinki to visit with the organizers to review the planning for the upcoming Congress.



Now, for the President, looking to the Congress is both an exciting and nervous experience. It requires planning to recognize other bar dignitaries and passed AIJA officers at a cocktail party in their honor. There is of course the opening address during the Opening Ceremony. There are preparations for the EC meetings which will take place during the Congress. Each of Bureau members planned to attend as many of the working sessions and

events as humanly possible for the five of us to attend. We did have a bit of an advantage in that we had a sixth Bureau member from Maite MASCARO-MIRALLES who was the Assistant Treasurer working to fill the very large shoes of our soon retiring Bernard VAN PARYS. Therefore, we had the man and womanpower to make sure that the Bureau attended the events and we recognized the work of the organizers at the Congress working sessions, committees and commissions. With the incredible efforts of the organizers, the Helsinki Congress was a great success. From the opening ceremony to the classical concert by the Kuusisto Brothers at the “Rock” church, from “Helsinki night”, and local dancing, to the food and the late evening disco music, to the Day Out in the wilderness with festivities to please everyone, and from the efficient and comfortable environment for the working sessions, to the gala evening, everyone was kept busy, happy and even productive! Computer terminals were set up for the Congresses to check and send email and the Bureau members were given cell phones to stay in touch with each other at all times (they were water proof for the Sauna!).

I was also interviewed for Finnish national television to talk about this international invasion of lawyers visiting Helsinki. The interview had more than a few surprises. It also gave me the opportunity to speak to the Finnish nation about what AIJA is and what it does.

To wind down from the, Gala evening, we spent Sunday with my dear friend and member of the organizing committee, Pekka Jaatinen, and his wife Anna, at their summer home. Now I was a naturalized “Finn” and I knew exactly everything there was to know about the Sauna experience!

The next day I took the family to Estonia and we walked the capital in pouring rain. However, the rain did not dampen the experience but instead gave it that distinctive eastern European flavor.

As mentioned above, the Presidency is turned over to the First Vice President at the second EC meeting during the Congress. It was at this meeting that my dear friend and successor, Michelle Sindler, assumed the Presidency. At this point, the President becomes the Immediate Past President. Theoretically, the Immediate Past President has the opportunity to now relax after a full year of the Presidency and constant activities. However, this was not the case. As with all Presidents, everyone has their ideas as to how best to utilize the one year Presidency. One year is a short time to try to accomplish admirable goals. I told Michelle I was there to help and she made me prove it! The next thing I knew I was off to Buenos Aires for the next UIA meeting!

Working during transitions on the Bureau are the most interesting. In the first year, the First Vice President is to watch, learn and absorb in preparation for the Presidency. During the Presidency, the President has his or her goals and objectives and hopes to meet at least some of them. The President is the number one Ambassador for AIJA attending meetings and conferences as AIJA’s official representative. However, as we know, one cannot be in two places at the same time. At this point one looks to the Immediate Past President for some assistance with the duties and responsibilities provide with other events.

The Immediate Past President hopefully provides some wisdom to the President and also support at these collision times.

Once the President has lived through the year of the Presidency, there is a better understanding of how best to juggle all of the responsibilities that exist, not just with the Presidency, but how to manage those together with your work and private life.

The Immediate Past President does these duties as her or she leaves to the next Congress and prepares for rotation off of the Bureau. For me, this occurred at the 2001 Montreal Congress. Prior to the Congress, I attended the Scottish Faculty of Advocates annual meeting on behalf of AIJA and used that opportunity to get in touch with my Scottish roots. I bought a kilt that belonged to the MacNeil clan (the “a” was dropped by my Grandfather when he moved to the USA). I wore it to the Gala event and learned what was meant to “properly wear the kilt! It was a huge success with the Scottish Advocates and this would be my “uniform” for the closing dinner at the Montreal dinner.

The rotation of the Bureau takes place at the general assembly meeting at each Congress. This is at or near the conclusion of the Meeting. Michelle coyly told the Bureau she wanted us to “dress up” a bit for the General Assembly meeting. She wanted us to look a bit more “official.” I had my doubts about this strategy but as a loyal Immediate Past President, we dressed elegantly for the General Assembly meeting. It was a high fashion event but Michelle’s motives soon became apparent. The Immediate Past President gives a farewell address which is a bit difficult to prepare. First, I wanted to thank those members who went above and beyond their call of duty to help you in your agenda to leave a lasting mark on AIJA. I also wanted to thank my fellow Bureau members with whom I worked with and developed special relationships. I also wanted to mention your accomplishments but also look to the future recognizing that each President will put their own special stamp on the Association.

We had several Past Presidents who attended the General Assembly meeting and I wished to recognize them as well. At the conclusion of my remarks, which were a bit emotional at times, Michelle’s wardrobe advice became apparent. The next thing I knew all of the Bureau came out shooting pistols to the growing and vibrant sound of the James Bond theme pulsating in the room. Now those of you who know me know that I have a collection of James Bond souvenirs and memorabilia. I have occasionally bothered members of different countries to seek out James Bond movie posters in different languages.

Therefore, this moment of was perhaps one of the most memorable of the AIJA Bureau experience. But, best of all, my son Geoffrey McNeil was also present. Geoffrey is a Videographer. He recorded the Montreal Congress and caught the entire Congress on tape. I was proud of him and he created a permanent and moving memoir!

Each year, just before the Congress ends, the Bureau spends an evening alone discussing the past year but really using the time to reflect on good times, the difficult times, and the accomplishments. It is a rare moment where the Bureau truly bonds together (no pun

intended). At that time, the Immediate Past President knows that he or she will not be there for next year's meeting. I expressed my thanks and gratitude to the fellow Bureau members for their help throughout my tenure. My fellow Bureau members gave me a special tribute with the send off with the James Bond theme. I thanked them again.

In summary, the above is meant to be more than a travel log. Sometimes there is such a mystique and aura surrounding the Bureau and the Presidency that some members may be intimidated by the thought of considering leading AIJA. This memoir is designed to give you an insight into the progression of a candidacy, membership on the Bureau, the difficulties, but most important, the rewards associated with leading an international lawyers association.

Is it expensive to be President? Yes. Is the gratification and satisfaction worth the expense? Absolutely yes. Is it difficult to manage the AIJA life, personal life, and professional life? Yes. Is one able to manage these three facets of ones life? Absolutely yes. One learns to be even more organized, more efficient, and more sensitive to those around you. The President needs to be firm and resolute, but also must have compassion and concern for the members. Remember, we are all volunteering our time for the Association.



A good President inspires others to action. Inspiration comes from concern about what everyone's role is in the Association. Concern is contagious. When I ran for President, we had two capable candidates who were concerned about the Association. The election was exciting and everyone took part and was interested in the outcome.

AIJA deserves to have capable candidates come forth, express their interest and run for the Presidency. I encourage our up and coming members to think early about becoming a member of the Bureau. Talk to the Bureau members. Talk to the Presidents.

However, let us not forget the efforts of our Secretary and Treasurer which are so vital to the Association and form the backbone for each President. For myself, I can say that without the help of Bernard VAN PARYS, and his successor, Maite MASCARO-MIRALLES, and Etienne ROCHER, and his successor, Marc KERGER, the Bureau term would have been impossible to manage. They provide the dedication and input to effectively lead the Association. Bernard and Etienne, then, Maite and Marc are the guarantors of the allow the President to lead AIJA. Each performs distinctive duties for the Association. They are sometimes referred to as the “Administratifs”; however, that term does not do their dedication justice. The Treasurer works to assure the financial stability and capability of the Association. The Secretary acts as our memory. Without either, the Presidents could not function.

I encourage you to reread this “diary” and consider your role. Are you ready to consider becoming a Bureau member?

To all my dear friends and colleagues, I hope this special AIJA 40 Gazette, celebrating 40 plus years of AIJA, brings back memories, brings laughs and insights, and most importantly I hope it brings you closer to AIJA.

To all of our contributors who have responded to my requests for their personal AIJA experiences, I personally thank them for their contributions. It shows you that just because some of you may reach 45, we are not off the hook to volunteer.

Best wishes to all,

MALCOLM S. McNEIL
Honorary Past President (2000)

Claudio COCUZZA

President of AIJA 2002-2003



When I look back to the year during which I had the privilege to serve as President of AIJA – *Anno Domini* 2003 - I am very proud of our Association and its achievements.

I can say - infact – of being the only President in the history of the Association who had organized – in the very same year - two Annual Congresses!

Why?

You might recall that AIJA had launched in 2002 the project of “going to Asia”: it was then decided to set the 2003 Congress in Hong Kong.

Everything was going according to plans and - indeed – the fantastic team of Chris Lambert with whom I was working had prepared and fully planned in December 2002 – already 6 months before the Congress! – the full and final program, printed and ready to go out for distribution to our members.

Mother Nature had, however, other plans for AIJA.

Between the winter 2002 and the spring 2003, a violent SARS epidemic spread out through the Asia-Pacific region. Serious concerns on safety and a pressing media campaign created an enormous alarm: Hong Kong was one area where the risks of being exposed appeared then to be substantial.

I had to take the most difficult decision of my life.

On March 30 2003, the Hong Kong Congress was cancelled and we had to work - very hard indeed - to relocate the Congress in another venue.

Between March 30, 2003 and May 15, 2003 the entire Association worked – relentlessly – towards this goal, facing on enormous challenge and turning the risk of not having a Congress, for the first time in our long history, into a memorable teamwork that produced - miraculously – a successful AIJA Congress in the beautiful city of Edinburgh, Scotland.

All members of AIJA were able to turn a crisis into a success, to address a tremendous challenge and indeed keep on growing and increasing the profile of the Association.

I had the most formidable task of leading the team that took the challenge and succeeded: of course my Bureau - Marc Kerger, Maite Mascaro, Adi Seffer, Miguel Avillez Pereira - and a terrific team on-site, led by Hilary Kane, Head of the Scottish Organizing Committee.

AIJA must not forget the courage of his members, their commitment, their determination, their great generosity.

I cannot and will not forget a tremendously rewarding year, the most enriching and challenging of my life.

Claudio Cocuzza
President d'Honneur de l'AIJA (2002)