



THE ONLY GLOBAL ASSOCIATION OF YOUNG LAWYERS

AIJA'S BALTIC INVASION

It is always nice to be able to say that you were the first.

AIJA's first ever Baltic Sea Festival; a seminar gathering together lawyers from the countries surrounding the Baltic Sea, was held in a beautiful but cold Tallinn on 27-28 October 2006. The topic for the seminar was "Buying and Merging in Emerging Europe - M&A Trends in Old and New Europe" - a topic which proved attractive enough to bring to Estonia lawyers not only from the Baltic Sea region, defined as Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Poland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Finland, but also from the countries such as the UK, Italy, Hungary, Switzerland, Austria, Luxembourg, Norway, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic and - Brazil. To the organising committee's delight, this regional get-together was attended by approximately 130 participants, over half of which were non-AIJA members.

The seminar focused on recent developments in the European and in particular Baltic M&A market and covered the Takeover Directive, the Cross-Border Merger Directive, Antitrust issues and practical aspects and dynamics of M&A in the Baltic region. The speakers represented experience and knowledge from the academic world, the business environment and, of course, law firms from the Baltic and Nordic countries and mainland Europe. The program proved a success and gave a good insight into recent European developments and challenges seen with the eyes of for instance a Finnish lawyer based in Riga, a Danish former law firm partner and current University Professor or a Lithuanian investment banker.

Despite an autumn storm doing its best to keep the seminar participants in the SAS Radisson hotel and off the streets of Tallinn, the city offered us an impressive reception at the beautiful Gothic Town Hall, an optional guided tour in the charming medieval Old Town, which by the way is a UNESCO World Heritage, and fantastic dinners in the restaurants of the Old Town. As can be expected, Tallinn also provided entertainment after dinner in terms of drinks and clubbing for those who felt up to it.

All in all, the seminar was a success both in terms of attendant numbers and the scientific program. Particularly pleasing was the high number of attendants from the Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and the fact that we had the chance to introduce AIJA to many non-members, who we hope will not remain non-members for much longer. The seminar also gave the participants a unique opportunity to network with other lawyers from the region, an opportunity which was seized by most.

I think I speak for all members of the organising committee (consisting of myself, Toomas Prangli and Toomas Vaher from Estonia and Anders Forkman from Sweden) when I say that we are happy to have been able to bring together lawyers from around the Baltic Sea under the umbrella of European M&A and AIJA. We are also fairly certain that while AIJA has seen its first Baltic Sea Festival, it has not seen its last. A new AIJA tradition has been born.

Tanja Meinander