

Darya Shkittina
Moscow, Russia
IPBA 2013 Scholar

I would like to share with you the experience I obtained during the IPBA 2013 Conference in Seoul.

First of all, the day when I was notified by the Scholarship Committee that I was chosen as IPBA Scholar was one of the happiest in my life. From the very beginning of my education in the Moscow University I engaged myself in study of Chinese Law, and it was not long before I realized that the Asian legal systems are not being researched in Russia, - today I do not recollect more than five Russian experts in modern Chinese Law, and the situation with the other Asia-Pacific countries in most cases is much worse. I spent one year in China ten years ago, however, since then I did not have an opportunity to visit Asia.

Therefore, in the first place I would like to thank the Scholarship Committee for this wonderful and challenging opportunity to become a scholar and a member of one of the leading legal organizations in the world. I would also thank the then President of IPBA Lalit Bhasin and the Seoul Host Committee for the chance to be part of a community numbering thousands of distinguished lawyers from all over the world, and for the most warm and amicable welcome. Staying in Seoul was, but no means, a wonderful experience.

The first day, April 17, was marked by a warm welcome of the scholars, as well as a presentation of the Women Business Lawyers Committee which showed the existence and significance of the problem of small participation of female lawyers in management of the law firms all over the world. The fact that the overwhelming majority of the Conference participants were men was a regrettable evidence of this problem. It is an obvious fact that law business makes specific demands to the lawyers, and in most cases, unfortunately, the work and life balance is not observed. I presume it is harder for the female lawyers to observe such balance between creating a family and building a career. The situation worsens in countries where protection of women's rights does not have a long and successful history, and the social and cultural position of a woman tends to be insignificant due to national and religious factors. This makes woman the most unprotected category of lawyers, who often have to make a most critical choice between development as a professionals and being a wife and a mother.

Nevertheless, the IPBA Welcome Reception which was attended by more than a thousand prominent lawyers from all over the world was an exciting experience, and during the event it was easy to establish new business connections and exchange not only business cards, but also views and ideas. The general atmosphere of the Conference was benevolent and friendly, and the organization was extremely efficient.

On April 18-20 I attended several Committee Sessions. I must admit, that most the presentations were performed on a high level and many topics were interesting even if they had no relevance to my current activities.

On April 18, I found extremely interesting, in terms of studying the Asian law, the Plenary Session (“Hear from the CEOs” and “Hear from the Managing Partners”), especially presentation of Brenda Lei Foster, former President of the AmCham in Shanghai who provided valuable opinion on Chinese legal realities. I also attended “M&A Negotiation Trends and Practices in Pan-Pacific M&A” Committee Session which provided for new information on cross-border investment.

The Event Dinner which closed the day was a tremendous experience as several of us were engaged as actors in a Korean movie, and I found it extremely thrilling to become a Korean prime-minister of the old days. This, as well the following social events helped us to look at other lawyers from a different point of view and establish contact on a new level, for there is nothing like exchanging with a prominent lawyer from South America something like “hello, my judge – hello, my prime-minister” for the rest of your life.

On April 19, I attended Cross-Border Investment Committee Session related to “Shareholder Activism and Corporate Governance” and “Unusual Cross Border Contracts”. I found particularly interesting presentation of Fernando Hurtado De Mendoza on state participation in commercial contracts in Peru, and intend to proceed with a publication on the topic in Russia. This eventful day ended with a Gala Dinner and Young Lawyer’s night.

On April 20, all scholars participated in a special session “A Cultural Exchange with our IPBA Scholars and Friends: Business Etiquette in a Dynamic World”. All of us made a short presentation on cultural specifics of business etiquette. Taking into account that scholars represented Samoa, Cambodia, Myanmar, Vietnam, China, Philippines, Israel, New Zealand, Nepal and Russia, the representation covered several continents. Although Russia does not have any cultural differences from European business etiquette, I informed my colleagues on different “types” of Russian businessmen, Russian holidays and other related issues. Conducted in a semi-formal way, this Session was a heartwarming and inspiring end of the Conference for all of us.

By the end of the Conference, I understood the following: only two lawyers from Russia participated in the Conference (me and the partner of my firm, Maxim Alekseev). This reflects a sad fact that the Russian legal market does not pay enough attention to development of relations with the legal businesses of Asia-Pacific Region. This can be solved, *inter alia*, by bringing IPBA ideas and ideals to Russia.

Also I would like to note that many presentations at the Committee Session were related to narrow topics in different spheres of law and practice, and I as a constitutional lawyer lacked for generalizations. Nevertheless, the on-site experience described in narrow topic showed great possibilities for generalized studies, and at some level helped in my further researches related to Asia, as well as enhanced my M&A experience.

Attending the Conference programs enriched my experience and enhanced my contacts with distinguished lawyers from all over the world, which was a rare and a valuable opportunity. The focus of Asia, although underestimated in Russian legal spheres, seems to be one of the keys to the future, especially taking into account the growing significance of Asia in the world’s political, economical and cultural spheres. In this situation I felt like being in vanguard of the movement towards legal Asia.

In conclusion, since no other country has such a unique location both in Europe and Asia, it is obvious that IPBA should be brought to Russia, and I am ready to assist in all possible ways in implementing this idea.

I would like to express once again my gratitude to the Scholarship Committee, and the opportunity granted to me as a Scholar.

Yours Sincerely

Darya Shkittina, Ph.D.
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