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IPBA Scholar Report on 23rd Annual Conference in Seoul, South Korea

The 23rd IPBA Annual Conference was held at the Sheraton Grande Walkerhill Hotel in Seoul, South Korea from Wednesday 17th to Saturday 20th April 2013. The theme of the conference was Dynamic Asia – new opportunities and challenges for law and business.

More than 1,500 delegates around the world came together for four days to share ideas on how the legal profession in the Asia-Pacific region could work better with business, government and wider society to enable countries to remain competitive, innovative and strategically agile in today's market.

On the morning of 17th April, the IPBA scholars were kindly invited by Judge Jun Hwa Jung to visit the Seoul High Court. Judge Jung provided us with a tour of the Court and we also had an opportunity to sit in one of the Court's morning trials. We were impressed by the size and architecture of the Court's building as well as the efficiency of the Court's use of modern technology in the courtrooms. After our Court visit, we were invited to attend lunch at the office of Yoon & Yang by Mr Kwon Hoe Kim. We had the privilege of meeting with some of the firm's leading professionals and had an opportunity to discuss about the current and future legal market for private practice firms in Korea.

The conference programme included plenary sessions with expert speakers, thematic group discussions, and a wide variety of exciting events, including a traditional Korean "hanbok" fashion show and a live dinner show put on by popular K-pop artists. I especially enjoyed attending seminars on Aviation law and Banking, Finance and Securities which provided for some very interesting discussions around some of the issues currently faced by various jurisdictions around the globe.

For the first time at an IPBA Annual Conference, the IPBA Scholarship Committee had its own seminar session which gave each of the scholars a chance to present short talk on the current etiquette in their jurisdiction in regards to meeting foreign legal counsel and conducting business negotiations. This was a huge success and provided an opportunity to hear about different traditions to help better understand and communicate with lawyers in other countries.

It was a very memorable and rewarding experience to attend the 23rd IPBA Annual Conference in Seoul, South Korea. The conference was very special for me as it was held in my home country of Korea. It gave me an opportunity to learn more about Korea, its culture and the legal system, which was something which I had always wanted to experience. I would like to sincerely thank the IPBA Scholarship Committee, the Secretariat, Dr Shin and his Host Committee for providing me and my fellow scholars with the opportunity to attend such a prestigious and unforgettable international event.

James Jung