



Almudena Arpon de Mendivil



Ernesto Zedillo

Rule of law, positive impact of profession and AI in spotlight as IBA 2024 kicks off

By John Malpas

IBA president Almudena Arpon de Mendivil Aldama was due to underline the IBA's role upholding the rule of law as she welcomed more than 4,000 delegates at the IBA 2024 Annual Conference in Mexico City yesterday evening.

In a speech that was due to be delivered after the IBA Daily News went to press, Arpon de Mendivil Aldama, was expected to praise the Mexican legal profession and its leaders for their "outstanding, rigorous and peaceful support of the separation of powers" as Mexico undergoes judicial reform proposals that the IBA has characterised as raising "serious concerns about the judiciary's independence".

The opening ceremony was due to hear a keynote address from former Mexico president Ernesto Zedillo, a member of The Elders, an independent group of global leaders founded by former South Africa president Nelson Mandela with a mission to promote "peace, justice, human rights and a sustainable planet".

Also due to speak was Mexican Supreme Court president Norma Lucía Piña Hernández who, along with her fellow Supreme Court judges, are the recipients of the inaugural IBA Impact Award for their efforts to defend the principal of judicial independence in the face of plans for a popular vote to elect judges.

The opening ceremony kicks off a week-long conference that begins in earnest today.

Other top speakers at the conference include human rights activist and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Rigoberta Menchú; Marc Rotenberg, founder and president of the Center for AI and Digital Policy; and John Sullivan, former US deputy secretary of state and former US ambassador to the Russian Federation.

The roster of keynote speakers also includes businessman, television presenter and motivational speaker Nando Parrado – one of the 16 survivors of Uruguayan Air Force Flight 571, which crashed in the Andes on 13 October 1972 – and actor, director and writer Liev Schreiber.

The findings of the IBA's recently published Impact Report analysing the economic and societal benefits of upholding the rule of law will also feature prominently at the conference, including in a session hosted by Arpon de Mendivil Aldama.

Another major theme running throughout the conference will be the impact of AI on the law with more than 30 sessions dedicated to this topic.

The IBA Daily News will carry a full report of the opening ceremony tomorrow.

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DELEGATE VIEWS

Meet some of the IBA delegates and hear what they are looking forward to.

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MEET THE IBA OFFICERS

Get to know the IBA's leadership team.

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IBA Impact Award honours Mexican Supreme Court for upholding rule of law

By Ben Rigby

Mexico's Supreme Court – Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación – has been presented with the International Bar Association's (IBA's) inaugural Impact Award for its efforts to maintain the rule of law under challenging conditions.

This prestigious award, introduced by the IBA following a landmark report produced with support from McKinsey on the social and economic effects of the legal profession, aims to recognise significant contributions to the rule of law and societal improvements.

The Supreme Court, led by president Norma Lucía Piña Hernández, has been acknowledged for its courageous and ethical efforts to uphold the rule of law at a time when the judicial system in Mexico is under heightened pressure. In its citation for the award, the IBA said the court had worked relentlessly, with courage and with the highest ethical standards in very difficult circumstances, to uphold the rule of law in Mexico. President Hernández



was set to accept the award on behalf of the court at the opening ceremony, which took place after the IBA Daily News went to press.

The IBA report, to be discussed at a keynote session on Thursday, has demonstrated that the rule of law promotes sustainable economic growth. Mexico, currently 12th in the world economic ranking by GDP according to International Monetary Fund (IMF) data, has benefited from such growth in which the court's work has played a part.

The award comes amid concerns over plans by the Mexican government to reform the judiciary, with proposals for Supreme Court ministers and federal judges to be elected by public vote, which has sparked debate over the potential impact on judicial independence.

IBA president Almudena Arpón de Mendivil Aldama previously called the moves “alarming”, stressing the need for a meticulous examination of the implications of such reforms on a fair and independent judiciary.

The IBA Impact Award follows the granting of an earlier award, the Ebru Timtik Award, to Mexican lawyers Alicia de los Ríos and Ana Yeli Pérez Garrido by the IBA's Human Rights Institute in June 2023.

Such awards underscore the critical role of legal professionals in shaping a just society, recognising that the independence of the judiciary and a robust and independent legal profession are cornerstones of the rule of law.

AI in focus at second ‘High Tide’ conference for law firm business development professionals

By Ben Rigby

Artificial intelligence will increasingly be used by business development professionals to drive efficiency, according to panellists at the ‘High Tide’ law firm marketing and business development conference.

The second edition of the hugely popular side conference arranged by members of the marketing and business development (BD) subcommittee of the IBA's law firm management committee was opened by Bennett Jones's Katherine Hutchinson and featured a series of short talks and panel debates on key topics with an international line-up of speakers.

Key highlights included the return of the popular managing partners panel, featuring speakers including Kromann Reumert's Christina Bruun Geertsen, Bowmans' Alan Keep, Pérez-Llorca's Jorge Mondragón and Tilleke & Gibbins' Tiziana Sucharitkul.

The panellists said AI will drive efficiency in BD activities, allowing BD teams to spend more time on strategic projects where they can add value.

Moderated by Rachel Hussey of Arthur Cox in Dublin, the wide-ranging session also underscored why getting the support of a firm's managing partner is critical to success, as well as discussing successful approaches such as training delivery, data-driven BD plans, integrated business services, cross-practice collaboration and increased client engagement for strategic insights.

This was followed by a Chatham House ‘fishbowl’ session facilitated by Hutchinson, which explored topics on the minds of senior BD professionals. In introducing the session, Hutchinson said: “We have a



Left to right: Rachel Kennedy, Addleshaw Goddard; Rachel Hussey, Arthur Cox; Katherine Hutchinson, Bennett Jones; Isabell Zimmer, A&O Shearman; Hugo Peña, Pérez-Llorca; Charlotte Ford, Charles Russell Speechlys

lot to learn from each other,” describing the session as “Part problem-sharing, part problem-solving, part therapy!”

The event concluded with a general counsel panel with a wide-ranging discussion, with contributions from Jessica Gallegos of Vitesco Technologies, Angelica Huacuja of Uber, Abhijit Mukhopadhyay of Hinduja Group in London and Noe Pascacio of TC Energía.

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Meet the IBA Officers



Almudena Arpon de Mendivil y Aldama, IBA President

Almudena Arpon de Mendivil y Aldama is IBA President for the period 2023-2024. Almudena is a partner of Gomez - Acebo & Pombo, Madrid, Spain. As IBA President, Almudena's greatest aspirations are to increase even more the IBA profile, engagement with members and to contribute to the legal profession and society. With those aims, she established five IBA priority areas. First, highlighting the role of the legal profession and of the rule of law. This resulted in the landmark *IBA Report on the social and economic contribution of the legal profession*, the first comprehensive study measuring the effects of lawyers work and of the rule of Law. Second, reflecting on the legal implications of AI in terms of regulatory principles, on the impact in the profession and on the rules regulating legal practice. The outcome being the report *The Future is Now: AI and the Legal Profession* to be launched this Thursday. Third, taking into account the increasing relevance of the environmental, social, and governance (ESG) agenda for law firms and their clients, the first and second ESG Conferences have been held and ESG training in Africa is being promoted. Fourth, gender equality has been on the top of the IBA's priorities, celebrating the first and second IBA Women's Day, issuing the *Ten directives to break the glass ceiling in the legal profession and promoting the 50/50 by 2030 Project*, amongst other initiatives. Last but not least, looking at the younger generation, as President, Almudena has launched the first *IBA Legal Practice Program*, targeted at providing young lawyers with the necessary knowledge and skills to work in an international legal environment.



Jaime Carey, IBA Vice President

Jaime Carey is the Vice President of the IBA, together with Claudio Visco. He has been involved in the IBA since 1984 and has held numerous roles within the organisation, which include the following: Country Representative, Deputy Secretary-General for Latin America, Chair of the Latin American Regional Forum, Co-Chair of the Corporate and M&A Committee, LPD Assistant Treasurer, LPD and IBA Treasurer, Vice Chair of LPD, and Chair of LPD. Jaime is Senior Partner at Carey, one of Latin America's leading full-service law firms and Chile's largest. His areas of expertise are corporate law, mergers and acquisitions law, investment law, and tax law.



Claudio Visco, IBA Vice President

Claudio Visco is the Vice President of the IBA, together with Jaime Carey, his tenure is for the two calendar years of 2023 and 2024. Claudio sits on the IBA Management Board and has held the position of member of the IBA Diversity and Inclusion Council, Chair of the Bar Issues Commission, Co-Chair of the Capital Markets Forum, as well as Chair of the Securities Committee. He has significantly contributed to the drafting of important IBA guidelines and recommendations including the 'IBA Practical Guide on Business and Human Rights for Business Lawyers', 'IBA Business and Human Rights Guidance for Bar Associations' and the joint IBA-OECD report on 'The Role of Lawyers and International Commercial Structures'. He is Managing Partner at Italian law firm Macchi di Cellere Gangemi.



Jörg K Menzer, IBA Secretary-General

Jörg K Menzer is the Secretary-General of the IBA. During his time with the organisation, he has held various positions including Chair of the IBA section on public and professional interest (SPPI), Deputy Secretary-General, Co-Chair of the European Regional Forum, and a member of the Law Firm Management Committee Advisory Board. In addition, Jörg served as Chair of the Online Services Committee, the Public and Professional Interest Division (PPID)/SPPI Vice Chair Treasurer and has also represented the SPPI on the IBA Management Board and IBA Council. Jörg heads the Bucharest office of Noerr. He has been at Noerr for more than two decades, currently serving as an M&A, corporate and State-aid specialist concentrating on structuring major foreign investments and business expansion projects in Romania.



Carola van den Bruinhorst, Chair, IBA Legal Practice Division

Carola van den Bruinhorst is Chair of the IBA Legal Practice Division (LPD) and a member of the IBA Management Board. Previously held positions by her include Vice-Chair IBA LPD; IBA Treasurer; IBA LPD Council Member; and Co-Chair, IBA Taxes Committee. She was co-founder of the IBA Diversity & Inclusion Council and Co-Chair. Carola is based in Amsterdam and at Dutch law firm Loyens & Loeff, where she is responsible for designing, implementing and running the firm's Partner Development Programme. Previously, Carola worked as a partner in the firm's International Tax Practice in its Amsterdam, New York and Hong Kong offices. She founded the Hong Kong office in 2011 and managed it until 2017.



Mark Ellis, IBA Executive Director

Dr Mark Ellis is the Executive Director of the IBA. Prior to joining the IBA, he spent ten years as the first executive director of the American Bar Association's Central European and Eurasian Law Initiative (CEELI). Mark was a long-time consultant to the World Bank on investment policies in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. He has served as legal advisor to the Independent International Commission on Kosovo, chaired by Justice Richard Goldstone, and was appointed by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) to advise on the creation of Serbia's war crimes tribunal. He was actively involved with the Iraqi high tribunal and acted as legal advisor to the defence team of Nuon Chea at the Cambodian war crimes tribunal. He is leading the IBA's assistance to Ukraine.



Anne Ramberg, Co-Chair, IBA Human Rights Institute Council

Anne Ramberg Dr Jur hc is Co-Chair of the IBAHRI Council and the immediate past Secretary General of the Swedish Bar Association, a position she held for 20 years. Anne is an ad-hoc judge at the European Court of Human Rights, and Conciliator and alternate member of the Bureau to the Court of Conciliation and Arbitration within the OSCE. She is the Chair of the Uppsala University Board, as well as the Chair of the Stockholm Prize in Criminology Foundation. In addition, Anne serves as a member of the Board of Civil Rights Defenders, Raoul Wallenberg Institute and Southern Africa Litigation Centre and is member of the International Legal Assistance Consortium Advisory Council.



Mark Stephens CBE, Co-Chair, IBA Human Rights Institute Council

Mark Stephens CBE is Co-Chair of the IBAHRI Council. He is a partner at Howard Kennedy and a former President of the Commonwealth Lawyers Association. Mark also sits on the Council and Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Lawyers Association. Throughout his career, Mark has undertaken some of the most important cases in the United Kingdom and around the world. In addition to representing high-profile individuals internationally, he has been retained by several governments, among them the Republic of Cyprus, Greece, Jamaica, Libya, Mauritius and Russia, and has litigated in countries as diverse as Antigua, Australia, France, India, Iraq, Iran, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Samoa, Singapore and the United States.



Helena Kennedy LT KC, IBAHRI Director

Lady Helena Kennedy LT KC is IBAHRI Director, managing the work of the Institute and upholding and promoting the rule of law and human rights globally. She is recognised as one of Britain's most distinguished lawyers. Helena has spent her professional life giving voice to those who have the least power within the system, championing civil liberties and promoting human rights. She has conducted many prominent cases of terrorism, official secrets and homicide. In 1997, she was elevated to the House of Lords where she is a Labour peer.



Myra Garrett, Chair, IBA Section on Public and Professional Interest

Myra Garrett is Chair of the IBA Section on Public and Professional Interest (SPPI) and a member the IBA Online Services Committee. She has held numerous positions within the IBA including as IBA Council member and Co-Chair, IBA Law Firm Management Committee. Myra is a Corporate Partner and former Managing Partner of leading Irish law firm, William Fry. She specialises in cross border mergers and acquisitions, public takeovers, capital market transactions and corporate restructurings. Myra advises companies and boards of directors on corporate governance and strategic issues. She has been officially granted Senior Counsel status.



Ken Murphy, Chair, IBA Bar Issues Commission

Ken Murphy is the Chair of the IBA Bar Issues Commission (BIC), for 2023-2024, and a Member of the IBA Management Board. He has served on numerous IBA committees and task forces, including as Chair of the BIC's Policy Committee in 2022. He is a solicitor and a member of the Law Society of Ireland of which he was the Director General for 26 years. On his retirement in 2021, he was the longest serving Chief Executive Officer of any national Bar or law society in the world. Prior to his appointment as Director General in 1995, he practiced in one of Ireland's largest commercial law firms, A&L Goodbody, where he became a partner in 1990. He practiced primarily in litigation and in European Union and competition law including, for four years, in the firm's Brussels office. Prior to IBA work he was active with the International Institute of Law Association Chief Executives and the Chief Executives of European Bar Associations and served terms as elected President for both.

It's a good opportunity to change

IBA Mexico committee co-chairs Claus Von Wobeser, Mariana Herrero and Daniel Del Rio preview IBA Mexico 2024

How does it feel as co-chairs to be hosting the IBA conference in Mexico?

Claus: We're very happy to have the conference in Mexico. It's a challenging time in Mexico as you have probably read in the newspapers all over the world with the amendment to the Mexican constitution. So we think that having the conference in this complicated moment for Mexico is a great opportunity to express the views, not only of Mexicans, but also our colleagues from all over the world supporting democracy and supporting the rule of law.

Mariana: It is always going to be challenging to top Paris – Paris is Paris – but it's great that we have the opportunity to showcase what Mexico City is really about and the strength of Mexico's legal markets, so people can see how sophisticated the market is and the sizes and types of firms that we have here.

Daniel: We're very happy the IBA is coming back to Mexico after 23 years. The difference today is that it is being held in Mexico City and not in Cancun. It's good that people will have the opportunity to come and visit one of the greatest capital cities in the world, so we are very enthusiastic for people to really get to know the Mexican culture.

What IBA events and/or guest speakers are you most excited about and why?

Mariana: Having the chance to listen to a former Mexican president is going to be great. I was still very young when Ernesto Zedillo

was president of Mexico, but looking back and now with a better understanding of politics and how the country has developed, I think he was one of the best we've ever had. I'm also excited to see Rigoberta Menchú (Nobel Peace Prize 1992 winner)."

Daniel: In addition to those, I'm looking forward to the group members' breakfast and the LPD lunch. We are going to have two great economists – Carlos Elizondo Mayer-Serra and Luis de la Calle – who will talk to us about what is going on in Latin America and the nearshoring effect. I'm also looking forward to the Rule of Law Forum on Friday. The whole programme looks great.

Claus: I'm looking forward to the Nando Parrado session, it will be very interesting to hear his story of being a survivor of the Andes plane crash and how he and his teammate walked for 10 days across the frozen mountains to get help. I'm also looking forward to hearing Luis de la Calle, he was one of the negotiators of Mexico's trade agreement with the US and Canada, so it will be interesting hearing his views.

What other highlights should attendees look forward to?

Daniel: As the host committee, we are organising a cocktail reception that is going to be very nice in a modern museum called Museo Tamayo. At the beginning of the reception, we're going to be granting a recognition to Almudena Arpón de Mendivil Aldama as our chair and president of the IBA for her commitment and all her achievements. There will be a lot of opportunities to go

around and learn about our culture; many firms are having receptions in different museums. We're going to enjoy ourselves the whole week.

Claus: The biggest problem is time, you have to really pick what you like because it's impossible to make it to everything you would like to. The social events will be competing with academic events. In Mexico we really like to party.

Daniel: The next morning you will need to have a lot of coffee and tacos with a lot of chilli. That's the Mexican hangover cure.

Mariana: This year there are also multiple events for women lawyers. We have the Women Lawyers Committee lunch, which is always very well attended and is a great opportunity for networking amongst women. There are at least four or five other events only for women lawyers.

What have been the biggest challenges organising the IBA conference in Mexico this year?

Claus: One of the challenges is immigration issues for people coming from different countries that have more difficulties travelling to Mexico. Another challenge has been promoting the congress among Mexican lawyers, we're not a large group of Mexican lawyers that typically attend the IBA.

Mariana: Just the regular challenges that Mexico City presents such as the traffic, so making sure that most events are organised in an area that people can access. Also on the 19th there is the national earthquake drill. Usually you need to leave the building that



Claus Von Wobeser



Mariana Herrero



Daniel Del Rio

people's views about Mexico



Polanco, Mexico City

you are in, so we had to convince people to allow everybody to stay in the buildings and ignore the drill."

Daniel: Safety is another issue. Like any big city, you have to take precautions, but there are many places here where people can walk and move around very easily.

What would you like attendees to take away from this year's conference?

Mariana: It's a good opportunity to change people's views about Mexico with respect to news saying that it's dangerous. So come here and experience what we have to offer and see that we are capable of hosting this and large events with no problem, and that this is a sophisticated, mature market from a legal perspective.

Daniel: For me it's the same. Our economy has evolved, but we know that we still have limitations in our country. There's still poverty and there are still many things that we need to work on, but we have been fighting very hard to improve the condition of everybody, and also to become one of the principal economies in the world.

Claus: I would like people to go away thinking that this was the best-ever IBA conference.

What are your top recommendations for IBA attendees when visiting Mexico City?

Daniel: People should try to have some tacos – there are very good taquerias around the city. Our local cuisine is very rich depending on the different regions. As an example, every September, it's great to taste the chile en nogada, which is green, white and red. We also have some very good restaurants and most of them are located in Polanco. On Saturdays there is a bazaar in San Angel in the south of the city, and you can also visit Coyoacan, where you can go to Frida Kahlo's home. We also have the Teotihuacan pyramids close by.

Claus: Aside from the restaurants, the museums are a big attraction – we have the most or the second-most of any city in the world. We also have many music bars. And Mexico City has the most Spanish-speaking theatres anywhere in the world, even more than Spain.

Mariana: Taking all the necessary security measures, just get a driver and experience the different areas of Mexico City. Go to the Centro Historico and experience walking around. The Roma neighbourhood is the hottest place for food, not just Mexican food but other types as well. You will see that the people that go there have a different vibe than the people that are here in Las Lomas and in Polanco. Go to the Chapultepec Castle. It's our only castle in the country and it has a great view. Just try to absorb the diversity of the city and not stay only in one area."

Claus Von Wobeser, is managing partner and head of dispute resolution at Von Wobeser y Sierra; **Mariana Herrero** is a partner specialising in environmental law at Galicia; and **Daniel Del Rio** is a corporate partner at SMPS Legal and vice chair of the IBA's legal practice division

Honing your networking skills

Itzik Amiel explains how delegates can make the most of IBA 2024



Your success as a legal professional depends on how well you network and build relationships with others.

However, many lawyers struggle with networking at conferences in general and at the IBA annual conference in particular.

Here are some questions to ask yourself. Do you:

- connect with the right people?
- nurture the relationships you build on a regular basis?
- use your relationships to help you grow your practice?

If you struggle to achieve these goals, then you are not alone.

As is the case at every annual conference, yesterday we conducted a special opening session called the IBA Global Networking Hub.

Don't worry if you missed it. Here is a condensed practical guide to ensuring you get the best return on investment from your networking efforts in Mexico City.

Before the conference

Research and plan

Start by familiarising yourself with the conference agenda, identifying key sessions, speakers and attendees. Prioritise events that align with your professional interests. Use social media platforms like LinkedIn to connect with other participants and join relevant groups.

Set clear goals

Define what you want to achieve from the conference. Are you looking to gain knowledge, find clients or explore collaboration opportunities? Clear objectives will guide your interactions.

Prepare your personal intro

Develop a concise and compelling personal introduction. Clearly articulate your expertise, interests and what you are seeking at the conference. Remember: it is all about giving attention to the other person (not getting attention from them).

Organise professional materials

Ensure your business cards are up-to-date and prepare digital versions if possible. Enhance your LinkedIn profile and have digital copies of your resume or portfolio ready to share.

Schedule meetings

Reach out to other attendees and schedule one-on-one meetings or coffee breaks in advance. Use the IBA conference app or online tools to coordinate and confirm these meetups.

During the conference

Attend strategically

Prioritise attending sessions that align with your goals and offer networking opportunities. Take notes and actively participate in discussions to gain visibility.

Network proactively

Approach other attendees with confidence. Start conversations by asking about their interests and experiences related to the conference themes. Share insights and offer value before seeking it (tip: find the uncommon commonalities).

Leverage social media

Use X, LinkedIn and the official conference hashtag #IBAMexico to share insights and engage in live discussions. This amplifies your presence and connects you with a broader audience.

Participate in social events

Attend informal gatherings, dinners or social activities organised during the conference. These provide relaxed environments conducive to building deeper connections.

Be mindful of time

While networking, be respectful of others' time and busy schedules. Engage in meaningful conversations but know when to move on to other engagements.

After the conference

Organise your contacts

Sort through the business cards and digital contacts you have collected. Create a categorised list that highlights key connections, priority lists and potential follow-ups.

Follow up

Send personalised emails and/or LinkedIn messages to the connections you want to cultivate further. Reference your meeting, highlight mutual interests and suggest potential collaboration or future meetings.

Share your experience

Publish a blog post or social media update summarising your key takeaways from the conference. Tag individuals or organisations you interacted with, further solidifying your connections.

Evaluate your goals

Reflect on the objectives you set before the conference. Assess what you achieved and identify any areas for improvement for future networking events.

Nurture relationships

Continue the conversation with new contacts by sharing relevant articles, industry news or inviting them to upcoming events. Building lasting relationships requires consistent and meaningful engagement.

Conclusion

By strategically preparing before the IBA annual conference, actively participating during it and diligently following up after it finishes, you can maximise your networking ROI. Remember, it is not just about the quantity of connections, but the quality of the relationships you build and nurture over time.

Itzik Amiel is a growth strategy expert, author and client relationships advisor to law firms. He is immediate past chair of the IBA's LFMC business development and marketing subcommittee among current and former IBA roles. His latest ebook on networking is available to download free of charge [here](#).

PARTNER CONTENT **Doing business in the UAE**

An environment of growth and opportunity

The UAE is on an upward trajectory and scores highly on 'ease of doing business' and 'standard of living' metrics, says Sadiq Jafar of HadeF & Partners

What are the opportunities for international businesses considering setting up operations in the UAE?

The UAE's economy is on an impressive upward trajectory, becoming ever more sophisticated and attractive to international businesses. Abu Dhabi has the highest GDP due primarily to its famously abundant reserves of oil and gas, whereas Dubai has historically been best known as a centre of business, transport and tourism. In 2023, Dubai launched a plan to double its GDP within 10 years. Meanwhile, Abu Dhabi continues to diversify by way of substantial investment in infrastructure and a range of sectors. The other five emirates are also experiencing continuous development, each with its specific niches.

While the prospect of operating in an environment of growth and opportunity is inherently attractive, the UAE actively provides simple and flexible ways for companies and individuals to establish, operate and expand. It is also an ideal place to live and work with excellent international connectivity, first-class infrastructure and facilities, as well as desirable weather for much of the year. For all these reasons, the UAE is utilised by many international businesses as a hub for conducting business in the Middle East and Africa, and even further afield.

How would you characterise the general business culture?

The UAE consistently scores highly on 'ease of doing business' metrics and you need only visit to appreciate the extent of its diversity and energy. The country is regarded as a successful melting pot of virtually every nationality and culture making it a hospitable, cosmopolitan and open environment in which to live, work and do business. In recent years, the UAE has become a magnet for ultra high net worth individuals, for all the reasons mentioned above, as well as the zero income tax environment.

To what extent does the legal system provide a positive environment for overseas businesses?

The UAE aims to continually enhance its legal and regulatory environment, never standing still.



In 2023 Dubai launched a plan to double its GDP within 10 years

While the free zones retain a level of attraction to international businesses, virtually every 'onshore' sector is now open to 100% foreign ownership. However, free zones do still offer useful benefits to certain companies, depending on their sector and operational needs. Businesses established in free zones are largely outside the application of the recently introduced corporate tax to the extent that they do not operate in onshore UAE. Similarly, enterprises using free zones as distribution hubs for operations outside the UAE are free of customs duty.

What are the key legal challenges specific to the UAE?

The UAE is a civil law jurisdiction and proceedings in the domestic courts are generally in Arabic. Nevertheless, common law-style business courts are well established in the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) and the Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM), and even the domestic court system is exploring the use of other languages including English. The DIFC and ADGM courts can be selected as the forum to determine disputes, provided they are specified by the parties in the relevant contract. The arbitration option has always been actively utilised in the UAE, again subject to contract provisions. To ensure justice is achieved swiftly in the domestic courts, there has been a drive to accelerate the litigation process, presenting disputes lawyers with relatively short time frames to submit pleadings and related documentation. This inevitably puts the best-resourced firms at an advantage. In many cases, clients (especially plaintiffs) are pleased to conclude legal proceedings in a shorter time frame.

What upcoming reforms should businesses be aware of?

The introduction of corporate tax at the generally applicable rate of 9% of profit has been implemented in line with

best international practice. UAE-related transactions now need to be structured and documented to address tax on an optimised basis wherever appropriate. Looking ahead, in common with many countries, the UAE seeks to keep ahead of developments in technology, including AI, and the related fields of data protection and privacy. It very much helps that it can move quickly where change is necessary or appropriate.

Another ongoing development is the UAE's Emiratisation project. Over many years, the government has been introducing laws and regulations requiring onshore businesses to employ a proportion of Emiratis. Historically, these rules applied to the larger oil companies, banks and insurance companies. More recently this initiative has been extended to the wider private sector. The reforms have rapidly become integral to the local business landscape and most businesses appreciate the benefits of leveraging local knowledge and networks.

As a leading UAE law firm, we are well-positioned to advise on the ever-evolving legal landscape and invite all our friends from the IBA to contact or visit us whenever the UAE appears on their itineraries or their clients' agendas.

Sadiq Jafar is Managing Partner of HadeF & Partners and has extensive corporate and commercial law experience.



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For more information about HadeF & Partners visit hadepartners.com

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IBA 2024 Mexico City

Monday

09:15 – 10:45

Morning Keynote Address: Achieving the impossible - the epic and human story of Nando Parrado

Palacio de Valparaiso 1, Level E1

On 13 October 1972, Nando Parrado survived a plane crash in the Andes that killed his mother and sister. Stranded at over 4,000 metres in freezing temperatures without food or water, Parrado fought against impossible odds. He will share his journey of resilience, leadership, and survival, culminating in a 10-day trek through the mountains to find rescue.

13:15 – 14:15

A Conversation with... Ambassador John J. Sullivan

Palacio de Valparaiso 1, Level E1

Ambassador John J. Sullivan, former US deputy secretary of state and ambassador to Russia, will share insights from his distinguished career spanning four decades under five US presidents in a discussion with the IBA's executive director, Mark Ellis. A leading authority on foreign policy, US-Russia relations, and national security, Sullivan will also discuss his forthcoming book, *Midnight in Moscow*.

14:30 – 17:30

IBAHRI Showcase: Femicide, Murder and Other Crimes Against Women – A Social Crisis

Palacio de Inturbide 1, Level E1

Chaired by Baroness Helena Kennedy KC, director of the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute, this session explores femicide, the most extreme form of violence against women. Despite global activism, gender-based killings remain prevalent worldwide. The discussion will focus on preventing femicide by challenging social norms, engaging communities, and promoting gender-responsive policing to address this escalating social crisis. Speakers include Bianca Jagger, human rights advocate and founder of the Bianca Jagger Human Rights Foundation.

Tuesday

09:15 – 10:45

Morning Keynote Address: A World Without Lawyers? The IBA Report on the Social and Economic Impact of the Legal Profession

Palacio de Valparaiso 1, Level E1

This presidential session will explore the critical role lawyers play in upholding the rule of law and democracy. It will feature a presentation by McKinsey on the findings of

the IBA's landmark report, which measures the positive social and economic impact of the legal profession. Chaired by IBA president Almudena Arpón de Mendivil and David W Rivkin, former IBA president and leading international arbitrator, this session will include an open debate with audience participation. Speakers include former UK attorney general Lord Goldsmith KC.

13:15 – 14:15

A Conversation with... Prosecutor General of Ukraine, Andriy Kostin and Liev Schreiber

Palacio de Valparaiso 1, Level E1

Prosecutor General of Ukraine Andriy Kostin, known for his focus on investigating Russia's war crimes and combating corruption, joins actor and BlueCheck co-founder Liev Schreiber, whose initiative supports vetted NGOs in Ukraine. In a conversation with IBA executive director Mark Ellis, they will discuss Ukraine's legal and humanitarian challenges, blending perspectives from law, cinema, and activism.

14:30 – 17:30

LPD Showcase: Digital Assets and the Future of Financial Services

Palacio de Inturbide 1, Level E1

This session explores how digital assets and innovative technologies like blockchain are transforming global financial markets. Panels

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Key sessions to look out for during a week that will set the agenda for global law

will address opportunities, risks, and key developments in digital finance, decentralisation, regulatory responses, and the role of legal professionals. Chaired by IBA committee and forum members Giorgio Bovenzi, Theodor Härtsch, Benjamin Leisinger, and Klaus Löber, the showcase features a keynote intervention by Jon Frost, senior economist at the Bank for International Settlements, focusing on the future of digital finance, centralisation vs decentralisation, and the macroeconomic impact on the real economy.

Wednesday

09:15 – 10:45

Morning Keynote Address: The Power of Cultural Diversity - A Conversation with Dr Rigobertha Menchú Tum, Nobel Peace Prize Winner 1992

Palacio de Valparaiso 1, Level E1

Join Nobel Peace Prize laureate Rigobertha Menchú as she reflects on equality, inclusion, diversity, and the rights of Indigenous people. Menchú will share her journey from her Maya upbringing in Guatemala to becoming a global advocate for indigenous rights. The session will explore her life's work, the impact of her Nobel Prize, and her vision for future generations. Chaired by IBA president Almudena Arpón de Mendivil and Berit Reiss-Andersen, vice chair of the Bar Issues Commission, this interactive conversation will invite questions from the audience.

14:30 – 17:30

Bar Issues Commission Showcase: Beneficial Ownership

Palacio de Inturbide 1, Level E1

This session will explore the complex legal landscape surrounding beneficial ownership laws, focusing on anti-corruption measures and privacy concerns. The panel will discuss the implications of recent regulations, including the EU's privacy ruling on beneficial ownership and the Corporate Transparency Act in the United States. Chaired by Sara Louise Carnegie, member of the IBA Diversity & Inclusion Council, and Steven Richman, chair of the Bar Issues Commission policy committee, the session will address how these laws impact lawyers, law firms, and their obligations to clients.

Thursday

09:15 – 10:45

Morning Keynote Address: The Future is Now: Artificial intelligence, the Law, and Society with Keynote Speaker Marc Rotenberg

Palacio de Valparaiso 1, Level E1

Artificial Intelligence is identified as the top challenge facing the legal profession. This session will present the findings of the IBA's 2023 presidential project report, The Future is Now: AI, the Legal Profession and Society, developed with the Center for AI and Digital Policy. Keynote speaker Marc Rotenberg, executive director and founder of the think tank, will explore AI's impact on legal practice and governance. Chaired by IBA president Almudena Arpón de Mendivil and IBA vice president Claudio Visco, this session will feature insights from the AI Task Force and engage the audience in discussion.

09:30 – 12:30

SPPI Showcase: Creating Great Pro Bono Programmes

Palacio de Inturbide 1, Level E1

Pro bono work plays a critical role in providing access to justice and protecting human rights, offering legal assistance to those in need and mobilising lawyers in impactful cases. This session will explore the intersection of pro bono efforts, access to justice, and human rights, highlighting best practices for creating successful programmes. Chaired by Babatunde Ajibade SAN, SPPI vice chair and treasurer,

Myra Garrett, SPPI chair, and Flavia Regina de Souza Oliveira, co-chair of the IBA Pro Bono Committee, the session will feature insights from legal professionals on enhancing pro bono initiatives.

Friday

09:30 – 16:00

Rule of Law Forum

Palacio de Inturbide 1, Level E1

IBA president Almudena Arpón de Mendivil will set the stage for the Rule of Law Forum, which is co-chaired by Federica D'Alessandra, senior vice-chair of the IBA Rule of Law Forum, and Adam Goodman, co-chair of the IBA Rule of Law Forum. The day will include a posthumous presentation of the 2024 Benjamin B Ferencz Rule of Law Lifetime Achievement Award to Stephen Denyer, accepted by his family.

The symposium will feature three key sessions:

- **09:30 – 11:00:** Defending and restoring the global rule of law
- **11:30 – 13:00:** The rule of law in the Americas
- **14:00 – 16:00:** When the rule of law and democracy clash, which prevails?

Registration and Access

The symposium is open for free registration, even if you are not attending the main conference. Registration must be completed by 18 September.



El Ángel de la Independencia, Mexico City

Delegate Views

What are you most looking forward to?

Amaitari Andabai

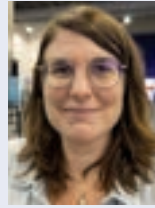
Deputy Manager,
NNPC Limited,
Nigeria



I'm looking forward to the expert information and viewpoints I receive at the conference. It's capacity building for me and also helps me to know global trends that will be of benefit to my company and my work, which is the oil and gas industry.

Emmanuelle Vicidomini

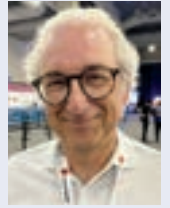
Partner, Sekri Valentin
Zerrouk, France



I work in business law and it's important to understand the concerns of people around the world. All law is local and that's why I'm excited to be here at the IBA and learn the issues business lawyers are facing in multiple jurisdictions.

Fabio Trevisan

Partner, BSP,
Luxembourg



I'm looking forward to the mix of sessions and meeting up with the people I already know here. I'm especially looking forward to my litigation committee meeting.

Majeda Gharib

Managing Director,
Al Gharib & Partners,
Abu Dhabi, UAE



As the manager of my law firm, it's all about the sessions. Specifically, I'm very interested in two sessions – Better Business Development; Future Proofing your Firm as well as How to Actually Win Pitches to Clients.

Maria Alexia Aurelio

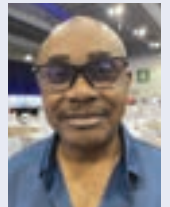
Founding Partner,
Aresco Abogados,
Argentina



I'm looking forward to speaking at the conference again this year. My session is on global employment issues in Argentina and Spain.

Ndukwe Nnawuci

Senior Advocate,
Ndukwe Nnawuchi
SAN & Co, Nigeria



I'm looking forward to meeting new lawyers and contacts from around the world, and then keeping in touch with them after the conference.

Pablo Jiménez

Partner,
Von Wobeser y Sierra



To engage with peers from around the world and share experiences that help us grow professionally and elevate the legal profession. Additionally, I look forward to sharing a bit of our rich Mexican culture and the warmth of our people.

Paul Marmor

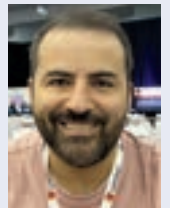
Head of Litigation,
Sherrards Solicitors,
England



The highlight of my week is always the managing partners' breakfast on Wednesday morning which has a first-class group of speakers and the attendees are second to none.

Roberto Valladares

CEO, Legal Machine,
Guatemala



I'm excited about legal tech and data privacy sessions because there is a great lack of these programmes in Central America.

Stephen Revell

Founder and Managing
Partner, Making Change
Happen, England



As the co-chair of the IBA's law firm management committee, we have eight fabulous sessions. Given the practical focus of our committee, I'm looking forward to sharing the learnings of those sessions with participants from across the world.

"I look forward to sharing a bit of our rich Mexican culture and the warmth of our people."

PARTNER CONTENT

Doing business in the UK

‘A proactive compliance culture’: navigating the UK’s far-reaching regulatory landscape

Businesses that embrace Britain’s extraterritorial jurisdiction can enjoy practical and reputational benefits, says Paul Feldberg of Brown Rudnick



The City of London benefits from a strong regulatory environment and independent judiciary

As a compliance and investigations expert, do you regard the UK as a good place to do business?

One of the things that attracts companies to the UK is the independence of the judiciary, which is widely regarded as a hallmark of the country. It is seen as independent of the executive, operating in a transparent and unbiased way.

On a practical level, it’s relatively easy for companies to set up and register in the UK through Companies House, often within a day or so. But this system has come under significant criticism for being used improperly by shell companies. That’s being tightened up, with new transparency requirements. And, of course, there is a whole different set of rules for public listings.

Foreign businesses do, however, need to be aware of the liabilities that operating in the UK can create for their global operations. But I don’t see that as a negative. If companies comply with the relevant laws, they gain respect from potential counterparties. The legal system also allows them to take matters to court and get a fair hearing relatively quickly.

Can you elaborate on the UK’s compliance and regulatory landscape?

The landmark legislation is the 2010 Bribery Act, which requires UK companies to have what it calls adequate procedures to prevent bribery. The act has a wide reach; a third party acting anywhere in the world on behalf of a UK company can make it liable, so companies have to keep a close eye on their supply chain.

Sanctions have also been in the headlines, and that is an area where I do a lot of work. They apply to UK individuals and incorporated entities wherever they are in the world.

So there is a culture of requiring UK-based companies to police their operations worldwide in very general terms. The clients I advise, however, adopt a proactive compliance culture and appreciate the reputational benefits it brings with it.

How does the UK compare to the EU in terms of these regulations?

Different EU countries have their own laws on bribery, but the UK was the first in Europe to emulate the US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, which was introduced in the 1970s. Other countries, including France and Germany, have passed similar laws since. So it is coming in the EU, but not as developed. We’ve seen some very large bribery settlements recently, including Airbus, where the UK and French authorities worked together on the investigation.

What about regulations concerning foreign investment and ownership?

The National Security and Investment Act came into force in early 2022. It functions in a similar way to the longstanding US Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) and gives the government the power to look at foreign investments, especially in sectors that are potentially sensitive, like biotech and tech. If there’s significant foreign ownership, there are requirements to notify the government, and it can review the investment and even stop it if they see national security risks.

Are there any notable upcoming legal reforms?

Since Brexit, the UK has developed its own sanctions regime, and because the UK no longer has to get the 27 member states to agree, we’ve seen it act faster on some sanctions than the EU.

There’s also this new law that changes how corporate entities can be found criminally liable, making it easier to hold companies, and not just

individuals, accountable for bribery, fraud and other economic crimes. That is a major change whose impact is yet to be felt.

It is too early to say whether the new Labour government will significantly develop the law in these areas. However, it has already made a fairly concerted effort to mend bridges with the EU and I think that will assist in the flow of information between the European countries in relation to cross-border investigations. The legal architecture won’t necessarily change, but how quickly you get something from a French judge, for example, depends more on the mood music.

The new prime minister, Keir Starmer, was previously Director of Public Prosecutions, so I think he understands the importance of running effective court systems. I’m hoping this will lead to a better-funded legal system and more appetite to respect legal processes than was the case with the previous government.



Paul Feldberg is a partner and head of Brown Rudnick’s UK white collar defence, investigations, and compliance practice

in London. He advises and defends companies and individuals in matters relating to sanctions, export controls, criminal fraud, corruption, money laundering, insider trading, and other diverse regulatory actions.

brownrudnick

IBA maintains steadfast support for Ukraine as conflict enters its third year

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the IBA has undertaken significant initiatives to support Ukrainian lawyers and uphold the rule of law

By Ben Rigby

With Russia's war in Ukraine persisting, the International Bar Association (IBA) has been stepping up efforts to maintain legal standards and justice in the country amid the turmoil.

Since last year's IBA gathering in Paris, the IBA has thrown its support behind Ukraine's ratification of the Rome Statute, establishing a formal relationship with the International Criminal Court (ICC).

This step marked a pivotal advance in Ukraine's legal landscape, says Mark Ellis, executive director of the IBA. By becoming the 125th State Party of the ICC, Ukraine has not only strengthened its legal system but also solidified its commitment to international law, particularly in prosecuting war crimes.

Ellis said: "For all of the Ukrainians who have been pushing for accountability for the grave crimes committed in their country since 2014, their efforts are bearing fruit," adding that Ukraine's efforts to prosecute war crimes domestically were consistent with the ICC's principle of complementarity.

Further emphasising the IBA's role, Kate Orlovsky, director of its ICC & International Criminal Law (ICL) Programme, stressed the importance of implementing legislation that aligns with the highest international standards, a process made even more crucial due to specific exemptions under Article 124 of the Rome Statute.

This exemption, which temporarily removes ICC jurisdiction over Ukrainian nationals for war crimes, placed a greater responsibility on Ukraine's domestic legal system to investigate and prosecute such crimes, she said.

The IBA has been instrumental in these developments, providing expertise and resources to ensure the trials in Ukraine meet international standards of fairness,

ranging from agreements with the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine and with the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence aimed at ensuring accountability for war crimes and other international wrongdoing.

Furthermore, the IBA Human Rights Institute's director, Baroness Kennedy KC, co-chairs a hybrid task force focused on the return of deported Ukrainian children. At the same time, the IBA-founded eyeWitness to Atrocities app is being used to gather potential evidence of crimes committed during the conflict.

Nor is it alone in these efforts, having worked closely with the Ukrainian Bar Association (UBA) and the Ukrainian National Bar Association, creating a dedicated fund to support their humanitarian efforts. In November 2023, the IBA hosted an international conference with the UBA and its Human Rights Institute in Brussels.

Marking the event, UBA president Mykola Stetsenko said it was "imperative for politicians, legal experts and thought leaders from across the globe to unite" around such challenges, calling it not "a necessity but a moral imperative".

The IBA also supports the establishment of the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine, marking another significant stride towards accountability. In March, Ellis emphasised the necessity of this tribunal, which aims to hold Russian officials accountable for their actions against Ukraine, overcoming traditional barriers such as head-of-state immunity, adding: "To date, the Russian leadership has evaded accountability. This failure must be rectified."

Another notable IBA effort included co-facilitating a delegation of 25 Ukrainian legal professionals to The Hague in June. This visit was part of a broader initiative to enhance the

capabilities of Ukrainian judges, prosecutors and lawyers through targeted training sessions in international criminal justice, with Ellis saying: "It is necessary that justice is not only seen to be done in Ukraine but is actually done and conducted correctly."

This initiative underscores the IBA's commitment to supporting Ukraine in handling international crimes effectively within its national legal system. That has not gone unnoticed, with UBA executive director Viktoriia Krasnova thanking both the IBA and its Human Rights Institute "for their unwavering support and dedication to justice and accountability in Ukraine".

She added: "Building capacities in international criminal justice is crucial for Ukraine as we navigate the complexities of war crimes and ensure justice for victims. The knowledge and skills gained from this study visit will significantly enhance legal practitioners' ability to handle these cases with the rigour and fairness they demand."

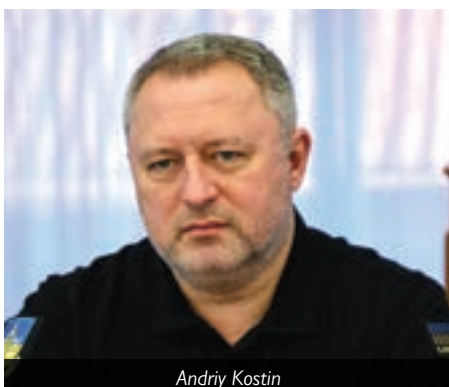
The IBA's role in these critical times reflects its broader mandate to foster the rule of law worldwide. That same commitment extends to this year's conference programming, as it has in previous years.

Addressing the conference is Andriy Kostin, Prosecutor General of Ukraine, who has maintained a strong relationship with the IBA, ranging from highlighting the destruction and looting of Ukrainian cultural property by Russian troops, to accusing the Russian state of ecocide.

In what will be Kostin's third appearance at the conference, he will be interviewed by Ellis as part of the IBA's 'In Conversation' series of lunchtime talks alongside another well-known speaker – Hollywood actor Liev Schreiber.

Speaking to IBA Global News in May, Schreiber – who is a co-founder of BlueCheck Ukraine, a humanitarian start-up that identifies, vets and fast-tracks financial support directly to local NGOs and aid groups in the country – said he shares the IBA's commitment to fighting injustice.

"The idea of something being so difficult or daunting that we just want to ignore it is troubling," he said, calling the struggle in Ukraine "the frontline of a war on democracy".



Andriy Kostin



Liev Schreiber

**IBA Annual Conference
Mexico City 2024**

PALACIO DE VALPARAISO 1, LEVEL E1

A conversation with... Prosecutor General of Ukraine, Andriy Kostin and Liev Schreiber

Tuesday 17 September (1315 - 1415)

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Our IBA team: Back row (l to r): Danielle Lobo, Mevan Bandara, Shahram Safai, Charles Laubach.
Front row (l to r): Bashir Ahmed, Saurbh Kothari, Chatura Randeniya.

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