

East Asia Branch Report

The East Asia Branch has enjoyed a busy and successful year. Although centred in Hong Kong it has continued to promote the knowledge and practice of ADR across the region.

The practice of arbitration in Hong Kong was advanced by the enactment of a new Arbitration Ordinance. The Ordinance reflects the Model Law, incorporating a number of the amendments approved by UNCITRAL in 2006. A number of members of the Institute were involved in the preparatory work leading to the drafting of the Ordinance. The Branch was fortunate to be addressed by two of the main architects of the Ordinance, Robin Peard and Frank Poon, in November.

The Branch collaborated with the Department of Justice and other interested organisations to establish the Joint Mediation Helpline, a first point of contact for parties to Court proceedings who wish to consider the use of mediation to solve their disputes. This collaboration is on going. Thanks are due to Nick Longley and Man Sing Yeung for their dedication in making this happen.

The current membership of the Branch stands at approximately 1500. During the course of the year we held a wide variety of speaker meetings, meeting at least once a month and often more frequently. Presentations addressed topics of interest to mediation and arbitration practitioners. We were particularly honoured to be visited by the President, Joe Behan, during his year of office. Thanks are due to Raymond Au for his management of the Programme.

We have continued with our efforts to promote the use of arbitration and other forms of ADR throughout Asia, by organizing our initial Entry courses in Korea (run twice) and Taiwan. A Fast track to Fellowship International Arbitration will take place in Japan in April 2011, in collaboration with the North American Branch. We also collaborated with the VIAC in the organization of a conference in Ho Chi Minh City. Thanks are due to Richard Leung and his colleagues on the Regional Development Committee for making these events happen.

We have continued to grapple with the challenges presented by the new Pathways and the desire to deliver courses reflecting current Hong Kong law. The Branch will be running its first Fast Track to Fellowship Course under the Pathways in March 2011 and the Award Writing Exam will follow later in the year. Thanks are due to Paulo Fohlin for his leadership of the Professional Development Sub-Committee.

Our Young Members Group remained very active organizing a wide variety of events and technical meetings. These activities included collaboration with the Young Members organisations of other learned societies. Thanks are due to Jessica Chan, Johnson Lee, Cheryl Je, Justin Wong and the rest of the YMG Committee for their dedication.

The Branch continues to be represented on the Editorial Committee of the "Asian Dispute Review" Journal and publishes a Branch newsletter quarterly.

Joe Gilfeather, the Honorary Treasurer, continues to manage Branch funds to ensure that it remains financially healthy. The 2010 financial year, saw a slight drop in reserves. Total cash reserves of the Branch stand at HK\$3.3 million. Please refer to his Treasurer's Report for full details.

Thanks are due to all the members of the Committee, particularly Joe Gilfeather and Man Sing Yeung the two Vice-Chairmen.

Timothy Hill
Branch Chairman 2010 – 11