

New York International Chapter News

A publication of the International Section of the New York State Bar Association

A Word from the Past Chair



Glenn Fox

It has been a privilege to serve as Chair of the International Section for the past year. Needless to say, the year passed by very quickly. I am very proud of all of our accomplishments as a Section over the past twelve months and thank my fellow senior officers, Thomas Pieper, Neil Quartaro, Diane O’Connell and Nancy Thevenin, as well as the entire Executive Committee

for their tremendous support. I would like to briefly summarize this past year’s events.

The inaugural meeting of the International Section’s Latin American Council (the “Council”) was held in Antigua, Guatemala in May of 2013. Since then, the Council has had two other meetings, one during the Annual Meeting in New York and another in Uruguay in March. The

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A Word from the Chair



Thomas N. Pieper

On June 1, I assumed the position of Chair of the New York State Bar Association’s International Section—or short “NYSBA International.” I thank my predecessor, Glenn Fox, for the true leadership he has displayed over the past 12 months. My gratitude also goes to those who have preceded both Glenn and me, and who have made the Section what

it is today. On a personal note, I would like to mention Joel B. Harris and Oliver J. Armas, who have also been my mentors.

This is a critical time for our Section. Due to our growth over the years, we need to adjust our structures to facilitate continued success. This includes, first and foremost, the many Committees and Chapters we have, which distinguish our Section from other organizations.

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A Word from the Past Chair

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Council has already attracted over 40 new members to NYSBA from Latin America. The purpose of the Council is to promote principles of ethics, integrity and the rule of law throughout Latin American and the Caribbean.

During this year, the International Section became a founding member of the New York International Arbitration Center, headquartered in Manhattan. The foundation for NYIAC was in no small part due to the extended efforts of the Section and we are very happy to be a part of it.

The Section held a very successful seasonal meeting in Hanoi, Vietnam in October 2013. The meeting attracted attendees from throughout Asia and Europe. The cooperation of local lawyers and the considerable participation of the U.S. ambassador to Vietnam demonstrated how far relations have come between our two countries since they were normalized by President Clinton in 1994.

The International Section also had a wonderful joint meeting with the Israel Bar Association in February, which would not have happened without the tremendous cooperation of the New York Supreme Court and Judge Sherry Klein Heitler, Gregory Murray of the New York Court System, and Karen Milton of the Federal Courts. This group arranged for the event to take place at the New York and Federal court houses, with a special address by Attorney General Eric Schneiderman. This was followed by a joint meeting of our two bar associations in June of this year in Tel Aviv. The Section also had an extremely successful second Cross Border Summit with the Ontario Bar Association in March and was pleased to again run the International Law "Bootcamp" at the ABA Section of International Law's Spring meeting in April.

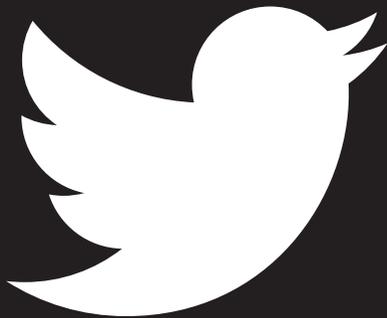
The Section continued to strengthen the role of NYSBA with the United Nations Committee on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL). In particular, the Section provided extensive comments with respect to the micro-small- and medium-enterprises (MSMEs) project of UNCITRAL's new Working Group I. We also worked with the ABA to provide suggestions for proposed legislation for international signature verification.

Throughout the past year one of the other signature projects of the Section was to enhance the understanding by the legal community of non-lawyer ownership of law firms. This topic was featured at both our seasonal and Annual Meetings. At the latter meeting we were addressed on this subject by President-elect William Hubbard of the ABA and President Nicholas Fluck of the U.K. Law Society (who has contributed an article on this subject to this publication).

During our Annual Meeting in January, the Section presented its Award for Distinction in International Law and Affairs to attorney Fiona Sampson of Toronto, Executive Director of the Equality Effect. Ms. Sampson has used international human rights law to help women and children across the world, notably in Sub-Saharan Africa.

I wish my successor, Thomas Pieper, all the best in the coming year. I know that he is up for the challenge and I will be there to support him in any way that I can.

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A Word from the Chair

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Reconnecting the Committees and Chapters to the Section as a whole will be a focus of my term. To that end, I have created a task force to study this issue and make recommendations.

According to its by-laws, our Section “shall in the field of public and private international and transnational law and practice (1) plan and conduct continuing legal education programs; (2) collect, publish and distribute educational and professional materials; (3) promote interest, activity and research; (4) formulate professional opinion; (5) study and comment upon the impact of foreign, federal and state laws and treaties; (6) develop and recommend policy and improvements in the law; (7) serve as a resource to business, civic and governmental organizations; (8) enhance the skills and competency of New York lawyers; and (9) undertake all such other activities as may be authorized from time to time by the Association and the Executive Committee of the Section for the purpose of accomplishing the foregoing.” Exercising the latter right, the Section’s Executive Committee adopted three long-range Missions: (i) Custodian of New York Law as an International Standard, (ii) Guardian of the New York Convention on the Enforcement and Recognition of Arbitral Awards and the international arbitral process, and (iii) Monitor of International Law Development at the United Nations. These Missions are non-exclusive and I envisage a review in order to identify additional Missions for the future.

As the Section’s Chair, I want to encourage all members to make the most of their membership by actively participating in Section activities and taking advantage of the valuable benefits and opportunities that membership provides. This starts with our many meetings:

- One of my first official acts as Chair was to attend a meeting of the Latin American Council—akin to a “super-chapter” within the Section, with members

in virtually every country in Latin America promoting the rule of law—in New York on June 12.

- I also had the honor of speaking at our Regional Meeting in Tel Aviv, Israel on June 25-26, 2014, which provided some 120 participants the opportunity to learn from each other and to network.
- I am writing these lines after meeting with the local organizing committee for our Seasonal Meeting in Vienna, Austria, to take place October 15-17, 2014. I promise it will be a great event—so please mark your calendars. Sponsorship opportunities are still available; contact me if you are interested.

And the series of events will continue in 2015:

- Our Annual Meeting at the New York Hilton Midtown Hotel in New York City in January 2015.
- Our Regional Meeting in Zurich, Switzerland on March 12-13, 2015.
- Global Law Week 2015, featuring the Fundamentals of International Practice (dates to be announced).
- Our Seasonal Meeting in São Paulo, Brazil in October/November 2015 (exact dates to be announced).

In addition, each Committee and Chapter will be holding their own meetings—a great opportunity for you to participate. I look forward to welcoming you in person at one of our events.

Again, I invite all of you to fully participate in all of the activities offered by NYSBA International and its Committees and Chapters. This is *your* Section—so please get involved!

With my best personal regards,
Thomas N. Pieper
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