

32nd POLA Conference Presidents' Summit

Singapore

22 September 2022

(Minutes of Meeting)

Attendees	
Name of Bar Association	Name of Representative
Law Council of Australia	Tass Liveris, President
	Margery Nicoll, Deputy CEO & Director, International Division
Bar Association of the Kingdom of Cambodia	LY Chantola, President
	YON Bunna, Council Member
	ANN Sovathana, Deputy Secretary General
Fiji Law Society	Maopa Wati Seeto, Vice President
Hong Kong Bar Association	Victor Dawes SC, Chairman
The Law Society of Hong Kong	Amirali Nasir, Vice-President
PERADI (Indonesian Advocates Association)	Johannes C. Sahetapy-Engel, Head of International Cooperation Division
	Nixon Sipahutar, Secretary of International Cooperation Division
Japan Federation of Bar Associations (attended virtually)	Motoji KOBAYASHI, President
	Mariko MATSUMURA, Vice-President
	Kunihisa ISHII, Deputy Secretary General
	Yuka ONO, Officer/Attorney, Office of International Affairs
	Naru MATSUMOTO, Officer/ Attorney, Office of International Affairs
Korean Bar Association	Jong Yop LEE, President
	Dae Gwang KIM, Secretary-General
	Jae Woo KWAK, International Committee member of KBA
Macau Lawyers Association (attended virtually)	Dr. Jorge Neto Valente, President
	Dr. Paulo Carochas, Lawyer of the Macau Lawyers Association
Bar Council of Malaysia	Karen Cheah, President
	Anand Raj, Secretary
	Murshidah Mustafa, Treasurer
	Rejen Devaraj, Chief Executive Officer
	Sunil Lopez, Deputy Chief Executive Officer
	Vilashini a/p Vijayan, Director, Practitioners Affairs Division and Continuing Professional Development Department

New Zealand Law Society	Caroline Silk, Vice President
	Bronwyn Jones, General Manager Policy, Courts and Government
Integrated Bar of the Philippines	Burt M. Estrada, President
Taiwan Bar Association (attended virtually)	Dr Edgar Chen, President
	Angela Lin, Director
LAWASIA	Melissa Pang, President
International Bar Association (IBA)	Sternford Moyo, President
	Kimitoshi Yabuki, Chair of the Bar Issues Commission
Inter-Pacific Bar Association (IPBA)	Richard Briggs, President
Law Society of Singapore	Adrian Tan, President
	Gregory Vijayendran, Immediate Past President

MINUTES

President Adrian Tan welcomed all delegates to the POLA Presidents' Summit 2022 and officially opened the session. He mentioned that this was the session where each representative would present their individual country reports. The country reports were presented in the following order.

1. Japan Federation of Bar Associations (Annex A)
2. Law Council of Australia (Annex B)
3. Bar Association of the Kingdom of Cambodia (Annex C)
4. Fiji Law Society (Annex D)

Apart from presenting a summary of her country's report, Vice President Maopa Wati Seeto asked if the session was recorded and if the recording and her country's report would also be made public. President Adrian Tan responded that the session was recorded but had not come to a decision whether it would be made public or whether it would be made available to the delegates only. He mentioned that for the time being, the report and the recording would not be made public and would be limited among the members, unless the delegates unanimously allowed the minutes to be made public. Vice President Maopa Wati Seeto mentioned that she did not want her country's report and the recording of the meeting to be made public due to sensitive information presented.

5. Hong Kong Bar Association (Annex E)
6. Law Society of Hong Kong (Annex F)
7. PERADI (Indonesian Advocates Association) (Annex G)
8. Korean Bar Association (Annex H)

Apart from presenting a summary of his country's report, President Lee raised the issue of managing the POLA's website. The POLA's website was established by the Korean Bar Association (KBA) in 2008 and they had been managing the website from then till now. They wanted to discuss how the management of the website would be done, moving forward. A working group was established in 2018 and discussions on the management of the website were raised. The working group suggested that each member would take turn every 3 years to manage the homepage. This matter was not resolved due to COVID. KBA stated that they wanted to restart this discussion. President Adrian Tan stated that this was an important issue that needed to be resolved and he was grateful to President Lee for raising it. President Adrian suggested that the issue be discussed after all delegates have presented their respective country's reports.

9. Macau Lawyers Association (Annex I)

10. Bar Council of Malaysia (Annex J)
11. New Zealand Law Society (Annex K)
12. Integrated Bar of the Philippines
13. Taiwan Bar Association (Annex M)

President Adrian Tan thanked all representatives for presenting their respective country's report.

He then mentioned that the maintenance of the POLA homepage had been a tremendous effort on the part of the KBA and he thanked them for their efforts. The issue was who was going to take over the maintenance of the website, moving forward. There was an understanding in the past that it would be rotated among the members. President Adrian Tan thought that this was an excellent idea. He then invited members to speak freely on this matter.

President Lee added that the homepage was established in 2009. Since then, KBA has managed the website (domain and hosting) and that it was now time to hand over the management of the homepage to another member. With the easing of the COVID-19 situation, President Lee suggested the formation of a working level group to work on the details of the website management. Gregory Vijayendran invited President Tass Liveris to share on past decisions on this matter. President Tass Liveris mentioned that the corporate history of this matter was not known to members but this issue has been discussed over the years. He said that it was a worthwhile idea to share the website hosting function for the time being and moving forward. He then stated that the Law Council of Australia was willing to take on the responsibility of managing the homepage for the next 3 years. President Tass Liveris suggested that documentation of the process be done so that there was a collective understanding moving forward between member organisations in relation to how the website hosting would continue in the future.

President Adrian stated the following: -

1. That the proposal from President Lee was that a working level committee be set up and members would be representatives of each of the Law Associations. The purpose of the working level committee would be to formulate some guidelines/rules pertaining to the management of the website.
2. President Tass Liveris's offer for the Law Council of Australia to take over management of the homepage from KBA for the next 3 years.

Vice President Maopa Wati Seeto agreed to both points.

President Tass Liveris then further observed that a tenure of 3 years was discussed in the past and was a reasonable length of time. He was happy to maintain that as the tenure for the rotation.

President Karen Cheah stated that in terms of convenience and practicality, since Malaysia was going to be the host for the next POLA conference, it would be easier for the Bar Council of Malaysia (BCM) to manage the website next. She commented that she was not aware of the previous decision of the tenure being 3 years but she was fine with that length of duration. Vice President Maopa Wati Seeto agreed with President Karen Cheah's proposal.

President Tass Liveris replied that what President Karen Cheah said made sense. With the BCM hosting the next POLA conference, President Tass Liveris agreed that BCM should take over the management of the POLA's website.

President Adrian Tan summarised the proposal as follows: -

1. Since BCM would be hosting the next POLA conference, BCM would take over the management of the POLA homepage for the next 3 years.
2. A documentation of the process in relation to how the website hosting would continue in the future so that delegates in future conferences would know what the procedure would be.
3. Each member organisation to send a representative to the working group that should be formed. That working group should be tasked with formulating guidelines as to who should host the website and how the content of the website should be managed. This could be something that could be discussed in the months going forward as well.

All delegates present unanimously agreed that the BCM would take over management of the website and that each of the member association would send a representative to a working group that would be formed to formulate rules pertaining to the POLA website.

President Adrian Tan commented KBA for doing a wonderful job shouldering the burden of managing the homepage since 2009 and that delegates owed the KBA a debt of thanks. A note of appreciation for KBA was recorded.

President Karen Cheah brought up the issue of the archive of previous decisions and meeting minutes. She mentioned that sometimes delegates entered meetings blindsided in terms of the issues to be discussed and the historical context of those decisions. She proposed developing a system of documentation of all past decisions made.

Immediate Past President Gregory Vijayendran then requested the assistance of Margery Nicoll to assist the committee on the history of this matter.

Margery Nicoll stated that the reason as to why she was being called upon was because she had been doing work with the working group on looking at the POLA Charter again. She shared that there was no practice of resolutions being passed in POLA. There may be provisions made for this in the POLA Charter in the future. Margery Nicoll mentioned that there should be an agreement on terminology and prescribe the type of sessions to be held. For example, to always have a President's summit or plenary sessions. This was what the working group raised when they first started looking at this issue back in 2018.

President Adrian Tan requested Margery Nicoll to explain the Charter to all delegates and the amendments being proposed.

Margery Nicoll stated that POLA started in 1991 and had a different name. Over the years, there were changes and developments. There was an executive committee. Now it was down to the host country to make the arrangements and decisions pertaining to the organising of the conference. Discussions in Kunming, China showed the level of discussions that took place (i.e the clauses that should be looked at and re-evaluated). Then the COVID pandemic began and discussions stopped. Discussions restarted when Gregory Vijayendran called for a meeting of the working group members. At that meeting, suggested updates to the Charter were made. They were as follows: -

1. To make allowances for the usage of Zoom
2. To make allowances for voting to be done via Zoom
3. Allowing for the notification of attendance via Zoom
4. Agreement on 2/3rds majority for the passing of resolutions.
5. Discretion to choose whether voting decisions of member organisations should be noted (if they wished to put it down)

President Adrian Tan asked if these issues would be discussed the next day. Margery Nicoll answered in the affirmative. President Adrian Tan then thanked Margery Nicoll for her assistance.

President Adrian Tan summarized that 2 things have been achieved in this meeting.

1. Malaysia would take over the managing of the POLA homepage for the next 3 years; and
2. A working group would be set up to formulate rules for the hosting of the website.

President Adrian Tan then concluded that the Charter's amendments would be discussed the next day at 10:30am.

President Karen Cheah asked if the country reports would be circulated and disseminated to all members. President Adrian Tan responded in the affirmative but clarified that the reports were not public documents and should only be circulated within member organisations since they have been particularly told by Vice President Maopa Wati Seeto that some of the information in her report was of a sensitive nature.

Melissa Pang asked for the sequence of the hosting of the POLA Conference. Gregory Vijayendran stated that in Kunming, China in 2019, the decision for the next 3 hosts was made. They were Singapore, Malaysia and then Hong Kong. Melissa Pang thanked Gregory Vijayendran for confirming the host countries.

President Adrian Tan thanked all delegates for their participation and ended the session.

[6.05pm]