



International President Report

67th IPA World Congress, Ohrid, North Macedonia

Distinguished delegates,

Esteemed Presidents and observers,

Dear IEB members,

Dear friends,

As your International President, it is an honour and a pleasure to address you at this World Congress and to present my report after my first year in office.

Many people back home are starting to think I don't work at all – they say I'm always off somewhere with the IPA. Little do they know that while it may seem like constant travel, it involves a lot of hard work behind the scenes. But it's the kind of work that brings great joy and satisfaction, especially when I see the positive impact our efforts have on the IPA and its members worldwide.

Reflecting on the Past Year

When I took on the role of President, I was eager to start making a difference immediately. I remember feeling both excited and a little nervous when I started as President. But I was committed to our mission and knew that, together, we could achieve great things.

Just one month into our term, the newly elected International Executive Board (IEB) met in Nottingham to develop a comprehensive strategy for the next four years. Our focus was clear: growth, professional development, sustainability, marketing, support Women and Diversity in the IPA, but also keeping and develop existing programs like the social aspect like IPA games, the Arthur Troop Scholarship and the Young Police Officers Seminar.

Engagement and Representation

It was very important to me to bring the IEB closer to the sections. I attended numerous national congresses and anniversaries, and I also participated in Zoom meetings of section board meetings, for example, in the UK, South Africa, Sri Lanka, and the Netherlands.

I want to thank all the hosting sections in Romania, Moldova, Serbia, United Kingdom, Poland, Slovakia, Albania, Italy, Greece, Malta, Denmark, Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Lithuania, Sri Lanka and of course Austria!

Visiting these sections and meeting so many dedicated friends has been one of the best parts of my job. Each visit reminded me how strong our IPA family is, and it motivates me to keep working hard.

I see my role as one of representing the IPA worldwide, and therefore I try to be present whenever possible – as long as my wife and my employer allow it, in that order.

The IEB held three additional meetings besides the strategy meeting in Nottingham: one in early April in Sicily, one in early June in Rio de Janeiro, and the most recent one last Monday and Tuesday here in Ohrid.

Strategic Initiatives and Key Projects

Article 16 of the International Rules states that the strategy of a newly elected IEB must be presented in the following year.

Our Strategy for 2023-2027, developed during our intensive meeting in Nottingham, outlines our vision for growth, inclusivity, professional development, and sustainability. Here are some highlights and related projects:

1. **Professional Marketing:** Developing a global marketing strategy to boost the IPA brand, attract new members, and engage current members effectively through various channels.
2. **#SHEisIPA Project:** Formerly the Women in IPA project, this initiative empowers and supports female police officers through mentorship, seminars, and networking opportunities, promoting inclusivity and professional growth within the IPA community.
3. **Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion:** We have appointed our first DEI Advisor, Sunethra Senevirathne from IPA Sri Lanka, to ensure every member feels valued and included.
4. **Sustainability:** Integrating sustainable practices into our activities, including tree planting and promoting environmental awareness. The Green IPA project supports this by promoting sustainability through various environmental projects, such as planting trees and using eco-friendly gifts.
5. **Professional Development in Education:** Expanding seminar offerings and collaborating with police human resource departments to recognize IPA education.
6. **Sports and Culture:** We continue to develop sports initiatives and cultural competitions, such as the photo and video contests.
7. **International Collaboration:** Strengthening our presence at the United Nations and the Council of Europe, and establishing relationships with RoadPol, Interpol and Europol.
8. **Arthur Troop Scholarship:** We facilitated the 2024 awardees' participation in their chosen courses and are evaluating applications for the 2025 scholarship.
9. **The IPA Mobile App:** The first version of this app will be showcased at this World Congress. It promises to revolutionize how we connect and engage with our members.

By focusing on these strategic initiatives and projects, we aim to create a more inclusive, sustainable, and professionally enriching environment for all our members.

From my perspective, I am pleased to report that all projects have gotten off to a good to very good start. In just the first year, we have already implemented several key initiatives, such as the 'Plant a Tree' event, the Women Seminar scheduled for November 2024 in Gimborn, the introduction of our new mascot Arthur Fox, and the distribution of IEB gifts made from bamboo or wood.

Furthermore, the new international IPA app is already in an advanced stage of development, with first results being presented at this World Congress. The marketing team has also taken the first steps to enhance the IPA's representation on social media, ensuring better engagement and visibility across various platforms.

Naturally, the new IEB will also be evaluated based on these outcomes. Looking ahead, I plan to hold a meeting with the IEB members in December next year to conduct a mid-term review. During this meeting, we will assess which projects have been particularly successful, identify areas where additional support may be needed, and explore potential new projects.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to all project members for their invaluable support.

Growth Inside and Outside Europe

A significant focus for us is to achieve growth both inside and outside of Europe. As we aim for growth around the world, I often think about my own experiences in Europe and how much more we can do here. We should continue to grow and strengthen our existing networks.

Currently, 87% of our members are from Europe, which highlights the need to expand our presence globally. The IberoAmericano meeting in Rio de Janeiro was an essential event, bringing together sections from Brazil, Peru, Canada, USA, Spain, and Portugal. This meeting, inspired by the successful 2023 meeting in Durban, South Africa, showcased the immense potential for growth in these regions.

In the Americas, we see immense potential:

- Argentina has 0.07% of its police force are IPA members.
- Brazil has 0.1%.
- Colombia has 0.11%.
- Peru has 0.25%.
- The USA has 0.68%.
- Canada has 3.22%.

During the Rio meeting, countries shared their historical development, membership trends, current events, and challenges. Each IEB member provided feedback on their areas of responsibility, and we discussed marketing strategies. The meeting was highly constructive, and I hope the enthusiasm carries over to the sections' development.

After the meeting in Brazil, I received invitations to Peru and Colombia. In both countries, I was greeted by very high-ranking police officials who pledged their full support for the IPA. In Peru, following my visit, the IPA was presented at the police academy in front of hundreds of students, and I am confident that similar events will soon take place in Colombia.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the sections of Brazil, Peru, and Colombia, specifically to President Mazo in Brazil, President Carlos in Peru, and President Hugo in Colombia, along with their teams, for their exceptional hospitality and support.

Regarding Colombia: In the last five years, there have been no reported increases in membership or events to the IEB, which is why their status has remained 'provisionally affiliated.' However, should there now be a visible increase in membership and events, Colombia could be fully affiliated Section next year.

Financial Health and Sponsorship

Financially, the IEB relies primarily on membership levies. This year, the levy is €1.50 per member, whereas before the COVID-19 pandemic, it was €1.68 per member. While we aim to keep these levies reasonable, our ambitious projects and the rising costs of organizing events demand exploring additional funding avenues, such as sponsorships. By attracting sponsors, we can fund new initiatives and reduce the financial burden on our sections, allowing them to allocate more resources to their own projects and marketing efforts.

The majority of expenditures in a calendar year are for the World Congress, which accounts for about one-third of the total budget. This share will certainly increase in the coming years due to rising hotel and flight costs. Currently, large sections finance the participation of smaller sections in the World Congress. The participation and travel costs for the World Congress average €1,800. With the 2024 levy (€1.50/member), a section would need 1,200 members to cover these costs. As of December 31, 2023, 27 sections had fewer than 1,200 members.

Of course, it is crucial to consider the size of countries and the number of police officers within them. For example, in San Marino, Gibraltar, Andorra, and Iceland, more than 80% of police officers are IPA members but have fewer than 1,200 members. Additionally, in five other countries, over 20% of police officers are IPA members, yet 14 countries have less than 5% IPA membership, with eight countries below 1%.

At the same time, we want to offer new events, the IPA app, and seminars through our projects, which also cost money. It is also important for me to visit the sections and represent the IPA, which will certainly incur more travel costs than in the past. Although the IEB has consistently recorded profits in recent years, I do not want to deplete all our reserves. I also do not want to increase the annual levy above the pre-pandemic level of €1.68. One measure can only be to generate more members and thus achieve higher revenues.

Therefore, the IEB intends to consider sponsorship in the future. From 2025 onwards, we aim to secure sponsors who can provide financial support in exchange for various benefits such as hosting information stands at World Congresses, premium advertising placement on IPA platforms, and access to our international IPA events like the IPA games and YPOS. This would mean that these revenues could finance new projects and keep or reduce the levy for the sections, depending on the amount of sponsorship income, thereby providing the sections with more funds for their own projects and marketing.

Communication and Transparency

Transparency is a cornerstone of our administration. To ensure all sections are well-informed, we send out detailed summaries of every IEB meeting. These summaries provide insights into our discussions and decisions, fostering a culture of openness.

International Newsletter

We have made the following changes to the International Newsletter:

- It will now be exclusively in English. If a report is also submitted in the local language, it can be linked to the English report in the electronic version of the newsletter and displayed in the local language.
- Since August 2024, the newsletter has a new design in the colours of the IPA logo.

I want to thank all the sections for the numerous reports. I urge you to continue this practice, as it is very important to follow the motto: do good and talk about it.

Please forward the International Newsletter, once sent out by the IAC, to all your IPA organizations within your sections and, if possible, to all your IPA members. This way, they can see what is happening worldwide. It might also be possible to forward it to all police officers, even if they are not IPA members. Special thanks to Hana and Lisa for their excellent preparation of the newsletters, alongside their other duties at the IAC. I keep both of them very busy.

IEB Motions

This time, we are proposing that the official **IEB documents**, namely the international statutes, rules, and procedures, **no longer be translated into IPA languages**. This always entails an exceptionally high workload for the IAC and is no longer necessary with modern translation programs. In the future, each section will easily be able to translate these documents into any language using translation programs or AI, and we believe this is reasonable for all sections.

In return, from 2025, we want to translate the Congress sessions and change these in the statutes again. We are translating the World Congress this year, even though we were no longer obligated to do so according to the decision made at the World Congress in Lloret de Mar in 2022. According to the statutes, a motion with the same content can only be reintroduced after three years, which is why it will be presented again next year in Poland.

Additionally, we propose that the newly established role of **DEI Advisor** be formally included in the statutes.

It is crucial that Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) are recognised as key pillars of our organisation, ensuring that all IPA members worldwide are granted equal opportunities and treated with fairness. **Sunethra Senevirathne**, our current DEI Advisor, has already drafted an initial version of a DEI strategy, which will be reviewed by the IEB over the coming months. Following the approval of the delegates, this strategy will be distributed to all sections. Including this role in the statutes underlines our commitment to fostering an inclusive and equitable environment for all members.

Timely Communication and Accessibility of Sections

It is common for members of the International Executive Board (IEB), the International Administration Centre (IAC), or myself to send requests or inquiries to sections. These communications may sometimes include deadlines, and other times they may not. Regardless of whether a specific deadline is mentioned, it is vital that sections respond in a timely manner to ensure smooth and efficient operations.

If no deadline is specified, I kindly request a response within one week, even if it is simply to inform us that a more detailed reply will follow later due to specific reasons.

In this regard, I must stress the importance of timely responses and adherence to deadlines. The organisers of World Congresses, IPA Games, YPOS, and other events undertake immense work and must meet strict deadlines with hotels and visa arrangements. When sections fail to register on time, it causes a significant increase in workload. It is particularly challenging when those who miss deadlines then respond in a manner that is either impatient or overly assertive, despite having been the ones to delay the process.

Therefore, I kindly ask all sections to ensure that deadlines are met and that communication is prompt. This will help facilitate smoother coordination and reduce unnecessary complications for all parties involved.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the vast majority of sections that consistently meet deadlines. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Michael Walsh's Resignation

It is with both understanding and deep regret that I acknowledge the resignation of Michael Walsh from his role as Vice President and Treasurer Finances. Mick has served the IPA with great dedication, contributing significantly to our mission over the years. His decision to step down is respected, though it is a significant loss for our organisation. According to the International Statutes of the IPA, the roles of Vice President and Treasurer Finances are crucial, as they involve not only leading key initiatives but also representing the International President in his absence and managing the financial stability of the IPA. These positions are integral to the continuity and stability of our leadership.

During his tenure, Mick Walsh has been instrumental in driving several key projects forward. His efforts in enhancing international collaboration, supporting the development of marketing, and promoting the values of the IPA across various sections have been particularly noteworthy.

Due to the critical nature of these roles and in line with the International Statutes, it has been decided that the election for a new Vice President and Treasurer Finances will not take place at this World Congress, nor at the next.

It is essential that we carefully consider the selection process to ensure the best candidates are chosen to fulfil these responsibilities. To address this matter with the seriousness it deserves, we have decided to hold an extraordinary online congress on 7th December. **Further details regarding the election process will be provided under Agenda Item 18.**

This procedural change reflects our commitment to transparency and the democratic principles that guide the IPA. By taking this extra time, we can ensure that the new Vice President and Treasurer Finances are well-prepared to support our strategic goals and uphold the values of our organisation.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to Mick Walsh for his years of outstanding service, and to all members for their understanding and support during this transition period.

Encouraging Engagement

As we move forward, I want to encourage every section to actively engage with our initiatives and contribute to our collective success. The strength of the IPA lies in its engagement, and your involvement is crucial to our progress.

Whether through participation in projects, sharing ideas, or providing feedback, each contribution is valuable and helps us grow stronger together. I urge you all to take an active role in shaping the future of our organisation.

What's Planned Next

We have identified several key initiatives that will shape the future of the IPA:

1. Revision of International Documents

In 2026, we plan to revise the international documents, including the statutes, rules, and procedures, in collaboration with the oldest and largest sections. The goal is to modernise the statutes, improve the organisation of World Congresses, and review the responsibilities of IEB members, with a particular focus on strengthening the role of marketing.

2. New Online Resource Folder

We will introduce a shared online folder, accessible to all sections. This folder will include international newsletters, summaries of IEB meetings, and photos from IPA photo competitions, allowing all sections to access and use these resources more easily. This initiative aims to improve communication and resource-sharing across the organisation.

3. Redesign of the International Website

The IPA's international website will be redesigned to make it more modern, user-friendly, and visually appealing. This update will better reflect the dynamic and evolving nature of our association, ensuring it meets the needs of our members and enhances our global presence.

Continuous Feedback and Improvement

Lastly, I want to emphasize the importance of continuous feedback from all sections and members. Your insights and suggestions are vital for our ongoing development and improvement. We are committed to listening to your feedback and using it to enhance our strategies and operations. Let's work together to ensure that the IPA remains a dynamic and responsive organisation, capable of adapting to the needs and aspirations of our global community.

Concluding Remarks

In closing, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all the members of the IEB, **Mick, Jože, Christos, Oliver, Diego, Clive** and **Jean Pierre**, for their excellent cooperation! Your engagement and your personalities have made working with you not just easy but an absolute pleasure. My further thanks go to **Hana** and **Lisa** for your outstanding work at the IAC. Whenever I needed something written, whether on your days off, during your vacations, or early in the morning, you were always very helpful and took a lot of work off my hands. Thank you very much!

I also want to thank our Legal Advisor **Michael Boolsen** and our DEI Advisor **Sunethra Senevirathne**. Michael has already supported us in many legal matters during the first year. Regarding the implementation of the DEI Advisor's tasks, we are working with Sunethra to put these into practice. We will keep the sections updated on this matter.

But above all, my heartfelt thanks go to my wife, Angela, for her patience and support. I often joke that I now have two wives, both very dear to my heart: Angela and the IPA. Angela sometimes reminds me that the IPA gets more of my time, but she knows how passionate I am about our mission.

Let's keep working together, building lasting friendships and making great progress for the IPA. Looking back at what we've done together, I feel grateful for your trust and for the shared vision that brings us together. Every challenge we've faced has made me even more determined to serve this great organisation.

I am now happy to take any questions or comments you may have.

Thank you very much!

Servo per Amikeco