

# HONG KONG LAWYER

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香港  
律師

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太平洋地區律師公會會長

### Pedro Pais de Almeida

President of UIA  
國際律師聯盟主席

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Kong legal community can expect from IPBA: "There have been conferences in Hong Kong and presidents from Hong Kong. Huen Wong is the last one who is very well known. It is up to the members. You only get out of anything as much as you put into it. I think probably the biggest thing that any member has got out of it is work referrals or in other ways has been able to pick up the phone to someone they've met and say, 'look I've got this problem can you help me'. Lawyers who sit in their offices and think they know everything are not doing anyone a favor."

"This year's conference will be in Manila in March. Last year's conference was Auckland. Next year will be in Singapore and after that we go to Shanghai. But in terms of keeping everything if you like lean and mean, the individuals who host the conference are the ones that do all the organisation. So, membership is actually very reasonable."

## Dr Pedro Pais de Almeida

### President of UIA

Pedro started his training as a lawyer in 1990. He is a practicing lawyer in Lisbon, Portugal. Both his law graduation and post graduation in Portuguese tax

law were completed in Portugal. The international flavor in his career as a lawyer was offered upon joining UIA in 1995.

Pedro decided to become a lawyer at a young age, contrary to his father's advice. "My father, an 80-year-old lawyer still practicing to this day, has always told me never to become a lawyer. In doing that he inspired in me a drive to challenge authority, to work to achieve my goals, persistently, but never to the point of breaking down and especially to always have the courage to fight for what I believed to be right."

Pedro is a partner in the Lisbon law firm Abreu Advogados. The firm promotes a policy of the 3Qs: Human Quality, Technical Quality and Organizational Quality and has an active pro bono policy and undertakes a great number of initiatives on social responsibility issues. They have offices in other parts of Portugal and are associated with Portuguese speaking jurisdictions around the world.

### UIA

"The UIA is the oldest International Association of Lawyers incorporated back in 1927, with its registered office in Paris." The office is located at a former 17th century mansion house, l'Hôtel de la Porte. "We have two types of members ie collective (like the Hong Kong Law Society) and individual members and





all together we represent around two million lawyers worldwide. UIA has an observer status at the UN and other International Institutions as an ONG (non-governmental organization) and develops two main activities. Through the UIA-IROL (UIA - Institute for the Rule of Law), we promote the rule of law and the core values of the legal profession around the world. Also, UIA contributes and promotes to the training of lawyers in a perspective of comparative law, which, I must confess played a very important role in my career." The UIA is committed to defending the cause of lawyers who may be pressured or threatened anywhere in the world for exercising his or her profession. "It is the defence of the defence."

"In practice, given that UIA has members and representation all over the world, it is usually our local representatives or sometimes even a relative of the lawyer who will contact UIA through their head office which provides multilingual administrative and logistics support in all areas of the association's work."

Pedro described his responsibilities as the president of UIA. "The president of

UIA is the voice of our Association and, of course, this involves full commitment, dedication and coordination of many different tasks working together with our staff based at our registered office in Paris. Among other responsibilities, the president represents UIA and this is the reason why I have the pleasure of receiving this kind invitation from the Hong Kong Law Society for attending the Opening of Legal in Hong Kong this year."

Pedro was asked about the main challenges faced by legal practitioners in Portugal which UIA could help overcome them. "The new Portuguese law on the combat against money laundering that transposed the last EU Directive on this matter, imposes additional obligations to lawyers. Now, in the case of suspicions, lawyers are obliged to denounce their clients to the Portuguese Bar Association and after evaluation, should transmit these suspicions to the Public Prosecutors and/or Criminal Investigation Police. I believe that this is against the Constitutional Law of Portugal and that also jeopardises the access from the citizens to the legal system. If clients can or should

be exposed by their lawyers, instead of trusting their lawyers they will fear them and will not require their advice. This is related to access to justice. Lawyers generally are not trained to detect suspicious activities especially the sophisticated kind such as money laundering."

"UIA welcomes the engagement and participation of all Hong Kong legal community members at the different events organised by the UIA. I would like to invite Hong Kong legal practitioners to attend the next annual Congress of UIA, in Portugal and become actively involved in our working sessions and in case they find that this was a positive experience (I'm pretty sure it will be!), then register as members of UIA. Two events that I would like to highlight the Hong Kong legal community. A UIA seminar in cooperation with the Macao Lawyers Association, to be held in April 2018 in Macao on Management of Law Firms. Also, I look forward to welcome a strong representation from Hong Kong at the 2018 UIA Congress in Porto (Portugal), to be held between October 30 and November 3." ■

