



Dear AIJA members, dear friends

My name is Moritz Maurer, I am 43 years young, I was born and live in Zurich, Switzerland and, as some of you might already know, I have applied for the position of the First Vice-President of AIJA.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to present my credentials and ideas.

1. MY BIO

1.1. AIJA

I joined AIJA in 2013. From the beginning I have been actively engaged in all facets of AIJA life. I have been a regular event attendee, speaker, panel moderator and organizing committee member of seminars and half-year conferences, and have acted as both Vice-President and President of the M&A Commission. My AIJA involvement has most recently culminated in my role as Co-Chair of the organizing committee for this year's annual congress in Zurich.

1.2. Expertise

Domestic and cross-border private M&A transactions (in particular retail industry and mid-cap M&A) as well as venture capital and private equity transactions (on both investor's and company's side).

1.3. Legal education

2012 Columbia University School of Law, New York, LL.M., Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar

2010 Admitted to the Bar

2007 University of Zurich (lic. iur.)

1.4. Career

2020 Partner, Niederer Kraft Frey, Zurich

2017 Senior Associate, Niederer Kraft Frey, Zurich

2013 Associate, Pestalozzi Attorneys at Law, Zurich

2012 Foreign Associate with Curtis, Mallet-Prevost, Colt & Mosle LLP, New York

2010 Associate, Pestalozzi Attorneys at Law, Zurich

2007 Junior Associate, Pestalozzi Attorneys at Law, Zurich

1.5. ... and?

I like running – a lot, and for as long/far as I can.

2. MY IDEAS

Before presenting the ideas for my presidency, I would like to restate AIJA's main objectives (based on its constitutional documents) as well as my vision of "AIJA in an ideal world".

2.1. AIJA's main purpose

AIJA's by-laws (dated 1962) state the following purpose:

"(1) The association's object is to encourage exchanges and to promote solidarity and mutual respect between young lawyers from all countries, to defend the interests of young lawyers and to examine issues of interest to them, to contribute to the creation of groupings of young lawyers in the countries and regions where no such groupings exist as yet, to participate actively in the development of the legal profession and in the harmonisation of its professional rules and to contribute to the full and effective implementation, in all circumstances and in all places, of the right of all lawyers to practice freely their profession and the right of everyone to be assisted, advised and represented by a freely chosen lawyer and to receive a fair trial before an impartial and independent court within a reasonable period of time.

(2) The object shall be achieved in particular: (a) via meetings, conferences and congresses within the association or in cooperation with other associations or institutions; (b) by establishing the closest possible contacts with national and international bar associations and associations of lawyers and, where applicable, with the public authorities; (c) via courses, seminars, and publications intend to enhance the quality of work and by organising further training for young lawyers in all areas of law."

From the above as well as AIJA's further constitutional documents, such as the Declaration of Athens, I understand AIJA to have the following two main principles (which, at first, do not seem to have a lot in common): the "Rule of Law" as well as the idea of gathering, exchanging and meeting; in short, "networking".

2.2. AIJA in an ideal world

Based on the above-mentioned purpose of AIJA, my understanding of it as well as AIJA's current structure and organization, I would describe an "AIJA in an ideal world" as follows:

- AIJA is accessible and affordable to every lawyer;
- AIJA's members are international and diverse;
- AIJA does not limit its current (and new) commissions nor their members;

- AIJA pursues the Rule of Law – on its own as well as with third parties;
- AIJA provides its members with career-building skills (i.e., hard skills through the individual commissions and soft skills through the SCILL commission);
- AIJA maintains and develops its established relationships with international and national legal/non-legal associations as well as with legal/non-legal sponsors (both on an AIJA level as well as on an individual commission level);
- AIJA's organizational planning is focused on networking and business development; and
- although a business association, AIJA is also about friendship – the AIJA spirit.

2.3. My ideas for the realization of such an ideal

To avoid any misunderstandings, AIJA already is very well organized, does not require fundamental changes and has all the tools it needs to complete its purpose. But there is always room for improvement and development.

The following outlines my ideas for the improvement and development of AIJA:

- *AIJA's members are international and diverse*

As per year end 2020, the AIJA membership (i.e., ordinary paying members) comprised of (only) approx. 1'119 European members, 61 Latin American members, 7 African members, 53 Asian members and 42 North American members (numbers are decreasing since 2015). AIJA has been, is and will be a primarily European-based association. However, numbers must increase both inside and outside of Europe (with a focus on Latin and North America). For that to happen, (i) the national representatives should intensify and vary their engagement (i.e., in addition to organizing local AIJA events, to engage with local bar/business associations or to involve AIJA alumni, both to promote AIJA and attract new members) and (ii) AIJA's larger commissions should organize seminars (bottom-up principle). No action should be a "one-off", but should be followed-up (as done in business development).

- *AIJA does not limit its current (and new) commissions nor their members*

AIJA's strength lies in its commissions. It is the commissions where AIJA's members primarily meet and network as well as develop skills. To improve their importance, commissions should (i) be allowed to organize overlapping events (to the extent they don't compete), have the amount of officers they need (not only for organizational purposes, but also to increase the visibility of its members; e.g., co-chairs, webinar officer, website officer, education/SCILL officer, conference/seminar quality officer, publication/newsletter officer, etc.) and should establish sub-commissions, if applicable, prior to establishing new commissions as well as (ii) be encouraged to implement commission guidelines to ensure professionalism (see "Corporate and M&A Commission Event Guidelines – The 8 Golden Rules") and to increase their number of newsletters (numbers are decreasing since 2016). In addition to the

aforementioned, the relevance, necessity and benefit of AIJA's Half Year Conferences should be carefully considered.

— *AIJA pursues the Rule of Law – on its own as well as with third parties*

In view of AIJA's constitutional documents, the importance of the Human Rights (or rather, "Rule of Law") Committee is evident. The implementation of its ideas requires a commission with enough personnel, the appropriate level of seniority and/or experience in connection with a constant public presence (e.g., the *Rule of Law Webathon*), involvement and engagement with third parties.

— *AIJA provides its members with career-building skills (i.e., hard skills through the individual commissions and soft skills through the SCILL commission)*

We obtain our hard skills primarily "at home" and improve them by way of exchange with our international peers. Soft skills or professional and personal development are, in contrast, international. Soft skills provide the knowledge of how to be more efficient / manage time, how to take advantage of new technology, how to draft fee quotes, how to conduct fee negotiations, how to build up our business case, how to do BD, how to use social media, etc. They "help us to become better in what we do". This is where AIJA can make a true difference and provide a very important benefit for its members. Therefore and given the overall importance for AIJA (amongst others, because of AIJA's constitutional documents), the SCILL Commission should become a staff function (as the Human Rights Committee). In addition, its work should be intensified (across the AIJA calendar and across the commissions), not only on a stand-alone basis but also in cooperation with the individual commission, and each commission or related group of commission should provide for a SCILL officer.

— *AIJA maintains and develops its established relationships with international and national legal/non-legal associations as well as with legal/non-legal sponsors (both on an AIJA level as well as on an individual commission level)*

AIJA provides the momentum which every sponsor is interested in: a generation of future leaders. With the assistance of the (adequately staffed) Sponsorship Committee, AIJA should increase in particular its institutional sponsorship (by both companies and law firms) via AIJA' alumni who might not be where they are without AIJA.

— *although a business association, AIJA is also about friendship – the AIJA spirit*

AIJA has provided me with true friends who bring happiness into my life. I will make sure that AIJA continues to provide those same opportunities.

In that sense and to close, I would like to quote a former Honorary President: "AIJA is about people and how meeting these people influences the course of your life."

I am determined to apply all my professional and personal skills and experiences to build on AIJA's successes and strengthen this organization we all love.

I would be honoured if you chose me as your First Vice-President to proudly represent you and your interests in AIJA.

Sincerely

Moritz Maurer