

India International ADR Association off to an Exciting Start

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This month of May witnessed the launch of the [India International ADR Association \(IIADRA\)](#). And what a blast it was! Judicial luminaries, leading lights of the legal profession, business leaders and politicians all descending upon the gorgeous port city of Kochi on the southwestern Indian coast in the state of Kerala.

At first glance Kochi might be the first place you would think of to be the home of the India International ADR Association. I mean, why not the major international Indian centres of Mumbai or Delhi? Interestingly, Kochi although better known today as a tourist destination, has a rich and colourful history with periods of Portuguese, Dutch and of course British occupation. Kochi is one of the major ports in modern India and was an important trading centre which connected India with the rest of the world from around 15th century AD. So it has a history of being a place which connects people...

And connectivity was certainly a major feature of the two-day event which followed the IIADRA launch — a conference entitled *Fostering Global Business: Making Deals and Resolving Disputes*.

It's been said before: We mediators tend to spend a lot of time talking in-group rather than across groups and most likely not enough time talking with those who could and possibly should be using our services. Many if not most mediation conferences invite mediators, ADR trainers and writers to speak to a crowd of, yes, mediators and ADR professionals. The Kochi event introduced a different paradigm: how to connect the worlds of ADR and big business. Refreshingly, right from the start both business and ADR speakers took to the podium with topics such as *Seamless International Trade and Commerce*, *Tailoring Dispute Resolution Strategies and Choices for Troubled Businesses*. ADR professionals, business leaders from various industries and lawyers engaged in two days of hearty dialogue and sometimes heated debate.

One of the outcomes of the conference has been a review and renewal of IIADRA's commitment. Here it is – the Reaffirmation prepared by Vice President Anil Xavier and endorsed by the Governing Council of IIADRA on 29th May 2013:

Reaffirming our commitment, recognising our responsibility and expressing our conviction, we hereby resolve:

1. To augment the base of the Association by increasing the members, which should include serious ADR professionals and ADR users from India and abroad.
2. To create constant opportunities for communication and interaction among ADR professionals globally and within India and to form a group of "Thought Leaders" who could assist the association in formulating and suggesting schemes for improvement of domestic as well as international ADR operations.
3. To appraise the law and policy makers to rectify the anomalies that exist in the ADR laws and suggest amendments, modifications and improvements in the ADR laws.
4. To cooperate with the Supreme Court initiated court-annexed mediation system and suggest ways for improvement on the professionalism and ethical aspects of mediators and the process.
5. To encourage companies and organisations to formally pledge their commitment to resolve disputes in a private and forward-looking manner, which would be practical, affordable and reliable and which could transform potential crises into strengthened relationships.

For a country where people inherit legal disputes because the size of the court backlog is just unfathomable, this double feature event of launch and conference is an important milestone. I've invited Vice President of IIADRA, the indefatigable Mr Anil Xavier, to blog about IIADRA's next steps. Meanwhile, [click here](#) for some pics!