

National News

Bahamian attorney addresses international legal conference

A Bahamian attorney gave the opening speech at the annual conference of the International Bar Association (IBA) on Sunday in Dubai.

Peter D. Maynard, who serves as the chair of the Public and Professional Interest Division of the (IBA), described law as a profession "committed to improving society as a whole".

The IBA was established in 1947 and it is the world's leading organization of international legal practitioners, bar associations and law societies.

It has more than 45,000 individual lawyers and over 200 bar

associations and law societies as members.

"A profession provides service to others. The relationship is based on core values or principles including trust - the trust that the lawyer will stand up and speak up for liberty, justice and the rule of law," said Maynard.

The IBA's main objectives are: To promote an exchange of information between legal associations worldwide; to support the independence of the judiciary and the right of lawyers to practice their profession without interference; and to support

human rights for lawyers worldwide through its Human Rights Institute.

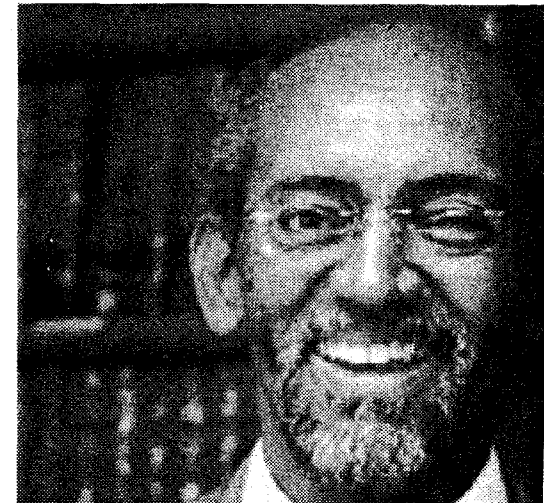
Maynard challenged those attending the conference to continue to examine how they can play a part in broader social issues.

"Being the global voice of the profession is something that is earned every day. It is not a public relations gimmick, but is based on a profound commitment to improve society," he said.

"We are 'the global voice of the profession, but what are we saying in terms of the grand-scale

issues of the 21st century, such as war and peace, poverty, diversity, human rights, corruption, corporate social responsibility, ethics, pro bono and access to justice, and the rule of law?"

The conference runs from October 30 to November 4. Speakers include Nobel Laureate and Egyptian Presidential Candidate Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei; UN Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers Gabriela Knaul, and Chinese banking and finance expert David Liu.



PETER D. MAYNARD