

# 5<sup>TH</sup> UIA ASSOCIATIONS ROUND TABLE IN ASIA-PACIFIC

by Nancy Carfrae and Clara Fernández López

For 110 years the UIA has been working to promote and facilitate the work of international associations. Since 2007 the UIA Associations Round Tables held in Europe have given associations and opportunity to learn through networking and through practice. Since 2013 the UIA Associations Round Tables take place annually in Asia-Pacific as well, this year on September 21 and 22 in the beautiful city of Chiang Mai, Thailand.

78 participants from 18 countries – professional societies, service organizations, interest groups, charities, and all other types, and active in all fields of human endeavour – met in Hotel Le Méridien Chiang Mai.

*“UIA Associations Round Tables takes place in the Asia-Pacific region annually since 2013. Representatives of 127 international associations with headquarters in 40 countries have participated at one or more of these Round Tables.*

*The Round Table event in Chiang Mai in September 2017 was memorable for all participants, Thailand was a most wonderful host. I was impressed by the responsiveness and the professionalism of the hosting Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau team, who worked extremely hard together with the UIA team to make the event a success. The culture and hospitality of the Thai people was an outstanding feature of the event.*

*By holding UIA Associations Round Table Asia-Pacific 2017 in Thailand, UIA wants to support and underline the impressive rate of activity which Thailand shows in the world of international associations: 224 international associations have their headquarter in Thailand, an additional 27 have an office in the country and a total of 4,109 international associations have members in Thailand.”*

**UIA President Cyril Ritchie**

During these two days of the Round Table Asia-Pacific delegates met, networked, enjoyed and learned together with other international association representatives. The participants shared experience and knowledge with colleagues from all over the world, profited from the training by senior association leaders, and gained practical skills and tools.

Cyril Ritchie, President of UIA, was keynote speaker with the thought-provoking topic “Is your association ‘political?’” A panel with all speakers, followed by a discussion with all delegates, gave insight into the current challenges international associations face.

Association leaders presented case studies and shared their experience in meeting challenges, such as increasing impact by using the power

*“Thailand is and will always be committed to the development and growth of association as its meeting plays a significant role to the growth of Thai economy and the region. Each year we have the opportunity to facilitate and support more than 100 international meetings in Thailand and are ready to welcome more.”*

**Director of TCEB, Mr. Chiruit Isarangkun Na Ayuthaya**

of technology (by Arundhuti Gupta from Mentor Together) or “Staying alive, with or without funding” by Margareth Sembering from the Consortium of Non-Traditional Security Studies in Asia.

Participants much enjoyed the pros and cons of discussing the consequences of “Getting accredited by UN bodies” (presented by Cyril Ritchie), how to deal with thousands of volunteers around the world (by Ping Ping Worakate Thangsurbkul) and ways of “Fostering global participation in an international organization” (by Kathryn Stewart from the International Council on Alcohol, Drugs and Traffic Safety).

The breaks, dinner and lunch, bubbling with interaction and spiced by fantastic food, gave plenty of time to network with colleagues from other associations and from other countries.

Association representatives and speakers, the hosts at Thailand Convention & Exhibitions Bureau, and the team of UIA – thanks to their active participation this Round Table was a success for all!

The next UIA Associations Round Table Asia-Pacific will take place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on September 26 and 27, 2018.

