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**My 2013-2014 Year in Review
Yvonne Chua, Past-President**

**Looking to the
Future—A Stronger
and Closer LES Family**



*By Yvonne Chua,
Past President, LES International*

I have been privileged to serve as President of LES International, and this marks my final presidential address to you. It has been a Year of Action as I proudly witnessed the much accelerated growth of the bond within the LES Family and the great strides made in continuing to excel amidst challenges. As my term draws to completion, I would like to recap what has been a year of accomplishments for LESI pursuant to the collective wisdom, commitment and hard work of all in the LES Family.

Advancing our structure

We have taken major steps to build a stronger LES by advancing our structure and management and improving member service.

On this, a number of guidelines and policies have been put in place to help steer LESI onwards and upwards. These include:

- a. Goals and guidelines for a structured relationship between LESI (and LES societies) and other IGOs (Inter-Governmental Organizations)/NGOs (Non-Governmental Organization);
- b. Guidelines for IPR committee outreach programs;
- c. LESI guidelines on funding of regional activities; and
- d. LESI guidelines on sponsorship arrangements.

Guidelines for LESI committees on setting up webinars are also in the pipeline.

A newly enhanced LESI brochure has been launched which sets out precisely the LESI structure and benefits of membership. This is now available on the LESI website, whilst printed copies have been sent to each national society. Translation into local languages of some societies where English is not the common language is also underway to expand the LESI profile.

Continual improvements to our LESI website have been in full swing, thanks to the Ad Hoc Task Force including Mark Horsburgh, Ned Barlas, Shawn Jacka, Chris Katopis and our IT expert Kate Schneider. Security of the website is enhanced to safeguard user experience. Local event information is accessible by a click-through map. The LESI Twitter is now on the website, which you can follow for news about meetings, publications and IP developments. Previous *les Nouvelles* articles are also searchable through the online database. Further, a shortened edition of the *LES Global News* is made publicly available on our website for sharing with the global IP community outside of LES membership.

Importantly, the Administration Office has made increased efforts in updating and ensuring the accuracy of the membership directory. This is now also searchable by society.

The powerhouse of LESI is our committees. In the past year we launched a series of quarterly committee leadership conference calls with chairs and vice-chairs, and this enhanced communication has proven valuable for facilitating their work and planning collaborations between committees and societies.

Building a stronger LES

As the theme of my presidency, one of my visions for LES is to enhance its leading role in the world IP arena.

We have actively expanded our collaboration with selected key IP organizations to foster our global importance. First and foremost is our partnership with WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organization). Aside from our fruitful meeting in Geneva with Dr. Francis Gurry and his colleagues to create closer long term relations, we have joined as a partner to WIPO's Green Project to contribute to the accelerated deployment of green technology solutions in both developing and developed countries. A number of goals were achieved in the past year under this project, and key strategies and related activities are underway. Further, we are participating in the WIPO Technology and Innovation Support Centre (TISC) program and will be sending speakers to take part in TISC's online educational program series, thanks to IUGT Committee Chair Karin Hoffmann. In addition, I had a special meeting with Mr. Anthony Taubman, Director, IP Division of WTO (World Trade Organization) in February on special collaboration between WTO and LES.

To strengthen cooperation with other NGOs, I accepted invitations from APAA (Asian Patent Attorneys Association) and AUTM (Association of University Technology Managers) Asia and participated in their annual meeting in Vietnam and Taipei, respectively. I also took part in the Annual NGO Coordination meeting held at INTA (International Trademark Association). Other LESI representatives also attended the ASIPI (Inter-American Association of International Property) Annual Meeting and the AIPLA (American Intellectual Property Law Association) Spring Meeting.

Further, thanks to arrangements by our national societies, I am pleased to have made official visits to the IP Offices of Korea, Singapore and Malaysia, and have had meaningful discussions with their respective commissioners and senior officials. I was particularly impressed by the special event hosted by LES Malaysia exclusively for Directors of the IP Office, national presidents of other major IP organizations including APAA, AIPPI (International Association for the Protection of Intellectual Property) and MIPA (Malaysia Intellectual Property Association) and selected industry people.

Following the success of the 2014 GTIF (Global Technology Impact Forum) hosted by LESI and that of 2012 and 2013, GTIF has now achieved recognition as a unique forum of world premier leaders in a global conversation on IP, with dedication to the promotion of IP licensing and technology transfer for the betterment of mankind. At the Forum this January, aside from the participation by WIPO, WTO and leading NGOs, we have seen keen interest from governments and big corporations with engagement also by many LES societies. Building on such recognition, I am pleased that GTIF 2015 will continue its mission at the LESI Brussels Conference.

On the expansion of the LES Family into Thailand, excitingly the Thailand Organizing Committee will be submitting their application in preparation for the establishment of LES Thailand. In demonstration of their enthusiasm, representatives of their committee attended our Moscow Delegates Meeting and made a presentation on their work. I am thus excited that we will see the birth of LES Thailand soon. My sincere thanks again to Patricia Bunye, Heinz Goddar and LES Japan for their relentless guidance.



From left: Janet Toh and Cheah Chiew Lan-LES Malaysia; Malaysia IPO Deputy DG Shamsiah Kamaruddin; Yvonne Chua, Past-President LESI; Director General Dato Azizan; Brian Law-President LES Malaysia; and Rick Dunham.



From left: IPO Singapore Executive Director Chiam Lu Lin; Audrey Yap, LES Singapore; Yvonne Chua, Past-President LESI; IPOS Chief Executive Tan Yih San; and Sheena Jacob, President LES Singapore.

Within LES, the “Driving Membership” initiative led by John Walker has addressed ways to promote membership growth including a wider LESI engagement activity. Amongst others are contributions to *LES Global News* on ‘Why I should be an LES member’ to demonstrate LES membership value, followed by another series on ‘tips’ from various societies on how they managed to increase members. LESI will continue to be proactive to achieve results on membership.

Joining Hands to foster “A Closer LES Family”

My further vision is to build a closer LES Family, and I have been advocating “Joining Hands”, an initiative which I first presented at the 2013 Rio Conference. A year on, we have successfully instilled this spirit into LES societies, committees and members, and have witnessed many active collaborations from within and outside of LES. Notable examples include the special visits by LES Japan delegation to LES Malaysia and LES Singapore, joint meeting of LES Andean Community and LES Brazil in Lima and the upcoming joint meeting of LES Japan and LES China, whilst a joint meeting amongst LES Chile, LES Brazil and LES Andean Community, the

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LESI Innovation Tour 2014 (to be jointly organized by the Americas Committee and LES Brazil) as well as the 2014 LES Asia Pacific Regional Meeting in Seoul are also in the pipeline following the very successful 2013 Hangzhou Meeting. The Asian

Students Business Plan Competition will progress to its third year pursuant to combined efforts of all in the AP region.

Another great story is the first Pan-European Young Members Event in Vienna in November 2013 under the joint support of LESI, LES Austria and others. This success has inspired planning the first Pan-Asian and first Pan-American YMC event. Interestingly also, the LESI Outstanding Activity/Event Award goes to a joint collaboration of LES (USA & Canada) and LES Japan on the Hello Kitty presentation.

To me, the star moment of the LES Family is our joint celebration of World IP Day under “Joining Hands 2014 Around the World with LES,” when all our 32 member societies showed extraordinary commitment to join hands in holding events across the globe to enhance the innovation economy. A 100% participation rate was achieved for the first time. This could not be more befitting with the “Joining Hands” initiative as LES members came together with their own society, as well as with the entire LES family, to celebrate ATW 2014.



In this collaborative spirit, LESI High Tech Committee leaders led by Chair John Paul have spearheaded a special initiative in building a body of members in the same sub-industry across the globe as core to facilitate cross-countries

cooperation in that same industry. As a first success, key persons for transportation, electronics and other high tech industries in each LES national society have established connections that will pursue future collaborative projects and the setting up of an industry advisory board. This is no doubt an excellent model that other industry committees may consider following.

This year LESI together with LES (USA & Canada) will again support conducting the Bio-Pharmaceutical Royalty Rate and Deal Terms Survey. The survey results, exclusively available to LES members, have always been a significant membership value.

To enhance my understanding of the LES Family, I have travelled extensively in the past year to meet fellow members of different societies in Europe, America and the Asia Pacific, and have also taken part in different LES organized/supported events across the regions. In particular on 21 March 2014, I had the pleasure of joining the flagship event of LESANZ in Perth, marking also their 40th anniversary celebration, when many past presidents shared stories of their amazing LES experiences.

The highlight event in our calendar is undoubtedly the LESI Conference and International Management & Delegates’ Meeting (IMDM), which took place in Moscow in May with immense suc-



Yvonne Chua, Past-President LESI, center, with the LESANZ Presidents at their 40th Annual Meeting. From left, Tim Jones, Mark Horsburgh, Simon Rowell, Rob McInnes, Rodney Deboos, and Des Ryan (wearing his Gold Medal).



Award winners and LESI leaders at the Annual Conference in Moscow. From left: Arnaud Michel, President LESI; Dr. Hayley French, International Service Recognition and representing Barry Quest, Certificate of Merit in Memoriam; Dr. Jose Luis Solleiro Rebolledo, LES Mexico, Society of the Year; Yvonne Chua, Past-President of LESI; Dr. Heinz Goddar, Awards Committee Co-Chair; Ronald Grudziecki, Gold Medal; Ted Cross, Certificate of Merit; Ichiro Nakatomi, LES Japan and Pam Demain, LES (USA & Canada), sharing the Outstanding Society Activity Award; J.J. Kim—LES Korea, Most Progressive Society Award. Gold Medalist Randall Rader is missing from the photo.

cess, which is a testament to the great work of LES Russia under the able leadership of President Sergey Dorofeev and Organizing Committee Chair Valery Medvedev, and above all, the unwavering support and participation of LES members and guests, notwithstanding the political tension in the region. The presentations of the LESI Awards with the three new recognitions added this term were particularly heart-warming as we paid tribute to our distinguished members, friends and societies for their outstanding contributions to LES.

Conclusion

Thank you national presidents, committee leaders, LES friends and members, for having inundated me and my board with your sterling support and encouragement in the past year in order to realize our mission of enriching the LES legacy. This is a time of great opportunity for the IP community and LES will continue to hold true, with vigor and passion, to its motto of advancing the business of IP globally. With Joining Hands becoming an integral part, we shall see the LES Family soaring to new heights. My heartiest best wishes to incoming President Arnaud Michel and his board as they move forward in another exciting year. ■