

## President's Message

Those who have read my annual report for 2008, published in the last ASA Bulletin, who have attended the ASA Conference in February 2009 already know: ASA has decided to join other arbitration institutions in offering a prize for special achievements in international commercial arbitration. However, contrary to the prizes presently offered, ASA's prize is not for academic achievement but for practical contributions to the effective resolution of international commercial disputes through arbitration.

Among the criticisms asserted against arbitration practice today the role of counsel and the reproach of "over-lawyering" are often heard. ASA thus believes that good practices, especially in arbitration advocacy, deserve active promotion. As an organization that includes both arbitrators and counsel, we feel well placed to contribute to this promotion. We will attempt to do so by identifying and publicizing good examples of advocacy in commercial arbitration. For this purpose, ASA has decided to set up a Prize for Advocacy in international arbitration that shall be awarded at regular intervals to arbitration counsel for outstanding advocacy work.

The choice of the laureate will be made by reference to a Charter presented by ASA at its February 2009 conference and that sets out ASA's views on good advocacy practice in international commercial arbitration. Simultaneously, guidelines have been presented as to how candidates for the Prize may be proposed and how the selection process is intended to work. Both documents are published on ASA's website [www.arbitration-ch.org](http://www.arbitration-ch.org).

We are looking forward to receiving proposals for laureates and hope to be able to present the first recipient of the Prize at ASA's January 2010 conference in Geneva.

Zurich, February 2009

Dr. Markus Wirth  
ASA President