



October 16, 2020

Report of the International Director
Honorable Lisette Shirdan-Harris

We all have experienced unexpected change in our lives since our last Annual conference in Los Angeles and the last IAWJ Biennial in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 2018. As we know, the only thing constant is change.

Due to the global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the IAWJ Biennial, highly anticipated by so many, which was scheduled to take place in Auckland, New Zealand in May 2020, had to be canceled and rescheduled for May 7-10, 2021. In the interest of caution, we have set back-up dates at September 1-13, 2021. The IAWJ board is communicating regularly through Zoom and email to determine whether continuing to plan for New Zealand in May 2021 is practical or realistic. Everyone who registered for the May 2020 conference should have been contacted regarding options for registration fees already paid. I will keep everyone posted as plans develop.

At our 2019 NAWJ Annual Conference in Los Angeles, the Honorable Lisa Walsh was elected by NAWJ to succeed me as International Director. Her term as International Director is to begin at the IAWJ Biennial upon her nomination and election to the IAWJ board by the North American region, which includes the Canadian Women Judges Association. Judge Walsh, has worked closely with me during the transition. IAWJ board is still in discussions about election and Biennial dates. Again, with the backdrop of the pandemic and the interests and issues of the over 6000 judges in IAWJ associations around the world, we are taking everything into consideration.

Since the pandemic, IAWJ has been putting on Webinars in English, French, and Spanish.

All members should be receiving the IAWJ newsletters which are always full of information about different member associations. Please take the time to review them.

Finally, a special and heartfelt thanks to our fearless leader, Judge Bernadette D'Souza, for the amazing job she has done in some of the most trying times. She has been an incredible leader. And thanks to the board for all of its collaboration in reimaging NAWJ virtually while continuing to keep our members connected. Congratulations to our incoming President, Judge Karen Donahue and all of the incoming officers.

I look forward to your leadership.