



A Word from The President 2020:

Our conventions and precedents dictate that every IAF President reports annually on the past year's progress and on future plans for the IAF and hopes for falconry in general. This report is made not only at the annual Council of Delegates Meeting, but also in this, our flagship publication, *The International Journal of Falconry*. 2020 is the second year of this presidency and in this, my second "Word from the President", I would like to emphasise that, while great things are possible for the future, the great things of the past must also be appreciated and potential pitfalls for the future must be identified.

In December of 2018, I sat in the president's chair for the first time and welcomed delegates and friends of the IAF from 33 countries to our Council of Delegates Meeting in Carmona, Andalusia, a place of fond memories for me: it was in Jerez de la Frontera in 2003 that the UAE first became an IAF member. Links between my own region's falconers and those of *Al Andalus* go back many, many centuries. We were proud, last year, to be able to renew those links and I am pleased to thank Señor Diego Pareja Obregon, President of AECCA, for enabling this prestigious meeting. At that event, I gave my first report as IAF President.

My strategy for the IAF is to make it a self-sustaining, self-funding International Non-Governmental Organisation. We now have a much extended Advisory Committee, consisting of the Board (concerned with legal and administrative matters, according to the Constitution) and twelve Working Groups. Six of these are under the Regional Vice-presidents, and six are on topics common to all regions. This new system for the Advisory Committee means that we now include many more experts and volunteers in our work (around 80 people) making the IAF a much more inclusive organisation, and paying particular attention to the young people who have come into the organisation since the 2017 Festival in the UAE.

Each of the Working Groups has been very active this year and, based on the objectives in the IAF Constitution, the Board has adopted a clear mission and vision to guide us, including prioritisation of four key areas: 1. Monitoring regulations at international level and assessing them for their impact on falconry, making sure we have access to the international regulatory bodies and that we can participate in their processes; 2. Providing access to best practice and broad knowledge, ensuring its quality and accuracy; 3. More effective communications with members, regulators and the public and supporting other IAF units in their communications requirements; 4. Devising programs to coordinate member activities and encourage individual member activity.

In this first year of the presidency we achieved several of the goals set out at the Bamberg 2018 meeting: the most important role of the IAF is to represent falconers around the world and we have done this through attending their events, for example in: Malta (*Welfare*), Croatia (*European Sustainable Use Group Meeting of IUCN*), Paraguay (*Conservation/Electrocution*), China (*Meetings with Government*), Italy (*UNESCO*), South Africa (*Conservation*), United States (*Conservation*) and Abu Dhabi, UAE (*Against Illegal Trade*), Pakistan (*Meetings with Government*) and Egypt (*Meetings with Government*).

In Europe, we saw the creation of clubs in Luxembourg, Finland and Norway, adding another three countries to those that the IAF represents. A landmark Nordic Meeting was held on the Isle of Møn, hosted by René Rask Bruun, former President of the Dansk Falkejagt Klub, building on his club's amazing success in having made falconry legally possible again in Denmark, after a 50 year gap. Also



in Europe, the Perdix portal developed, with new countries adding their experiences and there was much work done on UNESCO submissions. We are hoping to increase the international list from 18 to 25 in the next two years.

At his election as IAF Vice-president for MENA, in Carmona, we welcomed Karim Rousselon; he has already moved things forward, with important IUCN meetings in Tunisia, and a workshop in Cairo with members of the Raptors Club of Egypt and government officials. He has strengthened links with the falconers in North Africa and we hope the clubs across the region will play a more active role in the IAF this year.

At Carmona, Dan Cechinni was elected to his second, and final, three-year term as IAF Vice-president for the Americas and a motion changing the IAF Constitution to add a vice-presidency for Latin America and the Caribbean was passed unanimously. This vice-presidency will begin in January 2021 and an election will take place at the 2020 Council of Delegates meeting. This move will do a lot to help the region develop its falconry culture, increase the IAF presence in Latin America and in uniting local clubs. Next year the IAF Council of Delegates Meeting will be hosted by NAFA in Kearney, Nebraska, right in the central plains. If you have never been to a NAFA Meet, or never been to Kearney, be sure to come.

We are also proud of representing falconers at all of the international conventions; because of this we have a much better relationship with all of them. We have also made closer ties with Bird Life International, with CMS and with UNESCO and we have enhanced the reputation enjoyed by falconers everywhere. A particularly welcome achievement is the close contact we now enjoy with the International Finance Corporation, World Bank Group, which is creating World Bank Environmental, Health and Safety Guidelines for the banking industry for the financing of large infrastructural projects. We are working with them to add bird electrocution into their Electric Power Transmission and Distribution Standard, a "bird friendly" clause for future agreements. Several international convention events this year were based in Asia and the IAF had a strong presence at them through VP Asia Keiya Nakajima and IAF Conservation Officer Janusz Sielicki.

It is pleasing to know that we can send out so much positive information about falconry in our publications, which now go out to over 10,000 people electronically on social media, through the eBulletins and through the eNewsletter. More than 2,000 people are reached through *The International Journal of Falconry*, the only publication of the IAF which appears in print, now available in many languages, thanks to the youth controlled *Translations Group*.

THANK YOU ALL for the work you do for IAF, for falconry and for conservation.

His Excellency Majed al Mansouri

IAF President