

International Academy of Mediators 2009 September Conference, London

The Conference was entitled “What can we learn from each other?”

“Much” was the obvious and appropriate response as over 100 mediators from around the world – USA, Canada, Israel, South Africa, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Spain, France, Belgium and the UK amongst others - tackled a variety of subjects. A full day’s freeze-frame mock commercial mediation showcased a variety of cultures and styles and threw up some very interesting and diverse approaches, not least John Sturrock’s innovative approach to the start of the mediation by inviting the participants to an informal breakfast of coffee and pastries!

Important issues raised included:

- The role of the civil justice system
- Diversification of practice and training
- Mandatory or voluntary mediation
- Addressing questions of authority
- Cultural challenges
- Mediator proposals
- The role of judges as mediators
- The use of statutory schemes
- Mediating with large numbers
- Extending the scope of mediation

Lord Woolf received a lifetime achievement award and spoke eloquently of the role that mediation can play to help judges to achieve justice and that it was “better than any other method” for bringing parties together.

It was useful for Core to be so well represented and recognised on this international scale as we expand our horizons and our understanding of the role mediation plays worldwide.