

The Asian Regional Centre of the International Federation of Translators

FIT ASIA BULLETIN



FIT Statutory Congress, Geneva, 3 September 2025 (Credit: Mr. Gao Anming , TAC)

FIT Statutory Congress 2025

Geneva, 2–3 September 2025 – The XXIII FIT Statutory Congress convened at the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) headquarters, bringing together delegates from translators, interpreters and terminologists associations worldwide. Participants reviewed the past mandate, tackled emerging challenges, and charted the Federation’s path forward.

The Congress expressed heartfelt appreciation to the outgoing 2022–2025 Council for its dedicated service, notably the launch of new regional centres in Africa and Asia—key steps in strengthening FIT’s global reach and supporting member associations. With governance matters addressed, delegates elected a new Council for 2025–2028, tasking it with setting a clear mission, vision, and objectives. The message was unmistakable: FIT must stay agile, respond to members’ urgent priorities, and reaffirm its role as the global voice of the profession.

A Diverse Council Ready to Tackle Big Challenges

Incoming FIT President Guillaume Deneufbourg opened his address by celebrating the truly global makeup of the newly elected Council. Representing regions from New Zealand to Argentina and South Africa to Finland, the Council reflects the rich diversity of the worldwide community of translators, interpreters, and terminologists.

Deneufbourg also acknowledged the significant responsibilities ahead. He emphasised that the profession—vital to multilingual communication and cultural exchange—is navigating difficult times with limited resources and growing demands. Yet he expressed confidence that the new team is ready to meet these challenges “with pride and confidence in what we do and who we are.”

The next three years will be pivotal as FIT works to champion the interests of language professionals and highlight their essential role in connecting cultures and fostering understanding across the globe.

FIT COUNCIL 2025-2028**Executive Committee**

1. Guillaume Deneufbourg (CBTI Belgium), President
2. Laurinda Cecilia Van Tonder (SATI South Africa), Secretary General
3. María Galán Barrera (ASETRAD Spain), Treasurer
4. Roula Salam (ATIA Canada), Vice-president
5. Alfred Mtawali (EAITA Kenya), Vice-president
6. Xu Rong (TAC China), Vice-president
7. Mary Ann Elsa Monteagudo Medina (CTP Peru), EC Member

Council Members

1. Hasuria Che Omar (MTA Malaysia)
2. Heidi Cazes (NETA United States)
3. Isabelle Poff-Pencole (NZSTI New Zealand)
4. Jørgen Christian Wind Nielsen (DACTI Denmark)
5. Lorena Susana Roqué (CTPCBA Argentina)
6. Te Tumatakuru O'Connell (TKWh New Zealand)
7. Tiina Tuominen (SKTL Finland)
8. Victor Hugo Sajoza Juric (CTPPC Argentina)
9. Victoria Lai Cheng Lei (FTIM Macao)
10. Zsuzsanna Lakatos-Báldy (MFTE Hungary)



FIT Council 2025-2028 (Credit: Reina de Bettendorf)

FIT World Congress (4-6 September 2025)

Immediately after the Statutory Congress, the XXIII FIT World Congress welcomed around 400 participants for three days of dynamic sessions and networking. With the theme Mastering the Machine: Shaping an Intelligent Future, renowned speakers from across the globe shared insights and expertise, exploring how technology and human expertise can work hand in hand. The programme was as vibrant and diverse as the profession itself, showcasing keynote speeches, themed presentations, an awards ceremony, panel discussions, and an exhibition, all celebrating the essential role of translators, interpreters, and terminologists in a rapidly evolving world.



FIT Statutory and World Congress 2028

will be hosted by
Colegio de Traductores del Perú

in
Lima, Peru

20th International Conference on Translation (ICT-20), Kuching, 9 – 21 August 2025

By the Editor-in-Chief

Held 19–21 August 2025 in Kuching, Sarawak, ICT-20 brought together over 300 participants from 12 countries for three days of vibrant exchange. Hosted by Universiti Malaysia Sarawak in collaboration with the Malaysian Translators Association (MTA), Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (DBP), and the Malaysian Institute of Translation and Books (ITBM), the biennial event cantered on the theme “Conserving Heritage through Translation.”



ICT-20 (Credit: DBP)

The conference featured 59 academic papers, 5 plenary papers, 4 position papers, 2 forums, and a workshop, covering a wide spectrum of translation-related topics while underscoring how translation preserves cultural heritage and Indigenous languages and fosters collaboration between academia and industry.

The conference concluded with the announcement that the National University of Malaysia (Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia) will host the next edition in 2027.



ICT-20 (Credit: DBP)

ICT-21
in
2027

will be hosted by

The National University of Malaysia



ICT-20 (Credit: DBP)

Saudi Arabian Translation Association Steps Onto the World Stage

By SATA, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

The Saudi Arabian Translation Association (SATA) is proud to be the newest member of FIT Asia, with its membership officially accepted at the FIT Statutory Congress 2025. SATA looks forward to fostering partnerships, exchanging expertise, and collaborating with fellow associations to strengthen and promote the translation and interpreting professions across the region.

Founded on March 9, 2020, SATA is a national professional body dedicated to advancing translation and supporting practitioners across the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. With 312 members, SATA strives to elevate translation as a recognised profession, highlight its cultural and national importance, and present an honorable image of Saudi translators throughout the Arab world and beyond.



SATA's representatives at FIT Statutory Congress 2025. From Left: Amer, Abdulrahman, Esraa (Credit: SATA)

SATA has advanced the translation field through strong industry development and community outreach. It co-managed the Arab Observatory for Translation, documenting 12,000 translated book bibliographies, launched a Professional Ethics Platform to raise professional standards, and distributed 1,000 copies of the Professional Guide for the Translator across Saudi Arabia.

On the engagement front, SATA co-organised the International Translation Forum 2024, attracting 3,000 visitors and 30 local and international organisations, published three thematic issues of SATA Magazine reaching readers in 40+ countries, and introduced the SATA Ambassadors program with seven ambassadors representing regions across Saudi Arabia.

A word from SATA's CEO, Abdulrahman Alsayed

"At SATA, our strategy is built on a culture of institutional excellence, cooperation, and transparency, allowing us to deliver the best performance according to international best practices. We have focused on developing impactful projects, forging effective partnerships with prestigious organisations, and hosting events that serve and develop the translation sector. Joining FIT is a natural step in our journey, and we look forward to collaborating with our new partners in FIT Asia to continue creating a qualitative leap for the translation profession in our region and beyond."



SATA at FIT Statutory Congress 2025 (Credit: SATA)

China makes its mark at FIT Congress 2025

By TAC, China

A six-member delegation from the Translators Association of China (TAC), led by Mr. Gao Anming, TAC Executive Vice President, Secretary General and Editor-in-Chief of the China International Communications Group participated in the XXIII FIT Statutory and World Congress, 2 - 6 September 2025.



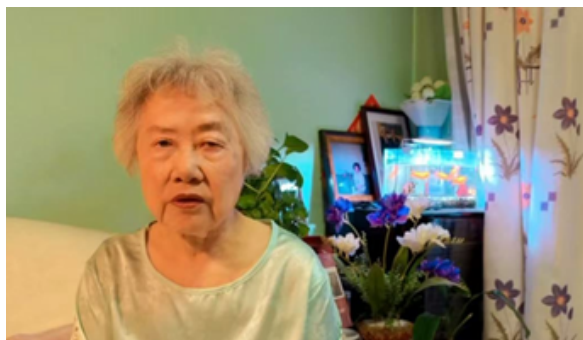
TAC delegation at FIT World Congress (Credit: TAC)

At the Statutory Congress (2-3 September), Ms. Xu Rong, TAC Executive Council Member and Editor-in-Chief of the Foreign Languages Press, was elected Vice-President of FIT.



Xu Rong delivering her campaign speech (Credit: TAC)

At the World Congress (4-6 September), FIT announced winners of its prestigious prizes. Two senior Chinese translators, both TAC Lifetime Achievement Award laureates, received top honors: Ms. Shi Qin'e of the Chinese Academy of



Shi Qin'e delivering a video message (Credit: TAC)

Social Sciences earned the Astrid Lindgren Prize—the first time it has gone to an Asian translator—while Mr. Yang Wuneng of Sichuan University received the Aurora Borealis Prize for Outstanding Translation of Fiction Literature.



Yang Wuneng delivering a video message (Credit: TAC)

Among many activities, a panel session on FIT's regional centres featured Mr. Xing Yutang, TAC Executive Deputy Secretary General and FIT Asia Chair, who highlighted FIT Asia's achievements, opportunities, and ongoing challenges in empowering the global translation community.



Xing Yutang (second from right) at the panel session (Credit: TAC)

Malaysia in action at FIT Congress 2025

By the Editor-in-Chief

Malaysia made a proud showing at the XXIII FIT Statutory and World Congress with a four-member delegation led by Dr. M. Zain Sulaiman, (Head of International Liaison for the Malaysian Translators Association (MTA) and FIT Asia Council Member). The team also included Dr. Hasuria Che Omar (MTA President and FIT Council Member), Dr. Yean Fun Chow, and Norzalena Abdul Hamed.



Malaysia's delegation at FIT Congress 2025. From left: Zain, Hasuria, Norzalena, Chow (Credit: MTA)

At the Statutory Congress, Dr. Hasuria Che Omar was re-elected to the FIT Council for the 2025–2028 term, reaffirming Malaysia's active voice in the global translation community.

At the World Congress, the delegation participated in three days of engaging sessions and networking. On the final day Dr. Hasuria moderated a thought-provoking session "Translators in the AI Era: The Evolution, the Essentials, and the Expert Gap," featuring speaker Josep Bonet, sparking lively discussion on the future of translators in an age of artificial intelligence.

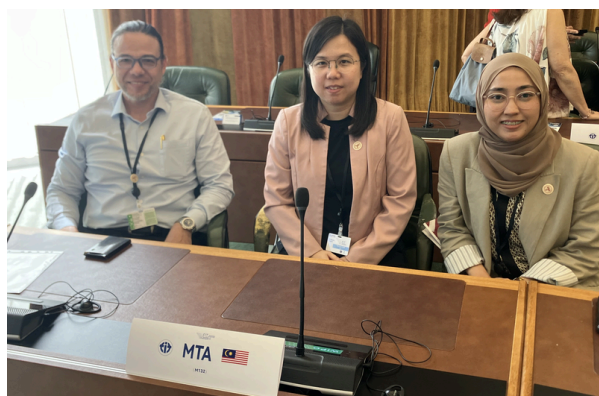


Photo Credit: MTA

Real-World Legal Translation Mistakes and Lessons Learned

By Ni Made Nunik Sayani, Secretary of Association of Indonesian Translators (HPI), Bali Chapter

In the world of translation, few areas demand as much precision—and carry as much risk—as legal translation. Unlike creative writing or literary works, a mistranslated legal document can have consequences that reach far beyond words on a page. A single error may spark costly lawsuits, derail international business deals, fuel diplomatic disputes, or even change the course of history. For legal translators, each assignment is more than an intellectual exercise—it is a responsibility to safeguard meaning, protect rights, and uphold justice across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

History and contemporary practice alike provide sobering reminders of what is at stake. In 2009, HSBC, one of the world's largest banks, learned this lesson the hard way when its global slogan, “Assume Nothing,” was mistranslated in several countries as “Do Nothing”.

The error not only undermined the bank's credibility but also forced a USD 10 million rebranding campaign to repair the damage. On a far more profound scale, the Treaty of Waitangi of 1840—the founding document between the British Crown and the Māori chiefs of New Zealand—was marred by a pivotal mistranslation. The English version declared that sovereignty had been ceded, while the Māori text referred only to governance, a subtle but crucial difference. The result has been centuries of legal disputes and land claims, illustrating that the smallest lexical choices can reverberate for generations.

Such translation errors are not limited to history books. In recent years, a mistranslation in a U.S.–Chinese business contract turned a mandatory arbitration clause into an optional

one, plunging both parties into protracted and expensive litigation. In private law, the mistranslation of a French will excluded rightful heirs and set off years of bitter legal battles among family members. These cases remind us that legal translation touches not only nations and corporations but also families and individuals—where precision is not just advisable, but indispensable.

At the heart of these failures lie common pitfalls familiar to every experienced legal translator. Ambiguity is ever-present, as many legal concepts lack one-to-one equivalents across jurisdictions. “False friends” and misleading cognates compound the risk, while even the smallest grammatical or punctuation error can alter the meaning of an entire contract—as demonstrated by the well-known “Oxford comma case” in the United States, which led to multi-million-dollar wage claims. Legal translation leaves no room for approximation; every term, phrase, and punctuation mark must be weighed with meticulous care.

How, then, can legal translators protect themselves and the communities they serve from such costly missteps? Collaboration with legal experts is a vital safeguard, as is the consistent use of trusted reference materials and legal dictionaries. Peer review and proofreading remain indispensable, ensuring that no detail escapes scrutiny. Above all, translators must commit to lifelong learning, keeping pace with the ever-evolving language of law. For in the end, legal translation is not simply about transferring meaning between languages; it is about preserving justice, clarity, and trust in a world where words truly have the power to change lives.

Today, this responsibility becomes even more complex with the rise of artificial intelligence and machine translation tools. While AI has brought undeniable efficiency and accessibility to the translation industry, it has also introduced new risks.

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Automated systems, however advanced, cannot yet fully grasp the nuances of legal terminology, jurisdictional differences, or cultural context. A mistranslation generated by a machine may slip through unnoticed—until it causes irreparable harm. For example, in Indonesian legal translation, machine translation often renders “voidable contract” as “kontrak batal demi hukum,” when in fact it should be “kontrak dapat dibatalkan.” This mistake is fatal because void and voidable have very different legal consequences. Another example is “akta otentik” as “authentic act” instead of “authentic deed.” The mistranslation may sound trivial, but it misrepresents a key legal instrument recognised in Indonesian law. For this reason, the role of the human legal translator is more critical than ever.

We are not only linguistic mediators but guardians of accuracy and integrity, ensuring that technology remains a tool in service of justice, rather than a source of error. Ultimately, every legal translator stands at a unique crossroads where language, law, and human responsibility converge. The lessons of history remind us that even the smallest mistranslation can echo across decades, altering lives, institutions, and entire societies. Yet they also affirm the indispensable value of translators who approach their craft with diligence, humility, and ethical commitment. In a world where words can uphold or undo justice, legal translators remain not just interpreters of language, but stewards of truth.

International Translation Day 30 September 2025

TRANSLATION, SHAPING A FUTURE YOU CAN TRUST

LA TRADUCTION, GARANTIE DE VOTRE CONFIANCE EN L'AVENIR
LA TRADUCCIÓN: FORJEMOS UN FUTURO EN EL QUE CONFIAR



INTERNATIONAL TRANSLATION DAY 2025
JOURNÉE MONDIALE DE LA TRADUCTION 2025
DÍA INTERACIONAL DE LA TRADUCCIÓN 2025



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