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I have never been awarded an honorary fellowship before, but today I am becoming an honorary fellow of the Association of International Accountants, which is one of the UK's smaller accounting institutes. That is, however, partly because it has, unsurprisingly given its title, a significant international membership. [As it says of itself:](#)

In the early twentieth century, the AIA was the only international accountancy body; founded with the aim of providing a professional qualification that would encompass accountants all over the world, from all backgrounds and all countries, both developing and developed. The AIA aimed to offer an organisation that would work on both a national and international scale, which would secure a definite and recognised professional status for accountants.

This novel way of thinking was unheard of within the accountancy profession at that time, and despite initial uneasy acceptance, the AIA has seen other accountancy bodies following in its footsteps over the years.

In my work over the last fifteen years or so I have shared that view that accountancy is not an issue that is to be pursued within national boundaries, but is about global accountability, the creation of compatibility across borders and the recognition of difference within common frameworks. That is why I am pleased to accept the honour they have bestowed and am grateful to them.

The AIA press release on the event says:

The Association of International Accountants (AIA), the global body for professional accountants held their honorary members' reception at Marlborough House, Pall Mall, London on 26 July 2017.

AIA is a global body for professional accountants, founded in 1928 to promote the concept of 'international accounting' in order to create a global network of accountants committed to the interests of its members and the accountancy profession.

The honorary members' reception was held to welcome 28 new honorary members into

the association. New honorary members included Robert Peston, Political Editor ITV News; The Rt. Hon. Dame Margaret Hodge, MP; and Prof. Richard Murphy of City, University of London and Tax Research LLP.

Honorary membership is an elected category of membership, described in our Articles of Association as: “A person who the Council considers has contributed service of particular merit to the Association or the profession of accountancy.”

All recipients of the honorary membership have made and continue to make a significant contribution within their respective business, finance and accountancy professions.

AIA CEO, Philip Turnbull, said: ““As an association we are always looking to proactively build a progressive and diverse membership body for the future; adapting continuously to an ever changing business environment.

“Sometimes however it is good to take a step back and enjoy the accomplishments of our members and professionals within the industry we operate. Today is one of those days.

“I am therefore delighted to recognise the significant contribution which all of our new honorary members have made in their respective professions, and I look forward to working with them closely in the years to come in order to help shape our industry for the next generation.”