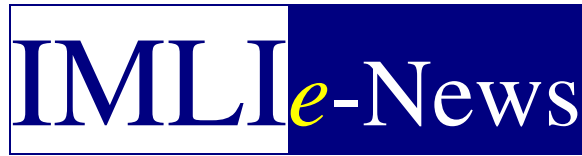


Circulated in more than 100 States to personalities in the legal and maritime professions



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Professor Emeritus, University of Oxford:

»IMLI gains more strength every year in both facilities and activities»

Prof. Francis Reynolds Q.C. (*Professor Emeritus, University of Oxford*) delivered during the month of November a set of lectures within the framework of the IMLI Course on Carriage of Goods by Sea.

Prof. Reynolds has recently retired after teaching at the University of Oxford for more than forty years. He has been at various times Visiting Professor at University College London, the University of Auckland, University of Sydney, University of Melbourne, University of Hong Kong, Monash University and the National University of Singapore.



Prof. Francis Reynolds, with HE Mrs. Dorothea Tsimboukeli - Douvos (Ambassador of Greece to Malta), Prof. David Attard (Director, IMLI), members of the staff and the IMLI Class of 2005/2006

Prof. Reynolds is a Fellow of the British Academy, a Titulary Member of the CMI and a consultant on English law to Ang & Partners, Singapore. In the year 2000 the President of Malta, acting on behalf of IMLI, conferred on Prof. Reynolds the title of Honorary Professor of International Maritime Law.

Prof. Reynolds, what were the highlights of your lectures at IMLI ?

I regard myself as delivering the basic course on Carriage of Goods by Sea, (some parts of which may be dealt with in more detail later on) and accordingly I try to give to the students a general overview of this area. My explanation is obviously based on English law (the legal system in which I am trained), but I try not only to cover central topics which are more or less the same in all countries (the charterparty and the bill of lading contract, the Hague Rules), but also to give a general introduction to problems which arise everywhere but to which the solutions may differ from one country to another (for example the idea of document of title, and the methods for and the effect of transfer of a bill of lading). I also refer to the contracts of sale which cover most consignments shipped, and

the role of banks. I try to give IMLI students some practical insight in the intricacies of this branch of maritime law with disputed cases and real documents.

What is, in your opinion, the role of IMLI in the international maritime community ?

IMLI performs a very valuable role in training people from all over the world in international maritime law, especially but not exclusively from developing countries, and enables them to form links with each other, the home team and visiting lecturers. This “networking” can be of great importance after their return home: there are IMLI graduates all over the world, and I hope they are a force for good.

What are the latest developments in the field of carriage of goods by sea ?

The law of carriage of goods by sea has become very fragmented, as there are different international conventions and national laws regulating this area. Some States are parties to the Hague Rules, some to the Hague–Visby Rules, some to neither, and the Hamburg Rules remain in the background. As a result of this fragmentation, some States (as for example China, Japan and the Nordic countries) have started to legislate their own specific regimes for carriage of goods by sea.

These and some other problems may be solved in the future with the *CMI/UNCITRAL Draft Instrument on Transport Law*, but only if it proves possible to agree on it and if such a document obtains wide acceptance internationally. Otherwise it will simply add another regime and add to the fragmentation.

Is it possible to achieve uniformity in the field of carriage of goods by sea ?

I am rather skeptical, but it would be nice if that could happen.

What are your general impressions of IMLI this year?

I do not like to compare different IMLI groups, but the current generation is definitely a very good and enthusiastic one. It is obvious that considerable good has been done by the Nippon Foundation, IMO, Lloyd’s Register, the Government of Malta and other donors, who have enabled many of the students to undertake their studies at the Institute.

I would say that IMLI gains more strength every year both in facilities and in activities.

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