



*Hon. Minister Censu Galea:*

*“Malta is proud of hosting such an important institution”*

The Hon. Censu Galea (*Minister for Competitiveness and Communications, Malta*) attended the 17<sup>th</sup> IMLI Graduation Ceremony and on that occasion presented the Malta Government Prize for Best Performance in Law of the Sea.



*Hon. Censu Galea addressing the audience at the 17<sup>th</sup> IMLI Graduation Ceremony.*

**Address by the Hon. Censu Galea, Minister for Competitiveness and Communications at the 17<sup>th</sup> IMLI Graduation Ceremony**

*"Excellencies, Mr. Secretary - General, Prof. Attard, Distinguished Guests, Graduates, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*It is my great pleasure to once again witness the graduation of yet another group of alumni of the International Maritime Law Institute, IMO's premier institution for maritime law training.*

*Since its inception in 1989 and with today's graduation, IMLI has trained over 360 lawyers in international maritime law. With this 17<sup>th</sup> intake, we have with us today graduands from 5 new countries, bringing the total number of nationalities represented by IMLI graduates to over 100 countries spread around the globe, an outstanding achievement and irrefutable proof that IMLI is living up to its motto of "serving the rule of international maritime law."*

*Malta is truly proud of hosting such an important institution. It is a continuation of Malta's constant commitment for the promotion of international co-operation in the global pursuit for safer seas and cleaner oceans.*

*Incidentally, this year, we are marking Malta's 40<sup>th</sup> year of full membership of IMO. As the government agency responsible for maritime affairs, the Malta Maritime Authority has been an active participant, both at IMO level and – for the past two years – at European Union level, in the major events shaping the industry. Membership in the European Union and years of activity at the forefront of the international maritime scene have put Malta in a position to lend its voice and provide a valid contribution to the debate on the future direction of shipping policy globally but, more particularly, in Europe.*

*The European Union is currently embarking on a far-reaching exercise to consolidate its regulatory regime under the guidance of a single maritime policy. The European Union has numerous maritime-related programmes and directives but as far as approaches to maritime related problems and opportunities go, they remain sector-based and a holistic approach to maritime issues – one which Malta has been constantly advocating in various international fora - was deemed the best way forward for future European maritime policy. As I had explained at the opening of the European Community Maritime Law Course at IMLI, earlier this year, an open approach to the realities of global shipping is indispensable, considering that within any context or aspect, Europe is definitely a global heavyweight and therefore, whatever the EU does in maritime policy will resonate way beyond its regional boundaries.*

*A sine qua non for a successful future maritime policy is a background of a stable and safe maritime order. Europe needs to foster such stability by promulgating the adoption and enforcement of international treaties and by developing European maritime policies within existing international maritime regulatory processes, such as IMO and UNCLOS. It is crucial that these two parameters remain the bases and prime vehicles to develop policies, initiatives and regulations.*

*Ideas, policies and aims need to be pushed forward within IMO and other world bodies. We need to raise the bar for standards on a global level rather than on a regional basis. Any alternative to the contrary will result in regulatory fragmentation along regional lines, and consequences, which, you, as experts in international maritime law, can fully appreciate.*

*Within the context of global institutions, I cannot let this opportunity pass without referring to a welcome development this year, which, I am sure, has played a substantial part in the course of IMLI studies. This is the successful adoption of*

*the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 at the International Labour Conference held in Geneva last February.*

*It is indeed a historic development of profound importance. More than 60 conventions and recommendations adopted since the ILO's foundation in 1919 have now been consolidated into a single maritime convention guaranteeing decent employment and social conditions worldwide to an estimated 1.2 million seafarers.*

*This consolidated convention is now considered as the "fourth pillar" of the international regulatory regime for quality shipping, complementing three of the most important IMO Conventions namely, the convention on safety of life at sea (SOLAS), the convention on prevention from marine pollution (MARPOL) and that on standards of training, certification and watchkeeping (STCW). Malta hopes the consolidated convention will enter into force as soon as possible.*

*In conclusion, allow me to express my satisfaction at a very significant achievement for maritime Malta this week. As you may already be aware, Malta's reputation has been enhanced as of this week, with Malta being accepted as a full member of the Paris Memorandum of Understanding on port State control and the inclusion of the Malta flag on the white list of the same MoU. Effectively, this means that the Malta flag is now included with the top flags for flag State performance, a flag which ship owners can embrace with even more confidence than before. It also means that Malta can now enhance its profile as a reliable partner to carry out the Paris MoU's mission of eradicating sub-standard shipping from European waters.*

*This is indeed an achievement of which we are all truly proud, an official recognition of years of endeavour to enhance Malta's standing, not only as one of the largest merchant flags in the world but also as a quality merchant flag that inspires confidence.*

*I congratulate you all for the successful conclusion of your studies, which I am sure is only the beginning of further success in your profession, to the benefit of the international maritime community.*

*Thank you."*

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