

# IMLI<sup>e</sup>-News

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**Address by Professor David Attard, Director, IMLI  
At the 2006 IMLI Graduation Ceremony  
13<sup>th</sup> May 2006**



*Prof. David Attard (Director, IMLI) delivering the Welcome Address at the 17<sup>th</sup> IMLI Graduation Ceremony*

It is my great pleasure and honour to welcome you to our 17<sup>th</sup> Graduation Ceremony celebrating the academic success of this year's IMLI class.

Today's Ceremony marks the entry of our graduands (from 22 States) into the fraternity of IMLI trained lawyers which now has 361 lawyers from 107 States and territories. This year we are particularly pleased to have, for the first time, lawyers hailing from Argentina, Germany, Iraq, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Turkey.

The success, which our graduands enjoy, is the fruit of many who have generously contributed to the Institute's work. Foremost amongst these benefactors is His Excellency Mr. Efthimios Mitropoulos, the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization, who is a prime supporter of the Institute and its role in the training of international maritime lawyers. His commitment and dedication to the Institute is manifest in his generous guidance, and support.

Another formidable supporter of the Institute's cause is the Honourable Minister of Competitiveness and Communications, Mr. Censu Galea, who has for over a decade, ensured the constant support of the Maltese Government and the Malta Maritime Authority.



*Prof. David Attard (Director, IMLI) with Mr. Efthimios Mitropoulos (Secretary-General, IMO and Chairman, IMLI Governing Board), the Hon. Censu Galea (Minister for Competitiveness and Communications, Malta) and the 2006 IMLI Graduates.*

I also wish to recognize the presence of other distinguished personalities who have come to Malta to attend this Graduation. We have today from the Tokyo-based Nippon Foundation, its Executive Director, Mr. Masazumi Nagamitsu, and Mr. Mitsuyuki Unno who is the Manager of the Overseas Programme Section within the Department of Maritime Affairs. We are also pleased to welcome Mr. Masamichi Hasebe, Legal Counsel of the IOPC Funds in London, and a

distinguished member of IMLI's Academic Committee. We are also pleased to have with us today Dr. Alberto Cozzo from Italy, the Director of the Istituto Europeo per la Formazione e la Ricerca in Diritto ed Economia dei Trasporti e dell'Ambiente (IEDETA).

Distinguished Guests,

The history of international maritime law demonstrates a constant pursuit for the stability and the security in legal prescriptions that are designed to regulate and protect the destiny of men and women who continuously expose their precious lives to the whims of the indomitable sea. This postulate implies the necessity of promulgating maritime rules which address the continuing challenges and developments in the maritime sector.

The task and primary responsibility of this process falls on IMO, which today is the foremost institutional source of maritime rules. It is responsible for the development and adoption of some 40 international treaties and literally hundreds of codes and recommendations. These legal instruments are designed primarily to further IMO's goals of safe, secure and efficient shipping on clean oceans.

Despite this legislative success, it is a reality that these legal instruments unless implemented by States, cannot be enforced. IMO itself generally lacks enforcement powers. Consequently the implementation and enforcement of these instruments is largely dependant on States that decide to incorporate their provisions into enforceable domestic law.

It is precisely in this task that IMLI makes a small, but vital contribution for it provides Governments with qualified international maritime lawyers who are able to advise on the incorporation, implementation and enforcement of IMO rules.

Over the past academic year, our graduands have dedicated themselves assiduously to the study of international maritime law within an exceptionally unique and intensive programme that addresses the whole spectrum of the subject on a comparative basis. Every one of them has had over 600 direct contact hours with around 30 eminent visiting fellows and the Institute's resident faculty. Each one has submitted a number of papers concerning international maritime legal issues. They have each drafted a law incorporating one of IMO's legal instruments into their domestic legal system. They have also passed examinations in the public and private branches of international maritime law. Their results were independently audited by international legal experts in London and Geneva.

IMLI's training efforts have received positive comments from His Excellency, the Secretary-General. In a recent communication he concluded:

.... To date, IMLI's impact can be measured by the undeniable success of its graduates around the world, as they have consistently secured senior positions in government administrations worldwide and within the global maritime industry – they include ministers of justice, attorneys general, chief justices, ambassadors, chief executives and senior corporate managers.

Distinguished Guests,

The cornerstone of an academic institution is its reputation. At IMLI we are fully aware of the need to ensure that our teaching conforms to the highest international standards which need to be observed if we are to preserve our reputation as a centre of excellence. In response to this challenge, IMLI has developed a number of practices.

We are constantly establishing links with like-minded organizations and personalities of international distinction.

On an institutional level we are proud of our linkage to IMO, which imposes its high standards and provides us with the most competent expertise available world-wide. IMLI continuously seeks to fine-tune its studies to reflect the latest developments in international maritime law, particularly those which are on the IMO agenda. This is true, for example, with respect to the growing attention we give to the international law of maritime security.

We are proud to note that our major project with the Nippon Foundation entitled “Human Resources Development Project for the Advancement of a more effective Global Legal Order for the Oceans” is steaming steadily towards its fourth year. The Project provides scholarships for deserving candidates, particularly those from Asian countries, to pursue studies at the Institute. As a reflection of our mutual cooperation, the “Sasakawa Prize for the Best Performing Nippon Foundation Scholar”, in honour of the Nippon Foundation’s founder, will again be awarded during this Ceremony.

We are also very pleased to note that the Institute’s fruitful collaboration with the European Union continues to consolidate further. Under the EU-funded SAFEMED Project, 10 scholarships will be awarded to deserving candidates from non-EU States. SAFEMED is a response to the interest of the EU to develop

Euro-Mediterranean co-operation in the fields of maritime safety and security and the prevention of pollution from ships by providing technical advice and support to the non-EU Mediterranean countries.

Distinguished Guests,

Over the past months we have sought to consolidate further our academic efforts to ensure IMLI remains a global leader in international maritime law training.

Our Doctoral Research Programme is now well established and is attracting researchers, particularly academics, ranging from a Professor at Washington University, to lecturers at the Universities of Plymouth and Malta. This programme's high standards are safeguarded by eminent and highly qualified supervisors who include Professor Vaughan Lowe, the Chichele Professor of International Law at Oxford; Professor Marko Pavliha, the Vice-President of the Slovenian Parliament; and Professor Frank Wiswall, the Honorary CMI Vice-President.

In order to further our global mission, IMLI has this year established the Advanced Diploma in International Maritime Law. This Programme is designed to attract professionals who, because of their careers, are unable to be away from their jobs for any length of time in excess of a few weeks per year. The Diploma is structured on a credit system and can be spread over five years.

Distinguished Guests,

The success that the Institute enjoys is also largely due to the support received from many sectors of the international maritime community.

I am particularly grateful to the IMO Technical Cooperation Committee, to the Nippon Foundation and to a number of Governments for their generous contributions in providing scholarships. The Governments of Malta and Switzerland deserve special tribute for their unwavering, constant support to the Institute's funding, as do the *CMI* and Lloyd's Register who have always been very willing to financially assist the Institute.

My special thanks go to the Institute's Governors. I am particularly honoured to thank our Governor Dr. Jean Hulliger. For many years, he has served as a member of the Board – nominated by the Swiss Government – and also as the Chairman of the Institute's Sub-Committee on Financial and Personnel Matters. We thank him for generously offering us his time and advice in our efforts to ensure that the Institute enjoys financial security and stability.

I would also like to express my appreciation for the support and work of the Institute resident faculty in the person of Dr. Ivan Vella, Mr. Norman Martinez and Mr. Mitja Grbec.

A similar word of appreciation should go to the Institute's staff. Without their loyalty and dedication, it could not have been possible to attain the achievements of the past year.

In concluding I wish to augur further success to our graduands in their respective professional careers. Graduands, your praiseworthy accomplishments today open up a world of opportunities for you and the countries you come from. Do savour your success, for you deserve it! And lest you forget, your future achievements will continue to consolidate the Institute's academic reputation. Remember you will always be the Institute Ambassadors, dedicated to serving the rule of



international maritime law. I wish you well in your endeavours. We are proud of you!

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*\*\* For further information please contact Mr. Mitja Grbec (Editor, IMLI e-News) at [publications@imli.org](mailto:publications@imli.org)*