

## **NIGERIAN MARITIME LAW ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT LECTURES AT IMLI**

The Institute welcomed Mr. Louis Mbanefo (President of the Nigerian Maritime Law Association) on 31 January 2014. During his visit, Mr. Mbanefo delivered to the students of the IMLI Class of 2013/2014 a lecture on the topic ‘The Essence of a Merchant Shipping Act: The Nigerian Perspective’.

His lecture was divided into two parts. In the first part he dealt with, amongst others, the international legal process in adopting an international instrument, choices facing a new State, problems facing developing countries in keeping abreast with international conventions, and most importantly, the essence of a Merchant Shipping Act.



*Mr. Louis Mbanefo (President of the Nigerian Maritime Law Association) meeting the students of the IMLI Class of 2013/2014*

In doing so, Mr. Mbanefo articulated some of the areas of importance of a Merchant Shipping Act such as those which promote rules of safety in all areas of shipping, including construction, navigation, surveys and certification of ships and qualifications of personnel. He noted that a Merchant Shipping Act generally provides for guidance for visiting ships and caters for penalties for infringements, measures for avoidance of pollution, sanitation and health regulations and activities relating to the exploitation of off-shore resources.

Part two of Mr. Mbanefo's lecture focused on the development of the Nigerian Merchant Shipping Act, including the modes of incorporation of conventions into the Act and the conventions therein incorporated. Mr. Mbanefo also provided a sound criticism of the Act.

As part of the requirements for the award of the Master of Laws (LL.M.) Degree, students at IMLI are required to submit a Maritime Legislation Drafting Project, which incorporates an international convention into the domestic legislation of the respective country. As such, Mr. Mbanefo's enlightening lecture and expertise in this area greatly benefited the students.

Mr. Louis Mbanefo was the Chairman of the Nigerian National Shipping Line. He was also Chairman of Ministerial Committee to review and update the Nigerian Shipping Law. He is author of the Nigerian Shipping Law Series and was responsible for the preparation of the Admiralty Jurisdiction Act 1991 and the Nigerian Merchant Shipping Act of 2007.

Mr. Mbanefo is currently the Principal in the firm of Mbanefo & Co. in Lagos. In his practice he has appeared as Counsel in many high profile shipping cases and was appointed a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) in May, 1988. In 2008, Mr. Louis Mbanefo was elected a member of the Executive Council of the Comité Maritime International (CMI). He is a founder of the Nigerian Maritime Law Association of which he is the current President.

Mr. Mbanefo has been a strong supporter of the Institute since its inception in 1988. He was instrumental in the preparation of the syllabus of the courses being studied at the Institute. He continues to extend his support as a Visiting Lecturer and a Member of the Institute's Governing Board.

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