



FORMER DIRECTOR OF IMO TECHNICAL COOPERATION DIVISION LECTURES AT IMLI

The Institute had the pleasure of welcoming Mrs. Monica Mbanefo (Former Director, Technical Cooperation Division) on 4 March, 2014. During her visit, Mrs. Mbanefo who met with the Director, and the students of the Class of 2013/2014, delivered a lecture under the rubric “*Sustainable Development - The Role of IMLP*”



Mrs. Monica Mbanefo meeting the students of the IMLI Class of 2013/2014

Professor Attard stated that he was pleased to welcome Mrs. Mbanefo to the Institute. He noted with great pleasure that Mrs. Mbanefo has, throughout her role as Director of Technical Cooperation Division, supported the Institute and its activities and for which he warmly thanked her. He stated that her presence at the Institute is a confirmation of her continued support, despite having recently retired from the IMO.

In her lecture Mrs. Mbanefo stated that the sea is the lifeblood of any country. Apart from being the provider of trade routes, the sea provides food, income and even moderates the climate. Maritime activities already provide an important source of income to many developing countries which now lead the world in some of the industry's ancillary businesses including registration of ships, supply of seagoing manpower, and ship recycling.

She stated further that more than 90% of global trade is carried by sea and therefore shipping is truly the lynchpin of global economy. Shipping is perhaps the most international of the world's great industries and it is for this reason that the IMO came into being, to address the obvious need for a framework of international standards to regulate shipping, which has to be accepted and implemented by all. She emphasized that instruments and standards will only be effective if they are universally and uniformly implemented.

Mrs. Mbanefo noted that although the IMO adopts international shipping regulations, it is the responsibility of Governments to implement those regulations and shipping, being a global industry, cannot afford to have any weak links. Therefore, she stressed that the importance of an efficient and effective national maritime administration cannot be over emphasized.

Some of the obstacles she highlighted as obstacles to effective implementation of IMO instruments in developing countries includes low priority, inadequate capacity, and inadequate resources to update national maritime legislation.

Mrs. Mbanefo further stated in her lecture that as maritime legislation is the cornerstone for effective implementation, States need to have appropriate legal infrastructure which incorporates the provisions of the respective international conventions and instruments into national law. She said further that the appropriate legal infrastructure in each State should consist of an up-to-date legislative regime, with a suitable machinery for the review, revision and modification of that legislation.

She reiterated the need for persons with expertise and skills in the preparation and drafting of legislative instruments, including the preparation of primary legislation as well as the necessary subsidiary legislation for implementing the principal instruments at State and industry levels. In her opinion, what each developing country needs is not only a good maritime law regime, but also a reasonable cadre of national legal personnel who are available to oversee, on a systematic basis, the implementation of existing law, to review and evaluate the provisions and arrangements for their implementation, to advise on the need for new or revised laws and regulations and, as necessary, to prepare suitable texts for consideration and adoption by the relevant legislative bodies. It is this aspect in her view, underlines the importance of IMLI.

Mrs. Mbanefo concluded her lecture by reminding the students of their mandate, upon graduation, to assist their governments in the effective implementation of their maritime policies;

to lay the groundwork which would impact positively on their country's capacity to adopt and implement the required international regulations and standards for safe, secure and environmentally sound shipping.

Mrs. Monica Mbanefo graduated from the University of Ife, Nigeria, with an Honours Degree in Law (LLB Hons) and was called to the Bar in 1973 as a Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Nigeria. Additionally, she is a graduate of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, University of Lagos, Nigeria, where she specialised in International Contract Negotiation and Arbitration Clauses in Contracts. She also trained in Policy and Management.

She is currently a Partner in the law firm of Louis Mbanefo and Co., in Lagos Nigeria, after having served for 20 years at the directorate level in the IMO. During her tenure at the IMO, she was Director of the Technical Cooperation Division from 2007 to 2010. Prior to that, she was Senior Deputy Director and Head of the Legal Office from 1991 to 1999 and was Director Conference Division from 1999 to 2007.

Mrs. Mbanefo served in the Federal Ministry of Justice in Nigeria, where she worked in various capacities including Legal and Legislative Drafting, Civil Litigation, Industrial and Mercantile Law and as a Legal Adviser to various ministries.

Apart from her key role at the Ministry of justice, she also served as Legal Adviser to the Ministry of Labour on Industrial Relations, Trade Unions, Factories Law and Workmen's Compensation Laws. Between 1982 and 1983, she held the positions of Head of Legal Department of the Federal Ministry of Water Resources, and Legal Adviser on the law relating to Water Resources, Agriculture, Maritime Law and Administrative Law. She was also Head of Legal Department of the Federal Ministry of Transport and Aviation, and was Legal Adviser on Aviation Law, Maritime Law, Land Transport Law and Administrative Law from 1984 to 1990.

While in the Nigerian Civil Service, she was assigned SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS including establishing and heading the contract vetting Department of the Federal Ministry of Justice (1985-1986); working as Project Co-ordinator for the Review of the Nigerian Maritime Legislations (1987-1988); serving as a Board Member of the National Maritime Authority; as well as Membership of the Contract Review Committee, responsible for producing guidelines used for all government contracts and reviewing major government contracts.

Mrs. Mbanefo worked as Legal Counsel to the National Maritime Authority's delegation to the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Brazil and the United States of America as the Expert on the Nigerian Shipping Policy (1988-1990); and was the Nigerian Delegate to all the Legal Committee and Council meetings of IMO as well as the delegate to all the UNCTAD Committee of Shipping meetings for the period from 1984-1989.

Her lecture was very well received by the students who greatly appreciated her vast practical knowledge in the field and her ability to convey meaningfully their role in sustainable development.

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