

IMLIIe-News

The IMO International Maritime Law Institute Official Electronic Newsletter (Vol. 11, Issue No. 30) 6 May, 2014

MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE OF MALTA PARTICIPATES IN IMLI'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

The Honourable Joe Mizzi (Malta's Minister for Transport and Infrastructure) participated in IMLI's 25th Anniversary celebrations held by the IMO Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Koji Sekimizu, in London, on 28 April 2014. Mr. Mizzi delivered a speech titled "IMLI – the host country perspective" at the Commemorative Seminar which was presided over by Mr. Sekimizu.



The Honourable Joe Mizzi (Malta's Minister for Transport and Infrastructure) delivering his speech at the Commemorative Seminar held at the IMO Headquarters in London

In his address, Mr. Mizzi noted that the real strength of the success of IMLI lies in the increased participation and leadership its graduates provide at IMO and other fora and that through IMLI, IMO can ensure universal interpretation and application that go well beyond the confines of the narrow approach of unilateralism and regionalism. He stated further that it is essential that what is by its own nature an international industry is not shackled by a unilateral and regional approach.

Mr. Mizzi stated that the role of IMLI in the service of the rule of international maritime law is now well defined and concluded his address by confirming Malta's support for IMLI.

The Honourable Minister's speech on "IMLI – the host country perspective" is recaptured below:

"Mr Secretary General, Distinguished Guests.

As Minister responsible for Transport, on behalf of the Maltese Government, proud host of the IMO International Maritime Law Institute I bring you greetings. As a former seafarer, on behalf of maritime Malta, I extend our congratulations on this symbolic milestone, the celebration of the twenty fifth anniversary from the setting up of IMLI.

But before I proceed further, I must first express the profound sympathy of the government of Malta and of Malta's maritime industry over the tragic accident involving the ferry Sewol that occurred earlier this month with such a heavy loss of life. We convey our profound sympathy and compassion to the government of the Republic of Korea in the name of the families, friends and colleagues of the victims.

Today we look back over the past twenty five years to remember how the IMLI vision was conceived, matured and realized but, since we must not rest on our laurels, this is also the time

when we also look to the future to consolidate these achievements and to set objectives based on new visions attuned to current and future needs.

The creation of IMLI and its evolution into a truly global institution to serve the rule of international maritime law is well documented including the testimony of those who were there even before its early days. The success story that is IMLI is universally evident through the sterling contribution of its graduates who serve the maritime industry within both the public and private sectors in countries large and small, rich and poor, developed and developing.

This year IMO celebrates World Maritime Day by focusing on the effective implementation of IMO conventions. The role of IMLI is to ensure that member States have the law expertise required for the implementation and enforcement of international maritime law, particularly the vast body of rules and regulations developed under the aegis of IMO. Transposing international law into national legislation alone is not enough to ensure implementation but it is a cornerstone and undoubtedly a big step in the right direction.

Moreover, it is important that IMO has the tools to fulfill its mission as the sole regulator of shipping. Through IMLI, IMO can ensure universal interpretation and application that go well beyond the confines of the narrow approach of unilateralism and regionalism. It is essential that what is by its own nature an international industry is not shackled by a unilateral and regional approach.

The strength of IMLI lies in its universality. When I visited IMLI earlier this year to inaugurate the refurbished student accommodation financed by the Government of Malta, I could not but be impressed by a map of the world, quite rightly prominently displayed, showing the more than 120 countries home of over 600 graduates of IMLI. This is a world wide web, if I may borrow a phrase that has spread across the whole spectrum of government administrations and in many parts, high and low, of the private industry. Indeed the pen is mightier than the sword. Yet, these figures are only indicative. The real strength of the success of IMLI lies in the increased participation and leadership its graduates provide at IMO and other fora and, in the evolution of national maritime legislation of so many IMO member States transposing international maritime

law. This has greatly facilitated global implementation and enforcement. The success that is IMLI is undisputable.

Mr Secretary General, IMLI Board of Governors, Director IMLI, Member States. Encouraged by the success achieved during these last twenty five years it is important that sights are turned to the years ahead.

The role of IMLI is well defined: to serve the rule of international maritime law. In the first decade or so the direct recipients of the IMLI benefits were lawyers from developing countries. Over the next fifteen years the curriculum, the courses offered, the student intake developed further and today is more inclusive even though the standards are even higher.

However, as a seafarer it saddens me to note that the seafaring profession is not that well represented in the list of IMLI graduates. It would be interesting and beneficial to find out the reason for this and to embark on another stage of development that would address this situation. Could IMLI be instrumental in offering young seafarers the necessary legal training they need in their profession and that they would require in their search for alternative employment when their seafaring days are over? By reverse psychology it could encourage more young people to take up a career at sea. IMLI could take implementation down to the roots.

I am sure that IMLI has taken on board the ILO Maritime Law Convention that has been aptly described as the bill of rights of seafarers. MLC lays down rights and responsibilities and it is important that seamen are conversant with both. It is also crucial that seamen are aware of the input that is required of them to ensure implementation of this and other international instruments.

Both the United States Coastguard and Malta's Maritime Squadron have recognized the benefit that IMLI can provide to their personnel. Both have regularly financed courses and their personnel have sacrificed their spare time and, while continuing with the execution of their duties have followed courses that led to the award of a well earned diploma. I am sure that the

Secretary General, the IMLI Director and the Board of Governors can refine these ideas and add them to their own.

Thanks to the initiative and diligence of its leaders and the generosity of its donors IMLI is on a relatively sound financial basis. However, the sustainability of the programme must be secured on a long term basis. This is the challenge of the coming years: how to match an ambitious programme, how to spread the opportunities so that a good cross-section of the maritime industry can benefit from what IMLI offers and at the same ensure the long terms sustainability of the institute.

The maritime industry and the IMO noble objectives would be the losers if the IMLI dream had to be curtailed. The vision of the founding fathers, the work of successive Secretaries General and IMLI Directors and the generosity of those who have been supporting IMLI for so long would not have been in vain if the institute had to falter because what has been achieved shall always be there. But these same vision, work and support were aimed towards a horizon more distant than the twenty five years which is the milestone where we are now. A lot has been done but a great deal more must be achieved.

Malta is proud of its close association with the vision that was IMLI and with the realization of that vision. The Maltese Government has been there from the very early days and not only has its support not faltered but it has increased over the years.

I started this presentation with words of greetings from the Government of Malta and from Maritime Malta. I shall end with a solemn reiteration of Malta's support for IMO firm in the belief that it is this organization that should lead the programme for safer and more secure shipping and cleaner oceans, and of Malta's support for IMLI, firm in the belief of the great benefits of the training programme towards ensuring universal implementation of international maritime law, motivated by the old saying that encapsules the IMLI vision.

Give a man a fish, and you'll feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you have fed him for a lifetime.

Thank you.”

** If you do not want to receive IMLI e-News in future, please return this message to the above address with request to DELETE in the subject field.*

*** For further information please contact Ms. Ramat Jalloh (Editor, IMLI e-News) at publications@imli.org*