



SWISS MARITIME NAVIGATION HEAD OF OFFICE VISITS IMLI

IMLI had the pleasure of welcoming Dr. Reto Dürler Head of Swiss Maritime Navigation Office, who visited the Institute on the 2 April, 2015. Dr. Dürler who is also a member of the IMLI Governing Board was introduced to the students of the IMLI class of 2014/2015 by Dr. Norman Martinez, Senior Lecturer. During his visit Dr. Reto Dürler delivered a lecture on “*The New SUA Protocols: Development, Content and Scope*”.



Dr. Reto Dürler meeting the students of the IMLI Class of 2014/2015

In his lecture, Dr. Dürler discussed the relationship between piracy and terrorism, stating that piracy is the oldest and one of the very few crimes where universal jurisdiction had been recognized under customary international law. Universal jurisdiction was historically justified because pirates are considered to be *hostes humani generis*, which means enemies of all mankind. In this regard, he stated further, similar criteria should be applied to terrorists as they

are also a threat to all States. However, while piracy and terrorism at sea have many similarities and are both forms of violent interfering with shipping, there is a marked difference between the goals of pirates and terrorists, which is that pirates seek financial gain whilst terrorists strive for a political or ideological aim.

Dr. Dürler dealt in detail with the International Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation of 1988, and the Protocol on Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf (SUA 1988). He then examined the development, content and scope of the new SUA Protocols which were adopted in 2005, laying special emphasis on the new offences and the boarding provisions set out in the said Protocol.

In concluding his lecture, Dr. Dürler stated that in his opinion, since the definition of offences found in the new 2005 SUA Protocols is broad in nature, the said treaties could also be used to counter the increasing threat of piracy today.

At the Universities of Basel and Geneva, Dr. Dürler studied Law, Contemporary History and Languages. In 1988 he passed the federal examination to the diplomatic service of his country. Subsequently he served in South Africa, Germany and in various functions at the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bern. Between 2000 and 2002, Dr. Dürler served as Head of the Division of International Affairs in the Federal Ministry of Health of Switzerland.

Dr. Reto Dürler has been the Head of the Swiss Maritime Navigation Office since 2005. In 2009 the Swiss Government appointed him Ambassador and Head of Delegation to the Central Commission of the Navigation on the Rhine which is the oldest international organization in Europe based on the so called Mannheim Convention which came into force in 1868. The Commission was founded at the Vienna Congress in 1815 and celebrates its 200th anniversary this year and has its seat in Strasbourg/France. It stipulates the free navigation on the Rhine river for all its members (Switzerland, Germany, France, Netherlands and Belgium).

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