

## CYBER TERRORISM LECTURE

Dr. Rebekah Tanti-Dougall (Associate, ‘Advocates, Tanti-Dougall & Associates’ Law Firm) based in Valletta, Malta, recently visited the Institute and lectured on the topic “*Cyber Terrorism as a Threat to the Maritime Industry.*”



*Dr. Rebekah Tanti-Dougall meeting students of the IMLI Class of 2014/2015*

During her lecture, Dr. Tanti-Dougall explained that due to the high dependency on information technology and computer data by the maritime industry, interference therewith through cyber attacks may lead to disastrous consequences.

She explained that cyber attacks could be carried out through the alteration of information being sent from one computer system to another so as to suspend security measures, to shut down administrative systems, or manipulate the control systems of a vessel, directing a vessel to carry

out particular orders. Dr. Tanti-Dougall further explained that cyber attacks could also contemplate the creation of a ghost vessel by injecting false data into a vessel's software, as well as the negation of the existence of an approaching vessel.

Dr. Tanti-Dougall also referred to cyber attacks that are already taking place, with individuals having by-passed secured systems including the Pentagon, NASA, the White House, as well as cyber attacks at the Istanbul Ataturk International Airport in 2013, where the passport control system at the departure terminal was directly targeted.

Drawing parallels with the aviation industry, Dr. Tanti-Dougall referred to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) which has identified cyber terrorism as a distinct threat to the aviation industry, being described as the newest and arguable the most elusive threat to the civil aviation industry in the 21st century. In this regard, both IMO's Maritime Safety Committee and the Facilitation Committee have agreed to include cyber security on their agendas to develop guidelines on cyber security practices. Moreover, she referred to insurance policy clauses which are also providing an institute cyber attack exclusion clause.

Dr. Tanti-Dougall also discussed the lack of applicability of the current maritime legislative security framework in relation to cyber attacks, emphasizing that the maritime industry stopped short at incorporating provisions similar to the Beijing Protocol to the Convention on Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft, where there is a direct reference to a cyber attack against aircraft. She explained further that the European Union Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA) has also held that there is insufficient consideration of cyber security in maritime regulation, and the awareness thereof has been deemed to be extremely low.

Dr. Tanti-Dougall concluded her lecture by stating the importance of the industry to anticipate future threats and to be proactive rather than reactionary to such threats. She is positive that an international convention for the suppression of cyber attacks, would provide a comprehensive approach to prevent and criminalize cyber threat.

Dr. Rebekah Tanti-Dougall was awarded a Bachelor degree in Law with European Studies from the University of Malta. She has also completed a Master degree with distinction in Maritime Law at the Institute. In partial fulfilment thereof, a dissertation was presented, entitled 'A Legal Analysis of the Threat of Cyber Terrorism in the Maritime Industry.' Dr. Tanti-Dougall has also graduated with a Doctor of Laws from the University of Malta, for which she presented a dissertation entitled 'Cyber Terrorism in International Civil Aviation Security'.

She has also delivered presentations on the threat of cyber terrorism within both the aviation and maritime industries in a number of conferences, including at the International Air Transport Association's 23rd Aviation Security World Conference organized in Washington D.C. in 2014 as well as at the Transport Security Expo in London in 2014.

Dr. Tanti-Dougall is also author of various articles on cyber terrorism, including with Benedict's Maritime Bulletin and LexisNexis. She is also a Member of the Editorial Advisory Board of Aviation Security International publication, advising on legal issues and cyber threat.

Her lectures were very well received by the students, who greatly appreciated her vast knowledge in the field of cyber terrorism.

---

*\* 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](mailto:publications@imli.org)*