



THE VALEDICTORY ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE INSTITUTE'S 26TH ANNUAL GRADUATION CEREMONY

During the Institute's 26th annual Graduation Ceremony held on 30 May 2015, the Valedictory Address on behalf of the IMLI Class of 2015 was delivered by Ms. Anoushka Kishtoo, a graduant from Mauritius. The ceremony which was presided over by Mr. Frederick Kenney (Director, IMO Legal Affairs and External Relations Division), representing Mr. Koji Sekimizu, IMO Secretary-General and Chairman of the IMLI Governing Board, was graced by several distinguished personalities.



Ms. Anoushka Kishtoo delivering the Valedictory Address on behalf of the IMLI Class of 2015 at the Institute's 26th Graduation Ceremony

In her Valedictory Address, Ms. Kishtoo noted that as this year's World Maritime Day theme is "Maritime education and training", the Graduation Ceremony is the most apt occasion to highlight the achievements of IMLI in educating and training people in the maritime sector. She stated

further that to succeed in its quest to ensure safe and secure shipping on clean seas, the IMO must make sure that the framework is implemented and enforced. IMLI has been providing the requisite training and education for producing professionals with the knowledge and qualification needed for the establishment, development and maintenance of such national legal frameworks.

Addressing her fellow graduands, she noted also that they are all fully equipped to take their places in the outside world and embark on whatever challenging career path they may choose. Nevertheless, Ms. Kishtoo continued, it is good to be reminded that with knowledge comes responsibility and as IMLI graduates, they now have the responsibility of serving the rule of International Maritime Law.

Her Valedictory Address is recaptured below:

Professor David Attard, Director of IMLI,

Your Excellencies,

Fellow Graduands,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour and privilege for me to address you on behalf of the IMLI Class of 2014-2015 on the occasion of our graduation, the memorable day awaited by all the fellow graduands. While the oceans geographically divide us, it is the same oceans that brought us together and kept us united for the last 8 months. I believe, one point common to all of us is the eagerness to learn and study maritime law.

We all come from different countries carrying with us local expertise in the diverse fields of maritime law. Each one of us brought his or her experience in numerous areas such as ship sale and purchase, maritime safety, port regulations, maritime security and law enforcement, international relations, all with the aim of broadening our horizons. Coming from various parts from all over the world, irrespective of our age, gender or religion, we all started on an equal footing.

Our diversity is what distinguishes IMLI from any other maritime institutions. This melting pot has allowed us to learn about each other's cultures and backgrounds, and also to exchange our know-how in the maritime sector. This very diversity has considerably enhanced our experience at IMLI. We also took cognizance of the challenges faced by other countries and their various legal systems.

IMLI life, as we call it, was enriching and indeed an exceptional experience. Being far from our loved ones, we developed a special support system with our fellow colleagues, friends and lecturers, with whom we have bonded for life. Many of us, by coming out of our comfort zones, have learned to value what we have back home. Without any doubt, our journey was far from being

an easy one, we encountered many hurdles and difficulties, went through stressful and sleepless nights and yet, today, our efforts are being crowned with success.

Distinguished guests,

This year's World Maritime Day theme is "Maritime education and training"; what better occasion would it be to highlight the achievements of IMLI in educating and training people in the maritime sector. Once again, we see here that the IMO has placed the human element at a central position. To succeed in its quest to ensure safe, secure and efficient shipping on clean oceans, the IMO must make sure that the framework is implemented and enforced.

IMLI has been providing the requisite training and education for producing professionals with the knowledge and qualification needed for the establishment, development and maintenance of such national legal frameworks.

The comprehensive and interdisciplinary syllabus of IMLI's Master Programme strikes a balance between public and private aspects of maritime law. Another distinct feature of the LLM Programme is the Maritime Legislation Drafting project, which trains us in drafting laws and thereafter, to be in a better position to assist our countries in the preparation of such laws and regulations. IMLI's role in the capacity building of the maritime sector is evident on the national and international fora, where IMLI graduates are actively contributing to build a robust maritime legal framework that will bring the maritime industry a step forward. It can therefore be said that IMLI has lived up to the ideas of its founding fathers.

We also had the opportunity to interact with other colleagues following the Advanced Diploma Programme or attending short courses, especially those coming from Transport Malta, who have given us an insight of the practical aspects of maritime law in Europe's largest ship registry.

We can now stand proudly and profess that IMLI has lived up to the reputation that it has carved for itself to the outside world.

Distinguished guests,

Many States are now adopting the "Blue or Ocean Economy", which gives a pivotal role to the ocean and whereby maritime development contributes to the prosperity of the country. This is precisely where the knowledge acquired at IMLI becomes invaluable. Having been extensively trained both in Shipping Law and Law of the Sea, it can be said with confidence that each one of us will be able to assist our respective nations in whichever policy they adopt in the maritime field.

From the very first day at IMLI, we have been embraced by the warmth and patience of the lecturers and other IMLI staff who have given their best at every step of our quest for knowledge.

Professor David Attard, we owe our greatest gratitude to you. Your wise words have been a guiding light throughout the past months. At no point in time, did you hesitate to share your wealth of knowledge and extraordinary experience with us. We felt ourselves to be extremely privileged to have been able to attend lectures from an intellectual of great stature like you.

Our sincere thanks also go to the other resident lecturers for their countless hours of devotion and relentless commitment towards us students:

- Dr Norman Martinez, a true professional, clear-sighted and resourceful person who, with his experience and matchless lecturing style, made sure that maritime law became crystal clear. He was also best at triggering analytical thinking in us. With Dr. Martinez, we learnt that precision and perfection are not a luxury but is rather a mere necessity.
- Ms Elda Belja was the first person with whom we initiated contact at IMLI. She extended her support and cordiality to each one of us since the very beginning and also kept reminding us that the price of success is hard work. Ms Belja's sharp memory and expressive mannerisms will be remembered as being a symbol of her passion for maritime law.
- Mr Riyaz Hamza, in whom we found a very zealous lecturer, has successfully shared his passion for maritime safety and security with us. Throughout the programme, Mr Hamza was also a well-wisher whose words of encouragement have uplifted us during our difficult times at IMLI.
- In Ms Ramat Jalloh, we found a strong-willed and insightful person who always had the right advice at the right moment and who taught us that dedication and focus are the two factors that could help us fight against the odds.

We extend our thanks to the IMLI Staff at all levels. They have always provided us with the needed administrative and technical support throughout our stay.

Fellow Graduands,

We should also consider ourselves fortunate to have met a vast network of experts from around the world to assist and guide us with their expertise in their respective fields. The array of visiting fellows, who bestowed us with their valuable knowledge and practical advice, is indeed commendable. At this juncture, we offer our sincere appreciation and gratitude to IMLI's visiting lecturers, all of whom generously gave us their time.

We wish to acknowledge the support we have received from our families and friends who have unconditionally supported us throughout the past months.



The IMLI Class of 2015 taking the oath of allegiance at the Institute's 26th Graduation Ceremony

Distinguished guests,

Undertaking the LLM Programme at IMLI would not have been possible without the generosity of The Nippon Foundation, the Lloyd's Register Foundation, the IMO and for some of us, our governments and families. We are forever indebted towards these aforesaid institutions and persons for having chosen us amongst all other applicants and for having given us this golden opportunity which will bring us a step closer to our dreams. A special thanks also to our respective nominating authorities who were the first to believe in our capabilities.

We would also like express our gratitude to the Maltese people and our Maltese colleagues for having been the kindest and perfect hosts during our stay. Undeniably, Malta will always occupy a soft corner in our hearts.

Fellow Graduands,

We came here as strangers, but we are now leaving as friends and as an integral part of the IMLI family. We are now fully equipped to take our place in the outside world and embark on whatever challenging career path we choose. Nevertheless, it is good to be reminded that with knowledge comes responsibility; for us IMLI graduates, we now have the responsibility to serve the rule of International Maritime Law. We are all shapers of the future maritime industry. Let us all use the knowledge imparted to us to make the ocean a safe, secure and clean place to navigate.

I wish to conclude with a quote of Albert Einstein who said: "Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value." Learn to weather any storm and reap long-term rewards in your career by making it your goal to increase your value to others.

I wish you "bon vent et bonne mer" which means fair winds and following seas to you all.

Thank you

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