

NIGERIAN MARITIME LAW ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT LECTURES AT IMLI

The Institute had the pleasure of welcoming Mr. Louis Mbanefo (President of the Nigerian Maritime Law Association) on 3 February, 2016. During his visit, Mr. Mbanefo delivered to the students of the IMLI Class of 2015-2016 a lecture on the topic ‘The Preparation of a Merchant Shipping Act: The Nigerian Perspective’.

His lecture was divided into two parts. In the first part, Mr. Mbanefo dealt with, amongst others, the international legal process in adopting an international instrument, choices facing a new State, problems facing developing countries in keeping abreast with international conventions, and most importantly, the essence of a Merchant Shipping Act.



Mr. Louis Mbanefo (President of the Nigerian Maritime Law Association) lecturing to the IMLI Class of 2015-2016

Mr. Mbanefo then focused on the development of the Nigerian Merchant Shipping Act, including the modes of incorporation of conventions into the Act and the conventions therein incorporated. He also pointed out some drawbacks of the Act.

As part of the requirements for the award of the Master of Laws (LL.M.) Degree, students at IMLI are required to submit a Maritime Legislation Drafting Project, which incorporates an international convention into the domestic legislation of the respective country. As such, Mr. Mbanefo's practical lecture and expertise in this area greatly benefited the students.

Following his lecture, Mr. Louis Mbanefo was interviewed by the IMLI e-news Editor.

Good Afternoon Mr. Mbanefo, we are very pleased to welcome you back here at IMLI.

What changes have taken place in the Institute since your last visit?

I was last here two years ago and am very impressed with the improvements in the Institute over the last couple of years. As always, Professor Attard provides excellent leadership and the staff and are most friendly and competent. I notice improvements in the building and facilities. The library has an increased collection of publications in International Maritime Law. From year to year, I meet students many of whom are full of enthusiasm and experience. The interaction in the class is always lively due to their prior knowledge.

One lecture of 90 minutes has never been enough and many students still want to continue the discussions after the class and they come to me with questions arising out of my lecture. Their enthusiasm and desire for knowledge of international maritime law is always impressive.

How significant is the contribution of IMLI graduates in the development of maritime law in their individual region and in the world?

IMLI graduates have been recognized in their countries for their expertise and technical skills in international maritime law and many have occupied important governmental positions in their respective countries, such as head of maritime authority, legal adviser to ministries, judges and senior legal counsel. IMLI graduates now hold senior position at IMO - Dr. Emmanuel Kofi Mbiah is the Chairman of the IMO Legal Committee. I have no doubt in my mind about the promising future for the IMLI graduates. There are no limits for them and their future is assured.

Do you wish to comment on anything in your opinion that can contribute further to the growth and development of the Institute in the coming years?

Having been involved with IMLI since its inception in 1989, I believe that it has progressed on the right path. The varied courses it now offers and the increasing number of applicants for its PhD programme indicates that IMLI can stand side by side in research quality with other schools of law which established their PhD program a long time ago.

The Institute has built a strong network with prominent members of the European Commission and European Parliament through whom the academic and research collaboration in maritime law could be developed. I was privileged to meet Mr. Karmenu Vella, the European Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, during my visit and listened to his impressive lecture to the students when he touched on how IMLI can impact on the maritime world.

I understand that there are moves for greater collaboration between IMLI and WMU (World Maritime University) – a most welcome development.

Thank you very much Mr. Louis Mbanefo for your time and I hope you enjoy the rest of your evening with us.

Thank you too. It is always a pleasure to be at IMLI.

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