

IMO SECRETARY-GENERAL VISITS IMLI

Mr. Kitack Lim (Secretary – General of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and Chairman of the IMLI Governing Board) visited the IMO international Maritime Law Institute on 29 March 2017 and addressed the IMLI Class of 2016 – 2017.



Mr. Kitack Lim (Secretary – General, IMO and Chairman of the IMLI Governing Board) and Professor Attard (Director, IMLI) with the IMLI Class of 2016 – 2017.

In introducing Mr. Kitack Lim to the IMLI Class of 2016 - 2017, Professor Attard expressed his delight that, despite his busy schedule, the Secretary-General has taken the time to visit the Institute. This visit is the Secretary General's fourth visit to IMLI since he assumed office in 2016. Professor Attard informed the Secretary-General that though the 2016 – 2017 academic year is drawing closer to an end, the visiting professors have confirmed the high standard of excellence that the Class have shown. Professor Attard further informed the Secretary-General that the students are very hard working and always display a high sense of dedication to work.

Accepting Professor Attard's invitation to address the students, the IMO Secretary-General described IMLI as a prestigious educational institution whose role in maritime education the IMO and the entire international maritime community is always very proud of. He described his visit as a great opportunity to meet the students who come from all over the world.

Mr. Lim told that students that by their presence at IMLI, they are already part of the greater IMO family. He affirmed that his training at the World Maritime University (WMU) has given him the opportunity to be able to appreciate how important IMLI is for the students and how their experience from IMLI will be beneficial to them as they progress in their career.



Mr. Kitack Lim (Secretary – General, IMO and Chairman of the IMLI Governing Board) unveiling his portrait

Mr. Lim explained that the expansion of IMO's mandate from safety related issues to multifaceted regulatory issues including environmental considerations, maritime security among issues that affect the overall efficiency of shipping, led the Organization to adopt a comprehensive body of international conventions. He further went on to say that these conventions are supported by over 100 guidelines and recommendations to govern every facet of shipping industry. He believes that these instruments by themselves do not guarantee the attainment of the desired results unless the same has been properly and effectively implemented, and this is where the IMLI graduates are most needed. Mr. Lim also explained that in practice, the implementation of IMO conventions

involves a number of actors including shipping companies, classification societies and seafarers. However, the ultimate legal responsibility lies with the IMO Member States, who, in accordance with international law should incorporate such relevant convention(s) into their national laws to give it a force of law. That in many cases people trusted with the task of incorporating IMO conventions into national laws are the IMLI graduates.

Mr. Lim identified four key areas of IMO intervention to help the Member States, especially the developing countries, with the implementation and enforcement of IMO treaties:

- Identification of programmes that the Member States may be interested in.
- Widespread publicity of newly adopted regulations and standards.
- Promote discussion and seek solution from the relevant IMO Committees.
- Provide advice and technical assistance through technical cooperation.

The Secretary-General underscored the need for expertise in international maritime law within the IMO Member States and in particular the developing States so as to ensure that IMO instruments are implemented through the national legal system. He also stated that though IMO has a vast array of regulatory instruments, the same need to be constantly updated in order to keep pace with technological advancements. By providing a steady influx of highly trained legal professionals, IMLI has been very instrumental in enabling the Members States and IMO alike to be able to measure up to the above challenges.

Mr. Lim confirmed that IMLI graduates occupy positions of great responsibility throughout the maritime world and their knowledge, expertise and experience have been of immense benefit particularly to the developing world. He expressed great confidence in the students, referring to them as the “warriors, assets and treasures to the maritime world.” He told the students that they are the agents who can facilitate, through their education, mutual and harmonious understanding between the developed and developing countries in their engagements.

On ‘who you meet and when?’ Mr. Lim advised the students to use their presence at IMLI as an opportunity. ‘You are the luckiest students to work and interact with Professor Attard’ Mr. Lim told the students. He advised them to serve as real assets and treasures to one another and to maintain their global outlook through thinking and communication.

Mr. Lim thanked Professor Attard for his selfless and valuable contributions to the development of IMLI.

In an interview with the Editor of the IMLI e-News, shortly after his address, the IMO Secretary-General said that he wants IMLI graduates to contribute more to the public as well as the private maritime sectors, facilitating communication and collaboration. ‘I want the Institute and its graduates to become more proactive and stronger agents in terms of collaboration and communication. In that sense I see great value of the Institute,’ he said.

Asked by the editor to describe IMLI in one sentence, Mr Lim gave a two-word description of IMLI: “Superb Institution!”

In honour of his visit, Professor Attard invited Mr Lim to unveil his portrait.

Present during the visit were Mr. Lino C Vassallo (the Permanent Representative of Malta to the IMO and Member of the IMLI Governing Board), Mr. Masamichi Hasebe (Senior Legal Counsel, Japan Association of Marine Safety and Member of the IMLI Governing Board) and Dr. Agustin Blanco-Bazán (Former Senior Deputy Director and Head of the Legal Office)

Mr. Kitack Lim (from the Republic of Korea) was elected Secretary-General of the IMO by the 114th session of the IMO Council in June 2015 for a four-year period beginning 1 January 2016. The election was endorsed by the IMO's Assembly at its 29th session in November 2015. He is the eighth elected Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization.

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*** For further information please contact Mr. Buba Bojang (Editor, IMLI e-News) at publications@imli.org*