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SENIOR LEGAL COUNSEL OF JAPAN ASSOCIATION OF MARINE SAFETY LECTURES AT IMLI

Mr. Masamichi Hasebe (Senior Legal Counsel, Japan Association of Marine Safety and Member of the IMLI Governing Board) visited the IMO International Maritime Law Institute on 7 March 2017 and gave a lecture on the ‘Arctic Continental Shelf Claims’ to the IMLI Class of 2016 – 2017.



Mr. Masamichi Hasebe (Senior Legal Counsel, Japan Association of Marine Safety and Member of the IMLI Governing Board and Mrs. Reiko Hasebe (left) with the IMLI Class of 2016 – 2017

Mr. Hasebe began his lecture by explaining in detail how climate change has led to the fast warming nature of the Arctic Ocean – with a record ice retreat in 2007 - which has had far-reaching economic, environmental, and security-related consequences for the coastal States. Mr. Hasebe informed the students that the decline of ice has opened up new frontiers for competition over natural resources, new navigational routes for ships and other potential opportunities such as hydrocarbons exploitation, mining and transportation. Mr. Hasebe noted that these developments have transformed the Arctic Ocean, from a peaceful and stable arena for growing intergovernmental and non-governmental cooperation since the end of the Cold War, to a region of global geopolitical relevance with increased international attention.

Through his discussions, the Class learned that the melting of the ice has led to overlapping continental shelf claims by the Arctic coastal States and thus to potential disputes among the concerned States. Mr. Hasebe also examined how the Arctic Ocean became an element of national identities and narratives and how the same has helped shape the Arctic policies of the respective coastal States.



Mr. Masamichi Hasebe delivering his lecture

On how the concerned States have approached these challenges, which is referred to as the “scramble” for the Arctic, Mr. Hasebe explained that the five coastal States (Canada, Denmark concerning Greenland, Norway, Russia and the USA) met in Ilulissat, Greenland, in May 2008 and adopted the Ilulissat Declaration. The Declaration not only affirmed the abovementioned

States' sovereign rights in the Ocean, but more importantly, their commitment to the peaceful settlement of any possible overlapping claims on the basis of international law including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Although the five coastal States concluded that there was no need to develop a new legal regime to govern the Arctic Ocean they emphasised the importance of bilateral and multilateral cooperation to further guide their engagement concerning the challenges presented by climate change.

The class was appreciative of Mr. Hasebe's lecture as it helped them understand the fact that maritime delimitation in some circumstances can be marred by economic and geopolitical imperatives.

Mr. Masamichi Hasebe is a visiting professor at the University of Kobe in Japan. He is a member of many professional bodies such as Japanese Society of International Law, Japan Society of Transport Economics and Japan Society of Logistics and Shipping Economics, just to mention a few.

He served as Deputy Director General, Minister's Bureau, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan (July 2014-August 2015), Chief Researcher, Daiwa Institute of Research (June 2011- June 2014), Deputy Director-General, Kanto Transport Bureau Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (July 2009- May 2011) and Deputy Commander, Japan Coast Guard (July 2008- June 2009).

Mr. Hasebe has written extensively in many areas of his practice. Some of his articles included the 'Examination of British Tonnage Tax System', published in the Journal of Logistics and Shipping Economics (2008); the 'Legal Implications of Free Trade Agreement on the Trade Liberalization of Maritime Transport', published in the Journal of Logistics and Shipping Economics (2012) and the 'International Legislative Framework of the Use of Privately Contracted Armed Security Personnel (PCASP) to Defend against the Threat of Piracy', published by Japan Captain's Association (2013).

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