

IMLI *e*-News

The IMO International Maritime Law Institute Official Electronic Newsletter (Vol. 14, Issue No. 38) 19 May, 2017

HEAD OF THE SWISS MARITIME NAVIGATION OFFICE LECTURES AT IMLI

Dr. Reto Dürler (Head, Swiss Maritime Navigation Office and member, IMLI Governing Board) visited the Institute on 17 March 2017 and delivered a lecture on ‘The New SUA Protocols: Development, Content and Scope’ to the IMLI Class of 2016 – 2017.



Dr. Reto Dürler (Head, Swiss Maritime Navigation Office and member, IMLI Governing Board) meeting the IMLI Class of 2016 – 2017

At the beginning of his lecture, Dr. Dürler gave a brief history of how the Swiss Flag, which was established in 1941, strived to success amidst various challenges. He also, in brief, introduced the Rhine River Commission and how it came about.

Dr, Dürler engaged the students in discussing piracy and together, they identified the regions of the world where piracy is unfortunately present. Such regions include the Gulf of Guinea, Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. He examined in detail, the International Convention on the

Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation of 1988, and the Protocol on Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf (SUA 1988) before turning to discuss the development, content and scope of the new SUA Protocols which were adopted in 2005. He laid special emphasis on the new offences and the boarding provisions set out in the said Protocol.

He examined the relationship between piracy and terrorism with a view to determining whether the legal rules against piracy can be applied to terrorism. He stated that piracy is one of the crimes where the application of universal jurisdiction is recognized under customary international law because pirates are considered to be *hostes humani generis*, enemies of all mankind. He stated that to the extent that they are all threats to all States, similar criteria should apply to terrorists. However, Dr. Dürler identified the difference between the two international crimes. He stated that while piracy and terrorism at sea have many similarities and are both forms of violent interference with shipping, there is a marked difference between the goals of pirates and terrorists, which is that pirates seek financial gain whilst terrorists, a political or ideological aim. Notwithstanding this differences, Dr. Dürler concluded that similar approach should be undertaken to combat both.

Dr. Dürler studied Law, Contemporary History and Languages at the Universities of Basel and Geneva. In 1988 he passed the federal examination to the diplomatic service of his country. Subsequently he served in South Africa, Germany and in various functions at the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bern. Between 2000 and 2002, Dr. Dürler served as Head of the Division of International Affairs in the Federal Ministry of Health of Switzerland.

Dr. Reto Dürler has been the Head of the Swiss Maritime Navigation Office since 2005. In 2009 the Swiss Government appointed him Ambassador and Head of Delegation to the Central Commission of the Navigation on the Rhine which is the oldest international organization in Europe based on the so called Mannheim Convention which came into force in 1868. The Commission has its seat in Strasbourg/France. It stipulates the free navigation on the Rhine River for all its members (Switzerland, Germany, France, Netherlands and Belgium).

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