

IMLI *e*-News

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SECRETARY-GENERAL OF GENERAL WORKERS UNION (MALTA) VISITS IMLI

Mr. Joseph Bugeja, the current Secretary-General of the General Workers (GWU) Union of Malta – an affiliate of the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) – visited the Institute on 31 January 2018. Mr. Bugeja was accompanied by his deputy, Mr. Kevin Camilleri, and Mr. Paul Falzon who represents ITF.



Mr. Joseph Bugeja, (Secretary-General, the General Workers Union of Malta) meeting the IMLI Class of 2017-2018

In his welcoming address, Professor David Attard stated that he was pleased to welcome the visiting delegation to the Institute. He briefed the delegation about the Institute’s programmes and courses, which he said are not only full time but also intensive.

Professor Attard informed the visitors that IMLI is not just concerned with the interest of the shipowners, but also the need to focus on the human dimension of maritime law. Professor Attard said that ‘We are interested in the men and women who risk their lives every day at sea. This, for us, reflects the international concern for seafarers. I am very pleased to note that there is a great consciousness of the need to promote the human dimension of maritime law.’

When addressing the students, Mr. Joseph Bugeja expressed his great satisfaction in witnessing such a large body of future maritime law and legislation experts. He reminded them that, “You have huge responsibilities because we are entrusting the marine environment in your hands and your knowledge and in your expertise for the future generations.”

Mr. Bugeja stated that fighting ships that abuse seafarers is the biggest challenge his Union has faced but that they are hopeful of success because the IMLI students, on graduation, will not just join the fight to safeguard the marine environment but also to safeguard the rights of seafarers. To that extent, our objectives and that of IMLI are similar, covering the human aspect of the law of the sea.

He extended an invitation to the faculty and students to visit the Workers Union Building. He wished the students success in their academic work.



(L-R) Mr. Paul Falzon of the International Transport Federation (ITF), Mr. Kevin Camilleri (Deputy Secretary-General, the General Workers Union of Malta) Ms. Eli Berlan (IMLI Student, Croatia), Mr. Joseph Bugeja (Secretary-General, the General Workers Union of Malta) Mr. Bin Chao (IMLI Student, China) and Professor David Attard (Director, IMLI)

Mr. Bugeja spoke with the Editor of the IMLI e-news and expressed his thoughts about IMLI in the following words:

Knowledge and education are the tools that help in protecting and improving the working condition of seafarers. Educational institutions like IMLI help spread that knowledge. The maritime lawyers trained here will help to spread the IMLI philosophy. Trade unionism and the aims of educational institutions are much aligned. We need to train people to give them new skills. IMLI is giving knowledge and skills and ability to its students so that they spread the knowledge. It is like training the trainers.

Asked to describe IMLI in one word, Mr. Bugeja said that IMLI is “Inspiring”.

Mr. Paul Falzon of the ITF also spoke with the Editor, and he too had the following words:

Criminalization of the crew is a very big concern for us especially when ships operate outside the jurisdiction of States. This makes it very challenging for us and even for governments as it is always difficult to safeguard the right of seafarers in international waters. We do not have the tools of Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), we do not have the tools when they are outside the jurisdiction. So it is hopeful for us that laws will be drafted to cater for this situation. For these reasons, I would ask ITF to support IMLI further because IMLI students will be eventually monitoring and putting forward new legislation and this is what we need.

The two students currently sponsored by the ITF, Ms. Eli Berlan (Croatia) and Mr. Bin Chao (China) expressed deep gratitude to the ITF for the opportunity given to them. They promise that upon completion of their course, they will contribute to the advancement of human rights in maritime law and to promote the well-being of the seafarers.

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) is a global union federation of transport workers' trade unions, founded in 1896. In 2017 the ITF had 677 member organizations in 149 countries, representing a combined membership of 16.5 million transport workers in the seafaring, port, road, rail and aviation sectors.

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