

# IMLI *e*-News

The IMO International Maritime Law Institute Official Electronic Newsletter (Vol. 15, Issue No. 75) 14 June 2018

## IMO SECRETARY-GENERAL DELIVERS THE GRADUATION ADDRESS

Mr. Kitack Lim (Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and Chairman of the IMLI Governing Board) delivered the Graduation Address at the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Graduation Ceremony of the Institute held at the Malta Maritime Museum, Vittoriosa, Malta on 9 June 2018.



*Mr. Kitack Lim (Secretary-General, IMO and Chairman of the IMLI Governing Board) delivering the Graduation Address*

In his address, Mr. Kitack Lim commented that this year's graduation was indeed a special one as it is the same year that the IMO celebrates 70 years since the adoption of the convention that established the Organization.

He then informed the gathering that the graduation is a testament to IMLI's continuous support to the legal capacity building needs of maritime Administrations, with over 900 graduates from 142 countries, to date, through its educational programmes. He likewise stated that IMLI has made noteworthy efforts to reduce gender disparities in maritime education, by encouraging equal access to specialised maritime training. This is undoubtedly evident with IMLI being the first institution within the UN system to reserve 50 per cent of places of its programmes for deserving female candidates.

He implored the graduands to pass on the knowledge and apply skills that they have gathered from and have developed through IMLI, respectively, and work hard towards building the future that they want and for the future that the next generations deserve.

The core parts of the Graduation Address of the Secretary-General are reproduced below:

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Minister, President Emeritus, Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies, gentlemen and students.

It is a real pleasure for me to be here today to celebrate the Class of 2018. Today's students deserve our admiration for what they have achieved. They are joining the ranks of an elite group of professionals who make the Institute, and IMO, very proud. They, like many of their predecessors, will play a role in achieving one of IMO's main objectives, to enhance the legal capacity within the maritime sector.

Today, you celebrate your graduation, in the year IMO celebrates 70 years since the adoption of the convention that established the Organization. I was honoured to lead this year's celebrations, where, as part of these celebrations, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II visited the IMO Headquarters and met representatives from the IMO family.

We were touched by the congratulations received for our anniversary from all corners of the globe. They are a testament to the important role IMO plays in providing the regulatory regime to ensure that our oceans are safe and secure, while facilitating trade and safeguarding the marine environment.

Over the years, IMO has been very successful in adopting a multitude of instruments for the maritime sector to thrive. We are nevertheless fully aware that our success can only be measured against the effective implementation and enforcement of these instruments.

To effectively incorporate international instruments into domestic legislation, national expertise is crucial. Therefore, IMO, with the Government of Malta, established this unique Institute.

For nearly three decades, IMLI has established itself as the reference point for States to enhance their capacity building in the field of international maritime law. The Institute is recognized as a centre of excellence for the training of specialists in international maritime law and for the dissemination of knowledge and expertise in the field.

IMO takes great satisfaction in witnessing IMLI's tremendous achievements in the field of education. I would like to invite you to look at today's students and take note of the global reach of this Institute.

This academic year brought together students from Canada to Cambodia, which were represented for the first time at IMLI, Small Island Developing States, countries with longstanding maritime traditions and several landlocked states. As they return to serve their countries in different parts of the world, they remain connected by their shared experience, and they can all say: "I am an IMLI alumnus".

I am particularly pleased with the record enrolment of women, whose presence today signifies that the maritime industry cannot, and should not, be considered a 'male domain' any longer.

IMLI was the first institution within the UN system to reserve 50 per cent of places of its programmes for female candidates. This policy, as we see today, is paying off. This is also evident at IMO fora. I note with pride that many female IMLI students lead their countries' delegations at IMO meetings, while others chair important IMO committees and sub-committees.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We should not however rest on our laurels. With 900 graduates from this illustrious Institute, one would expect that the lack of national experts that prompted the Institute's establishment, would have been adequately addressed.

However, reality teaches us differently. The IMO Audit Scheme has found that, on many occasions, non-compliance by Member States with IMO instruments stems from lack of national expertise.

Therefore, I cannot stress enough how vital IMLI has become in the efforts of IMO Member States, especially developing countries, to generate national expertise for the effective adoption of laws to implement IMO instruments.

This year, IMLI has pushed the boundaries and has risen, once again, to the challenges of the maritime community. IMLI fully supports IMO's objective to promote the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 14 on oceans. The Institute - with the generous funding of The Nippon Foundation - undertook major research on the limitations of the current fragmented ocean governance regime to provide tangible solutions, for a more effective and sustainable oceans governance regime in the future.

IMLI's excellent record and achievements would not be possible without the financial support it receives from its many donors.

In this respect, I express my deepest appreciation to the Government of Malta and its people for welcoming the students and offering them a home away from home. I am particularly grateful to

IMO's Technical Cooperation Division for its efforts towards the welfare of the Institute, and The Nippon Foundation for continuously supporting IMLI and its activities since 2003.

Allow me to extend my sincere gratitude to the Lloyd's Register Foundation, ITF Seafarers' Trust Foundation, and other donors, in particular, the Government of Malaysia and the Republic of Korea. They provide financial contributions for the sustainability of the Institute.

I invite you all to remember the United Nations General Assembly Resolution on the Ocean and Law of the Sea which, for the 10th consecutive year, recognized the work of IMLI and encouraged the maritime community at large to continue to support its mission.

Before concluding this speech, I would like to address the Director, Professor Attard, and his academic and administrative staff. We value you immensely. We are grateful for your dedication and for your dedication towards the students. My heartfelt thanks to the Members of the IMLI Governing Board and to the Chairman of the Financial and Human Resources Committee.

Dear students,

As you leave today, please do not forget that you are part of a community that, for many years now, has strived to improve the maritime sector. Wherever your journey in life takes you, do not forget that shared experience that connects you all.

You are graduating from an institution that serves the rule of international maritime law. You have been equipped with knowledge and skills you need to use for the benefit of all of us.

Education does not know national boundaries. It transcends borders, it crosses seas and oceans and passes on from generation to generation. Strive to learn further and pass your knowledge; apply your newly acquired skills, when advising or representing your country and when negotiating with your international partners. Work hard for the future that you want and for the future that the next generations deserve.

I wish you all every success and look forward to meeting you at IMO.

---

*\* If you do not want to receive IMLI e-News in future, please return this message to the above address with request to DELETE in the subject field.*

*\*\* For further information, please contact Dr. Buba Bojang (Editor, IMLI e-News) at [publications@imli.org](mailto:publications@imli.org)*