

# IMLI *e*-News

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## **IMLI GRADUAND DELIVERS VALEDICTORY ADDRESS AT THE 29<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GRADUATION CEREMONY OF THE INSTITUTE**

Ms. Thandi Rosalee McAllister (Guyana) delivered the Valedictory Address on behalf of the graduands during the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Graduation Ceremony of the Institute on 9 June 2018.



*Ms. Thandi Rosalee McAllister (Guyana) delivering the Valedictory Address on behalf of the IMLI Class of 2017-2018*

Ms. McAllister began her address by befittingly acknowledging His Excellency, Mr. Kitack Lim (Secretary-General, IMO), Professor David Attard (Director, IMLI), the Distinguished Guests, and her Fellow Graduands. While thanking the sponsors for their generosity, she stated that without their intervention, most of them would not be present to witness and share the proud and historic moment of graduation. She also expressed appreciation for the assistance rendered by the Maltese Government and its endearing citizenry who have been so hospitable to them during their academic sojourn at IMLI. She thanked the staff of IMLI, particularly Professor Attard, whom she referred to as the epitome of the modern maritime lawyer, truly an inspiration to her and her colleagues.

Ms. McAllister's Valedictory Address reflected the theme of "The IMLI Graduate- Guardian of the Oceans" for the year 2018. She mentioned that this theme calls for more integration in the maritime and logistics sectors from a policy, as well as a practical perspective.



*A Cross-section of the of the Graduands*

On the Cultural diversity in the student body, Ms. McAllister explained that the IMLI Class of 2017-2018 hail from approximately 41 different countries, with each of them facing unique maritime issues that pose a threat to either the stability, health or overall well-being of our individual nations. She urged her colleagues to return to their respective countries to plough back towards making the world an environmentally better place.



*Families and friends of the Graduands*

The Valedictory Address of Ms. McAllister is reproduced hereunder:

Your Excellency, Mr. Kitack Lim - Secretary General of the International Maritime Organization, Professor David Joseph Attard - Director of the IMO-International Maritime Law Institute, Distinguished Guests, Fellow Graduands, Ladies and Gentlemen, good morning.

On this occasion of the 29<sup>th</sup> Graduation Ceremony of the IMO-International Maritime Law Institute, it is my distinct honour to briefly engage you, on behalf of the class of 2018, on the theme “The IMLI Graduate – Guardian of the Oceans”.

The IMLI experience has been life-changing. The divergent views, experiences, realities and cultures of 41 countries, converged in a single space for over eight months, increased the richness of our lives. Every discussion left us empowered and armed with a unique knowledge base. The interaction of academia and best practices fostered a comprehensive understanding of what would otherwise be complex legal and technical principles.

With our personal and professional profiles enhanced, it is anticipated that we will be able to transmit the benefits derived, for full and effective utilisation by our national administrations.

We are now more aware of the ever-changing dynamics of man’s interactions with the ocean space. In this regard, I am convinced that on every voyage in every ocean, the maritime lawyer is key to charting a safe and proper course.

Current maritime challenges concern issues of security, safety, fisheries governance, climate change and marine environmental protection and preservation among others. The oceans will remain the crucible of international maritime trade and with more than 90% of the world's goods being transported by sea, it is unlikely that the array of challenges will soon diminish. The transformation of the sea, fueled by advancing technology and the increasing economic interests of States necessitates a holistic approach to state action, and cooperation mechanisms including a more systematic sharing of knowledge and technology.

Ambassador Arvid Pardo, in his presentation at the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1967 noted that,

*“Retracting the past, man, the present dominator of the emerged earth, is now returning to the ocean depths. His penetration of the deep could mark the beginning of the end for man, and indeed for life as we know it on this earth: it could also be a unique opportunity to lay solid foundations for a peaceful and increasingly prosperous future for all peoples.”*

Ambassador Pardo's proposal for the development of new rules to protect the “common heritage of mankind” remains relevant as advances in deep-sea technologies have spurred renewed interests in extracting minerals and deposits from the ocean floor. Despite these technological advancements, the retrieval of deposits from the deep seabed still requires intensive, destructive processes, such as are intended for utilisation in the extraction of gold and copper off the coast of Papua New Guinea. This development demands now, more than ever, the cooperation of States and industry stakeholders to formalise a comprehensive regime to govern this extractive industry.

We are fortunate to be involved in the field of international maritime law during an era of unprecedented developments aimed at updating the law to cater for new and emerging challenges. In 2016, Member States of the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals of which goal 14 commits governments to conserve and sustainably use the world's oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

In December 2017, the United Nations General Assembly decided to convene an intergovernmental conference, to elaborate the text of an international legally binding instrument under the Law of the Sea Convention, on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ). This new instrument seeks to remedy a major gap in ocean governance taking into consideration conservation and sustainable use, aimed at balancing the interests of industry and biodiversity.

Further, in May 2018, the IMO agreed on a definition of Maritime Autonomous Surface ships along with the framework for analysing the applicable regulations – an important first step towards achieving a globally accepted regulatory regime.

Surely, as there continues to be tremendous developments in the maritime industry due to technological advancements and new scientific information, the challenges faced by our oceans



will threaten the limited available resources therein. This daunting reality demands a uniform global response of States, Civil Society and Scientific, Technical and Legal experts. In short, each of us has a role in the protection and preservation of the oceans. This is our non-delegable duty.

Fellow graduands,

Having regard for the evolving nature of the international maritime industry, we must build upon the professional and personal relationships we have forged in order that our knowledge of the industry will remain current.

As we join the pioneers of shipping and ocean governance, let us be excellent ambassadors of the rule of the law of the sea and of international maritime law, remembering that each of us is as important as the other in securing the oceans and the resources thereof for the use and benefit of future generations.

We have been exposed to exceptional learning and thus, there is no question that we possess the adaptability of mind and sufficiency of discipline to formulate appropriate mechanisms to aid the advancement of the maritime industry.

The institute's sterling contributions to the international community are renowned and can be measured by the incredible work of the hundreds of modern maritime professionals it has cultivated.

As graduates of the Institute, we are trained to effectively incorporate IMO adopted international conventions, and other related instruments into national law. We are able to provide technical advice and relevant expertise to aid the establishment of appropriate legal infrastructures on a wide spectrum of international maritime and ocean-related issues. The Institute has equipped us with the tools necessary to guide humanity's achievement of a balanced approach to sustainable use of the world's oceans and their resources, effectively "Serving the rule of International Maritime Law".

Our individual and collective voyages, from the builder's yard to the recycling facility were significantly aided by the best measures of safety, security and moral support provided by the Institute's committed resident academic staff. My colleagues and I will remain forever grateful for the oversight, guidance and patience exercised in their delivery of a first-class education.

Under the leadership of Professor Attard, IMLI's comprehensive curriculum continues to proficiently nurture maritime professionals.

An institution within the Institute, Professor Attard represents, for us, the epitome of the modern maritime lawyer. He is the hallmark of knowledge and he possesses an unparalleled passion for ensuring that Developing States are equipped with the resources necessary for the effective implementation of maritime conventions.

Professor Attard, we thank you and we wish you well!

Professor Martinez constantly reminded us of the importance of acquiring a thorough understanding of the law. For him, the only useless question was the one not asked. In his many discussions, he emphasised the need for humility and foresight. These lessons we will always hold dear.

We all agree that Dr. Bojang made the completion of our projects and assignments less tedious with his simple but detailed explanations of drafting techniques and, of course CITAVI.

There was never a dull moment with Ms. Jalloh whose passion for measures of protection, conservation and preservation increased our love for the marine environment with which we have, now, established a genuine link.

For us, Ms. Panaguiton authored ‘Towage, and Enforcement Made Simple’– our very own classics added to the collection of relevant resources.

On our voyage from the Mediterranean to the Gulf of Guinea and beyond, Mr. Yano provided the necessary safeguards against security threats to our vessel.

We are grateful for the stewardship of Ms. Belja who placed us, maritime law infants, into the moulding hands of the world’s leading maritime specialists, and whose persistence and uncompromising disposition relative to perfection were amongst the principal drivers of our success.

Last but not least, to have benefited from the tutelage of renowned experts in every important dimension of international maritime law has been an honour for myself and colleagues.

Indeed, the entire IMLI family is to be treasured for making this academic year most memorable.

For many of us, the journey to this point may have been impossible but for the generous contributions of donor organisations and funding agencies supporting IMLI’s capacity building initiatives. In this regard, we wish to especially acknowledge The Nippon Foundation, the International Maritime Organization, the Lloyd’s Register Foundation and the ITF Seafarers’ Trust and the Republic of Korea.

We are indebted to all of you - a debt we shall endeavour to pay forward to humanity.

With you on board, there is absolutely no doubt that the Institute is well-positioned to sustain the training of modern maritime professionals helping the international community to surmount the challenges posed by our use of the oceans.

Fellow graduands,

In closing, I borrow from the wisdom of Sir Martin Carter and charge us all to let not our voices be still for we have much to claim. In our fight for the life of the world’s oceans, we must not die, for death is far too poor. Let us not sleep to dream but dream to change the world, leaving a legacy of cleaner, safer and more secure seas for future generations.

Long live IMLI!

Thank you!

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