

IMLI *e*-News

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PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE VISITS IMLI

His Excellency Judge Abdulqawi A. Yusuf (President, International Court of Justice) visited the IMO International Maritime Law Institute on 8 January 2019 and delivered a lecture on “The Contribution of the International Court of Justice to Contemporary Law of the Sea” to the IMLI Class of 2018-2019.



His Excellency Judge Abdulqawi A. Yusuf (President, International Court of Justice) and Professor David Attard (Director, IMLI)

Introducing President Yusuf to the Class, Professor Attard described him as a distinguished judge and an active international lawyer with outstanding credentials. He noted with pride President Yusuf’s accomplishments because of his background, coming from a developing country, and stated that for the past 30 years IMLI has been at the forefront enhancing capacity-building in developing countries.

For his part, President Yusuf said that it was an honour and a pleasure for him to be invited to address the faculty and students of IMLI. He noted that more than half the students are from

developing countries and that the skills they acquire at IMLI will be of utmost importance to their respective countries.



A cross-section of the IMLI Class

In his lecture, President Yusuf gave a brief background of the ICJ and how the attitude of States changed from reluctance to acceptance of the Court's jurisdiction to settle international disputes. He described this change as part of human civilisation, that is, the settlement of disputes through the rule of law.

President Yusuf revealed that many inter-State disputes concerns the oceans since it covers 72% of the earth and that the courts and arbitral tribunals have clarified most norms concerning the law of the sea. He explained the role of ITLOS and ICJ as providing the guide for a better understanding of both customary international and conventional laws, to fill the gaps in law with analogous concepts and to develop the provisions of UNCLOS through proper interpretation and application.

President Yusuf predicted that the work of the ICJ would continue due to technological developments. He said, "We need to protect the health and quality of the oceans and the genetic resources for the benefit of humanity."

On his impression about the contribution of IMLI in the capacity-building of the maritime and law of the sea expertise of developing countries, President Yusuf said:

"My impression is a very positive one because I did not expect to see so many young people from the developing world gathering in one place and focusing on the blue economy and maritime law. Today, as you know, the blue economy is of extreme importance to the development of the developing States, but what they need is the skills, the expertise and the workforce which understands better the legal and economic aspects of the use of the seas and oceans. I am quite sure that all these young people will leave with a great amount of knowledge about these matters. I am very happy that IMLI is playing that role, and it is, therefore, contributing to the development of the developing countries."



His Excellency Judge Abdulqawi A. Yusuf (President, International Court of Justice) with Professor David Attard (Director, IMLI) and the IMLI Class of 2018-2019

Judge Abdulqawi A. Yusuf is the President of the International Court of Justice, The Hague, The Netherlands. He was elected as a Judge to the Court in November 2008 and re-elected in November 2017. He was Vice-President of the Court from 6 February 2015 to 6 February 2018. He is a member of the Institut de Droit International, a former Chief legal counsel to various intergovernmental organisations, including UNESCO and UNIDO. He is the founder of the African Institute of International Law (AIIL), Arusha, Tanzania and of the African Yearbook of International Law. He is the author of numerous publications on various aspects of international law. He holds a Ph.D. in International Law from the IUHEI, Geneva.

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