

# IMLI *e*-News

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## **MEMBER OF THE IMLI GOVERNING BOARD AND PATRON OF THE NIGERIA MARITIME LAW ASSOCIATION LECTURES AT IMLI**

Mr. Louis Mbanefo (Member, IMLI Governing Board and Patron, the Nigeria Maritime Law Association) visited the IMO International Maritime Law Institute on 18 February 2018. He delivered a lecture on “The Essence of a Merchant Shipping Act: The Nigerian Experience” to the IMLI Class of 2018-2019.



*Mr. Louis Mbanefo (Member, IMLI Governing Board and Patron, the Nigeria Maritime Law Association) and Professor David Attard (Director, IMLI) with the IMLI Class of 2018-2019*

Mr Mbanefo explained the various modes through which an international treaty convention is incorporated into national legislation, such as, the enactment of a new law (stand alone), the making of a regulation, the incorporation of an international treaty into text of existing legislation or incorporation by reference. Here, he discussed some of the challenges faced by developing countries in keeping abreast with international conventions.

On the essence of a Merchant Shipping Act, Mr. Mbanefo noted that a Merchant Shipping Act generally provides guidance to national and visiting ships and caters for penalties for infringements. It also adopt measures to protect and preserve the marine environment from pollution, health and safety, and the investigation of marine casualties, among other considerations.



*Mr. Louis Mbanefo signing the IMLI Guest Register with Professor David Attard (right) and Professor Norman Martinez (right)*

Furthermore, Mr. Mbanefo explained the progressive development of the Nigerian Merchant Shipping Act, including how relevant international conventions were incorporated into the same for effective implementation.

Mr. Mbanefo's lecture came at a time when the students are working on their legislation drafting project. His lecture provided an enlightening guidance for the students. It may be recalled that at IMLI, the students are required to incorporate (for effective implementation) IMO Instrument or other relevant international convention into their national legislation.

At the end of his lecture, Mr. Mbanefo was asked to give a recount of IMLI's progressive development since inception.

*Since the preparation of the first syllabus by our committee, I understand that there have been several revisions of it. The physical structures on the ground have been developed in a most impressive manner over the past thirty years and during my visits over the years to lecture to students, I have been most impressed by the use of the limited space to create, not only a most impressive and well-stocked library and lecture hall, but also offices as well as accommodation for students and visiting professors.*

*The pioneer director, Professor Patricia Birnie, ably assisted by Mr. P.K. Mukherjee, set the Institute on a high trajectory. However, following the appointment of Professor Attard as director,*

*the Institute attained enviable heights and has over the years produced a large number of very distinguished maritime lawyers who have made significant contributions to the development of maritime law in their respective countries.*

Mr Louis Mbanefo was Chairman of the Nigerian National Shipping Line. He was also Chairman of Ministerial Committee to review and update the Nigerian Shipping Law. He is author of the Nigerian Shipping Law Series and was responsible for the preparation of the Admiralty Jurisdiction Act 1991 and the Nigerian Merchant Shipping Act of 2007.

Mr Mbanefo is currently a Senior Partner in the firm of Mbanefo &Co. in Lagos. In his practice he has appeared as Counsel in many high profile shipping cases and was appointed a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) in May, 1988. In 2008, Mr Louis Mbanefo was elected a member of the Executive Council of the Comite Maritime International (CMI). He is one of the founders of the Nigerian Maritime Law Association and currently its Patron.

Mr Mbanefo has, since the inception of IMLI in 1988, been a visiting Fellow and an indispensable member of its governing board. He was very instrumental in the preparation of the syllabus of the courses being studied at the Institute.

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