

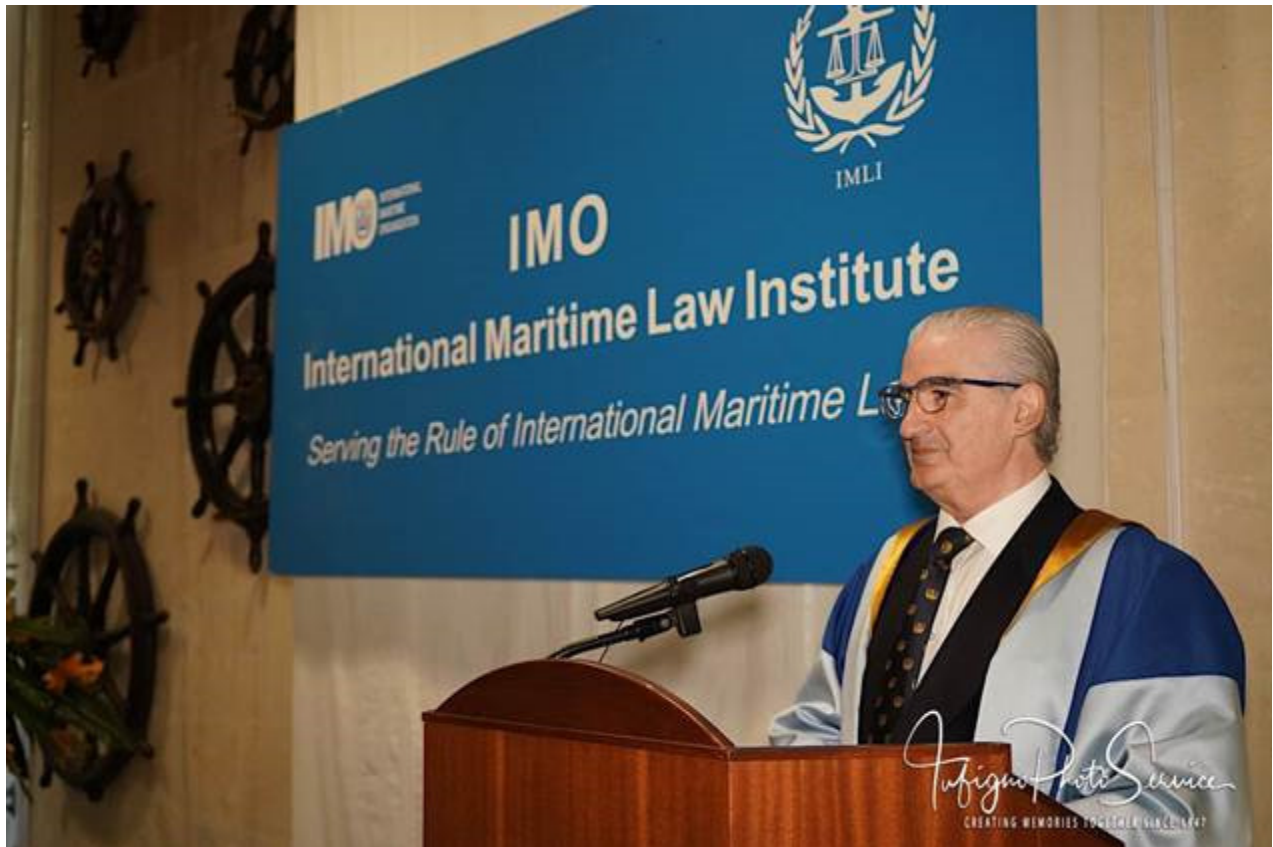
Circulated in more than 130 States to personalities in the legal and maritime professions

IMLI *e*-News

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IMLI DIRECTOR DELIVERS WELCOME ADDRESS AT THE 30TH GRADUATION CEREMONY OF THE INSTITUTE

Professor David Joseph Attard (Director, IMLI) delivered the Welcome Address to the distinguished guests and graduands at the Institute's 30th Annual Graduation Ceremony held at the Malta Maritime Museum, Vittoriosa, Malta on 15 June 2019.



Professor David Attard (Director, IMLI) delivering the Welcome Address

In his Address, Professor Attard welcomed His Excellency Mr. Kitack Lim (Secretary-General, IMO) and expressed deepest appreciation and gratitude to him for the generous interest he has taken in work and the welfare of the Institute. He acknowledged the presence of Dr. George Vella, President of the Republic of Malta and extended appreciation to the Honourable Ministers Mr. Carmelo Abela (Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Development, Malta) and Honourable Joe Mizzi (Minister for Energy and Water Management, Malta).



The Graduation Ceremony

Other dignitaries whose presence were amply recognised by Professor Attard, include H.E. Ugo Mifsud Bonnici (President Emeritus of Malta), Mr. Juvenal J. Shiundu (Acting Director, Technical Cooperation Division of the IMO), Mr. Christopher Davis (President of the CMI), Professor Richard Clegg (Chief Executive, Lloyd's Register Foundation), Ms. Katie Higginbottom (Head of the ITF Seafarers' Trust), Members of Academia, Diplomatic and Consular Corps and the families and friends of the graduands.

He asked the graduands to remember that their participation in the IMLI programmes is a privilege which carries with it a responsibility and that he is confident the graduands will bear such a responsibility with great pride.

While wishing the graduands success in their respective professional careers, Professor Attard assured them that their praiseworthy accomplishments will indeed open up a world of opportunities for them and their countries.



A Cross-section of Students

Reproduced below is the Welcome Address delivered by the Director:

Your Excellency President of Malta,

Your Excellency Secretary-General,

Honourable Speaker,

Graduands,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Distinguished Guests,

At the outset, I wish to state how honoured I am to welcome Dr. George Vella, President of the Republic of Malta who, for years, has believed in IMLI and its global mission. I am very pleased to recall that he has noted 'IMLI is an established Institution which is highly contributing to the reputation Malta already enjoys in the maritime industry. We are proud to host an Institution of such high standing which serves as the venue where Government legal advisors, practitioners, diplomats and many others engaged in the maritime industry enhance their knowledge and prepare to serve the rule of International Maritime Law.'

I am privileged to welcome Mr. Kitack Lim, the IMO Secretary-General and Chairman of the IMLI Governing Board who despite having commitments (the Maritime Safety Committee concluded its meeting yesterday and he had to arrive to Malta very late last night), he has graciously accepted to preside over our Ceremony.

Secretary-General, please allow me to take this opportunity to extend to you our deepest appreciation for the generous interest you have taken in our work and the welfare of the Institute. Our heartfelt thanks as well for agreeing to host at IMO on 25 June 2019 a commemorative

seminar which will be attended by representatives of Member States and distinguished personalities in the maritime world and will celebrate IMLI's 30 years in the service of the rule of international maritime law.

We are particularly pleased that the Honourable Ministers Carmelo Abela (Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion) and Joe Mizzi (Minister for Energy and Water Management) are with us. Your presence today reflects the continuing commitment which the Government of Malta has extended to IMLI over the past 30 years.

Distinguished guests,

It is my great pleasure and honour to welcome you to IMLI's 30th Graduation Ceremony celebrating an important achievement of our Institute and the academic success of our graduands.

I would like to congratulate the graduands for their achievements. Today you have earned the right to be proud of your hard work and commitment to the study of international maritime law. Our intensive programmes and interactive multicultural environment have prepared you to take your next steps in the maritime world with confidence and devotion.

Distinguished guests,

IMLI is a small institution with a global mission: to train government officials and practitioners to serve the rule of international maritime law. Our main goal is to develop national legal expertise to advise Governments on the incorporation and effective implementation of maritime rules through national legislation. We are confident that today we have world class training programmes which develop the necessary maritime legislation drafting skills of their participants.

Despite its humble beginnings 30 years ago, today IMLI's stature as a capacity-building center has been acknowledged widely. For 11 consecutive years, the United Nations General Assembly has recognized IMLI and its work in its Oceans and law of the sea resolution.

It gives me great satisfaction to see how over the years demand for IMLI training has grown tremendously – from the 19 participants every year in the 1990s to the record number of 51 this year. For the forthcoming academic year, over 80 candidates have been nominated by their governments to pursue the specialized IMLI training.

Our oceans and their resources are under constant threat. Studies have shown that as we advance in innovative technological developments we have often disregarded our fragile marine ecosystems which are currently paying the price. As I look at today's graduands, I note with pride that at IMLI they have learned to embrace the changes of our world, to drive these changes when necessary but to not forget our oceans and their resources which need to be safeguarded for the benefit of our future generations. Over this academic year, our graduands have been taught important principles of international law, rights and obligations of States in the various maritime zones, the regulatory framework which contributes to sustainable shipping, and skills to ensure that national legislation keeps abreast with international regulations and prescriptions.

Recognizing the importance of developing national maritime policies and legislation which reflect the spirit of Sustainable Development Goal 14 on oceans and their sustainable use, our graduands have been encouraged to conduct research to further this goal from an international, regional and national perspective and effectively implement international rules governing the abovementioned areas into domestic legislation.

Distinguished guests,

IMLI's contribution to the development of national legislation has been recognized by the Secretary-General and the IMO Governing Bodies. It gives me great satisfaction to read the message of the Secretary-General in our Graduation Brochure wherein he notes, 'The quality of training offered at the Institute has helped developing countries take their rightful positions and play their part in international maritime affairs. The education provided by IMLI has ensured that IMO Member States have the legal expertise required for the incorporation and effective implementation of international maritime conventions in their countries. Indeed, I cannot stress enough how vital IMLI has become in the work of IMO and the achievement of its technical cooperation programme.'

This success is also reflected in a new relationship with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations that also faces problems of incorporation and implementation of its treaties. For this purpose, the Organization appointed IMLI as its capacity-building partner and organizes joint training courses on Implementation of Fisheries Laws. I am pleased to announce that a second course will be organized this summer for officers from South America and the Caribbean.

Distinguished guests,

The close collaboration between the Institute and IMO ensures that the IMLI programmes are responsive to the evolving needs of the international maritime community. My sincere appreciation goes to Mr. Shiundu and the Technical and Co-operation Division which has facilitated over the years access to quality training for over 180 government nominated candidates who are proudly

serving the maritime industry. Thanks to the assistance of Mr. Shiundu and its Division, the Institute welcomed these years numerous IMO officials who shared with our students their knowledge and expertise on the latest developments in the maritime industry.

Furthermore, the Institute collaborates with eminent professors from prestigious academic institutions around the world. This year we had visiting professors from Harvard, Ljubljana, Oxford, Queen Mary, Sophia University (Tokyo), and World Maritime University, to mention just a few.

It is a unique feature of the teaching at IMLI its focus on practical training and networking. This year, IMLI invited 87 international academics, lawyers and international representatives to deliver, on a honorary basis, lectures, seminars, and workshops. This gives students the opportunity to gain insight into current international developments in the professional arena and to expand their contacts with world experts who I am confident will serve them well in their professional careers. I am pleased to welcome Mr. Christopher Davis (President of the CMI) and convey to him our appreciation for the support we receive from the CMI Charitable Trust which has facilitated the visit of many eminent shipping lawyers.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In its efforts to consolidate its academic reputation, the Institute promotes research, publications and international seminars.

A few months ago, the Institute published with Oxford University Press the three-volume “IMLI Treatise on Global Ocean Governance”. This groundbreaking work was inspired by Dr. Yohei Sasakawa, Chair of the Nippon Foundation, who has called for a holistic and integrated approach to global ocean governance.

Indeed the Treatise is the product of the fruitful collaboration between IMLI and The Nippon Foundation [which over the past 16 years has produced a unique network of 168 maritime professionals who are upholding the principles of IMLI and of The Nippon Foundation.]

The IMLI Treatise is based on a Report on the current state of ocean governance written by 58 leading experts and provides a reliable and knowledgeable basis for IMLI’s Ocean Governance strategy.

This publication complements “The IMLI Manual on International Maritime Law” which was published by Oxford University Press and has become a sought-after resource by universities and maritime administrations.

Another development worth mentioning is the IMLI programme on ocean governance issues in collaboration with governments and distinguished organizations.

In this respect, the Government of Chile, the Government of Japan, Stockton Center for International Law – Naval War College, and University of Malta collaborated with the Institute in the organization of different international seminars which addressed current issues of law of

the sea and global ocean governance. These seminars generated discussions on common concerns such as climate change, global ocean governance, human rights and law of the sea, as well as maritime security and peaceful settlement of disputes.

I would like however to make special reference to an international seminar which best reflected the IMLI spirit and the wisdom of its founding fathers. In April of this year, the Institute organized a seminar entitled 'Empowering Women in Maritime Affairs'. In line with IMO's World Maritime Day Theme and Sustainable Development Goal 5, the Seminar highlighted the role IMLI has played since inception in encouraging women participation in maritime affairs and how, through its policy of reserving 50 per cent of its places to deserving women candidates, has enabled female professionals to be trained at the Institute.

Distinguished guests,

As an institution for the specialized training of international maritime law experts, we are especially proud of our alumni. Since 1988, the Institute has trained over 1000 students, mostly working for government agencies, particularly maritime administrations, in 146 States and territories. I am pleased to record that this year Djibouti, Gabon, Luxembourg, Somalia, St. Lucia and Turks and Caicos have benefited for the first time from the quality of the IMLI training.

I welcome today's graduands to this elite network of international maritime law specialists, numerous members of which now occupy significant positions in their respective fields and are instrumental in the development and dissemination of international maritime law.

Distinguished guests,

None of these achievements would be possible without the support of our generous donors who believe in IMLI's mission. Our gratitude extends to the Government of Malta, which has offered the Institute's premises since its inception in 1988.

We are proud of our relationship with the prestigious Lloyds' Register Foundation has over the years assisted IMLI through the funding of candidates. I wish to acknowledge Professor Clegg's presence today. His support has been inspirational.

At IMLI we have always been keen to highlight the human dimension of international maritime law. In this respect, we focus on the welfare of seafarers who are constantly facing the perils and challenges of the sea. I would like to recognize the invaluable assistance of the ITF Seafarers' Trust who [together with the General Workers Union] has [have] contributed to the training of lawyers undertaking IMLI programmes. Many thanks are extended to Ms. Katie Higginbottom (Head of the ITF Seafarers' Trust) for her efforts to enhance our co-operation in the interest of the seafarers. I am very pleased to announce the Trust's new commitment to provide 25 fellowships over the next five years.

At this point, I would also like to express my appreciation for the sterling work of the Institute's academic faculty: Professor Norman Martínez (who has been recently appointed by the Secretary-General to the position of Professor), Professor Malgosia Fitzmaurice, Ms. Elda Belja, Dr. Buba Bojang, Dr. Angeles Jimenez, Mr. Sanjeet Ruhel and Ms. Sabina Dolic as well as to the Administrative staff for their unwavering support.

Distinguished guests,

Allow me to reserve my concluding remarks for today's Graduands as their accomplishments are very important to us. Over this last academic year they have demonstrated passion, commitment, hard work and a spirit of tolerance – values which I hope they will carry with them wherever they go.

Dear Graduands,

Please remember that your participation in the IMLI programmes is an opportunity granted to a few well-chosen professionals. This privilege carries with it a responsibility which I am confident you will bear with great pride. Indeed, through your training, IMLI contributes - in its small way - to the IMO's promotion of safe, secure and efficient shipping on clean oceans.

I wish you further success in your respective professional careers. Your praiseworthy accomplishments today open up a world of opportunities for you and the countries you come from. Do savour your success, for you deserve it! And lest you forget, your future achievements will continue to consolidate the Institute's academic reputation. Remember you are now IMLI Ambassadors, dedicated to serving the rule of international maritime law. I wish you well in your endeavours. We are proud of you and I am confident that you will make IMLI proud!

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