



IMO ASSEMBLY HOLDS ITS 31ST SESSION

The 31st session of the IMO Assembly took place at the IMO Headquarters in London, from 25 November to 4 December 2019. This meeting was preceded by the IMO Council's 30th extraordinary session which was also held at the IMO Headquarters in London. Being the Organization's highest governing body, the Assembly approves its work programme and budget, elects the Members to the Council and considers substantive issues emanating from the Organization's Council and five Committees. At this meeting the Assembly also confirmed the appointment Mr. Kitack Lim as IMO Secretary-General for a second four-year term in office.



Professor David Attard with IMLI Graduates during the IMO Assembly's 31st session (L-R) Mr. Watchara Chiemanukulkit (Thailand), Ms. Thandi McAllister (Guyana), Ms. Najla King (Barbados), Professor David Attard, Mrs. Nancy Karigithu (Kenya), Mr. Siphon Ronald Mbatha (South Africa), Ms. Murni Sitinjak (Indonesia) and Mr. Daniel Sihombing (Indonesia)

During the meeting, the Director of IMLI, Professor David Attard, introduced document A 31/18(b) entitled "Report on the IMO International Maritime Law Institute." Professor Attard

explained that the document is a report on matters concerning IMLI for the period August 2017 to August 2019. He explained further that it showcases the Institute's progress during the reporting period and highlights key information relating to its governance, academic, administrative and budgetary matters, student body and graduates. It also presents the Institute's work on research, cooperative activities with external stakeholders and partnership arrangements with other institutions.

Professor Attard informed the Assembly that for 30 years IMLI has been an exemplary institution, training maritime law experts from all over the world. He also noted that the Institute promotes capacity-building by training legal experts the best practices in drafting regulations to implement IMO conventions into their national legislation. The Institute's contribution to the international maritime community, said Professor Attard, was recognized at the seventy-third session of the United Nations General Assembly, through its resolution on "Oceans and the law of the sea", which highlights the importance of IMLI's work as a centre of excellence for education and training of government legal advisers, mainly from developing States.

Professor Attard stated that in order to celebrate its 30th anniversary, the Institute, in cooperation with IMO's Technical Cooperation Division, organized a Commemorative Seminar, hosted at the IMO Headquarters on 25 June 2019. The seminar was attended by over 350 participants from around the world and was addressed by high-level individuals. Professor Attard speaking on behalf of IMLI said: *"I would like to also thank Dr. Yohei Sasakawa from The Nippon Foundation, Judge Jin-Hyun Paik from the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea and Mr. Jim Harrison from the IMLI Governing Board for their participation, and of course, Mr. Kitack Lim for both hosting and joining the event."*

In addressing the Assembly, the IMO Secretary-General noted that *"The International Maritime Law Institute is an internationally recognized legal maritime training institution and its role in supporting IMO's capacity-building goal is indispensable. IMLI ensures that Members States, and particularly developing countries, have local experts with the right knowledge and capability to assist in the formulation of national legislation that implements IMO conventions taking into account the needs of each region. I am very pleased to note an increase in the number of legal experts attending the IMLI courses, particularly the rise in the female graduate numbers. The Institute's contribution to the global maritime community is undeniable."*

Representatives from Ethiopia, Japan, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Malta, South Africa, Suriname, and Thailand also intervened during the meeting and congratulated the Institute on its achievements during the 30 years since its inception and acknowledge the Institute's vital contribution to enhancing capacity-building worldwide through its quality training and research in international maritime law.

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