



## **IMLI GRADUAND DELIVERS THE VALEDICTORY ADDRESS AT THE 31ST GRADUATION CEREMONY OF THE INSTITUTE**

Mr. José Manuel Pacheco Castillo (Peru) delivered the Valedictory Address on behalf of the graduands during the Institute's 31st Annual Graduation Ceremony held online on 3 September 2020.



*Mr. José Manuel Pacheco Castillo (Peru), Valedictorian of the IMLI Class of 2019-2020*

In his Address, Mr. Pacheco Castillo, stated that there is no doubt that theirs have been a very special year due to the current world health crisis and, therefore, he refers to his class a very exceptional one. He noted that this has been a year that gave him and his colleagues the

opportunity to live the unique IMLI experience to the fullest, as not only did they witness the adjustments in the teaching methods due to the pandemic, but also the relentless efforts of IMLI and its staff to ensure their wellbeing while guaranteeing the successful completion of the programme.

Mr. Pacheco Castillo noted further that despite this unprecedented situation, him and his colleagues bear testament to the vital services that the maritime industry provides, and, therefore, are convinced that these services must remain operational for shipping to continue serving the world, even in challenging circumstances like the ones we live in now.

A special recognition was given in his address to the seafarers, whom he referred to as heroes of the pandemic. Despite facing tremendous trials in living during this time away from their homes and risking their lives, they continued to work hard, to guarantee the carriage of essential goods around the world.

Mr. Pacheco Castillo saluted Professor Attard, for his leadership and brilliant mind which enabled them to benefit from a high-quality education. He also thanked the lecturers, visiting professors and all members of staff for their relentless support throughout the academic year. To his colleagues, Mr. Pacheco Castillo had this to say *“We pushed ourselves to the limit to arrive to this day. Each and every one of us deserves this day. Each and every one of us deserves this recognition to be called from now on an IMLI Ambassador. No one could have imagined the surprises of this year, but above all, we embraced the same and succeeded.”*

Reproduced below is the Valedictory Address delivered by Mr. Pacheco Castillo:



*Mr. José Manuel Pacheco Castillo (Peru), who delivered the Valedictory Address on behalf of the IMLI Class of 2019-2020*

Your Excellency IMO Secretary-General;  
Professor David Attard, IMLI Director;  
Dr. Cleopatra Doumbia-Henry, President WMU;  
Fellow Graduands;  
Ladies and gentlemen.

There is no doubt that this has been a very special year and, therefore, we are a very special class. This has been a year that gave us the opportunity to live to the fullest the unique IMLI experience, as not only did we witness the adjustments in the teaching methods due to the pandemic, but also the relentless efforts of IMLI and its staff to ensure our wellbeing while guaranteeing the successful completion of the program.

Eleven months ago we arrived on the beautiful and warm Malta for the specific purpose of being trained in international maritime law, with the aim of becoming prepared officials to be in the first line of battle for ensuring the compliance and implementation of international maritime law instruments, and, most importantly, to serve our countries and the maritime industry. However, life, as usual, slightly changed our plans but not the determination to achieve our dreams, showing that, though we would require a greater effort to reach our goals, we could do it.

IMLI strengthened our knowledge in the law of the sea, shipping law, environmental law, maritime security law, among other outstanding subjects. Likewise, it allowed us to improve our skills on maritime legislation drafting for the effective implementation of international agreements, especially IMO treaties in domestic legislation. IMLI's curricula covered the entire spectrum of international maritime law, necessary to understand the importance of ocean governance as a means to achieve safe and sustainable use of the oceans. All the taught topics are of great importance to all States, those with large or small coasts as well as landlocked States, which were well represented in our class. In addition, we witnessed how IMLI's curricula were expanded, encouraging the students to increase their knowledge and strengthen their research skills. Proof of this is the genuine link symposium and law of ports seminar held during this academic year.

Distinguished guests,

Today, despite this unprecedented situation, we bear testament to the vital services that the maritime industry provides, and, therefore, are convinced that these services must remain operational for shipping to continue serving the world, even in challenging circumstances like the ones we live in now.

This, without a doubt, leads us to make a special recognition. The IMLI batch 2019-2020 would like to pay tribute to the seafarers, heroes of the pandemic who, although facing tremendous trials in living during this time away from their home and risking their own lives, continue their hard work to guarantee the carriage of essential goods around the world. As pointed out by IMO, they truly are essential workers who deserve all our support and assistance. This moment becomes a special opportunity to call upon States to continue working for the effective implementation of IMO and ILO treaties that guarantee safe and fair working conditions onboard ships.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We would not be here if it were not for the generosity of the Institute's donors. Governments and prestigious organizations saw capacity-building as an opportunity to make this world a better place to live. They are a fundamental part of this success and we shall remain forever grateful.

We are sure that the experience at IMLI would not be the same if it were not for Malta, a wonderful country with an impressive history and culture with an intrinsic link to the sea. We are forever grateful for warmly welcoming us. Malta, is and will always be a place we will call home.

Dear Professor Attard! Your leadership and brilliant mind enabled us to benefit from a high-quality education that no other program of study offers. Your willingness to help us and determination to build national capacity in maritime affairs can be summarized in your two usual questions: is this clear? Are there any questions? Yes, Professor, we have one last question. We are wondering how we can give back all you have done for us. And what comes to our mind is effort, hard work, and the commitment to take with pride the IMLI legacy wherever we go. We wish also to congratulate you for your election to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea with an overwhelming vote, reflecting everyone's appreciation for your brilliant contribution to the law of the sea.

We had the honor to learn from outstanding lecturers and visiting professors who not only trained us in maritime law and human values but also fueled our passion for maritime law while sharing their remarkable experiences. They prompted us to never stop looking towards the path of excellence; which reflects the high-quality of the IMLI programmes. Thank you for your infinite patience. Thank you for becoming not only our teachers but our mentors and our family. Thank you for always demonstrating your firm commitment to improve each day of our journey. We promise to make you proud, to work tirelessly to achieve that excellence that you instilled in us. Last but for sure not least, we would like to thank the entire IMLI staff for allowing us to enjoy a pleasant and comfortable stay. Your help, especially in the times of pandemic, will always be appreciated.

To conclude, I would like to address my IMLI sisters and brothers from all the corners of the world. My dear friends, we made it. Going through this experience will not have been the same without each and every one of you. Thank you for sharing all your knowledge, experience and part of your beautiful cultures and countries. IMLI gave us the privilege to enjoy the cultures of 31 countries around the world represented in wonderful persons that shared the same dreams and visions.

We pushed ourselves to the limit to arrive to this day. Each and every one of us deserves this day. Each and every one of us deserves this recognition to be called from now on an IMLI Ambassador. No one could have imagined the surprises of this year, but above all, we embraced the same and succeeded.

I therefore encourage you to continue working hard. IMLI opened a new path in our lives, a door we need to go through to continue serving the rule of international maritime law, committing ourselves to make a difference in this world, and sharing with future generations the acquired knowledge and experiences.

Long live IMLI

Thank you very much.