



UNIVERSITY OF CATANIA PROFESSOR LECTURES AT IMLI

IMLI had the honour to host Professor Rosario Sapienza who lectured on Tuesday, 10 November 2009 on “The theory of customary norms”.

Professor Sapienza’s lecture was concerned with the necessity of drafting a new theory of customary norms. He explained that “the traditional two elements theory of custom, i.e. international practice and *opinio iuris*, is not anymore adequate to reflect the today’s development”. Professor Sapienza recalled that “what we call custom today is different from what we used to call custom a century ago. When we speak of custom today, we think of constitutional principles of international law or we speak of inherent rules - rules that are logically implied by the mere fact that sovereign states live together in a community under the rule of law. However, we still need to speak about the traditional customary norms”.

In this respect he further argued that “while there is a need for state practice to establish traditional customary norms, such need is not felt for the establishment of constitutional principles or inherent rules. Therefore, we can have customary norms without state practice”.



Professor Sapienza meeting students of the class 2009/2010

Professor Sapienza found his teaching experience at IMLI a very interesting one, considering the very high level of students' expertise and knowledge. He stated that "I had the perception that it is a very useful and interesting characteristic the fact that IMLI students come from so many countries with different experiences and backgrounds. I had the feeling of teaching in an Institute where students and lecturers are involved together in the research on the topic".

Professor Rosario Sapienza is full professor of International Law in the School of Law of the University of Catania where he lectures the basic course in International Law and selected topics in the Public International Law Course. For several years he has served as Head of the Laws Department.

Professor Sapienza is a member of the Board of Editors of the reviews "Diritti Umani e Diritto Internazionale" and "Rivista Giuridica del Mezzogiorno" as well as Editor in Chief of the on line review "Fogli di Lavoro per il Diritto Internazionale".

He has served as a consultant to the Council of Europe and to the Regional Government of Sicily.

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