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IMO SECRETARY-GENERAL RECEIVES THE IMLI AWARD FOR MERITORIOUS CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT AND CODIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL MARITIME LAW

During IMLI's Graduation Ceremony held on 7 May 2011, the Award for Meritorious Contribution towards the Progressive Development and Codification of International Maritime Law was conferred upon H.E. Mr. Efhimios E. Mitropoulos (IMO Secretary-General and Chairman of IMLI Governing Board in recognition of his significant contribution to the international maritime community during his tenure as Secretary-General of the IMO and his endless efforts, in his capacity as the Chairman of IMLI Governing Board, to ensure that the Institute rises to the fore in the capacity-building process that complements the work of IMO.



Professor David J. Attard (Director of IMLI) presenting the Award for Meritorious Contribution towards the Progressive Development and Codification of International Maritime Law to H.E. Mr. Efsthimos E. Mitropoulos (IMO Secretary-General and Chairman of the IMLI Governing Board)

In conferring the Award, IMLI acknowledged that H.E. Mr. Mitropoulos has been an inspiring, dedicated and outstanding beacon of light to the international maritime community during his tenure as Secretary-General of IMO. The Organization has under his stewardship traversed historic milestones, in the process codifying a plethora of international maritime rules into landmark conventions, recommendations and guidelines concerning the whole realm of international maritime law. He has thus, contributed directly and in a meaningful manner towards the progressive development and codification of international maritime law.

From an early age, H.E. Mr. Mitropoulos was deeply involved in maritime affairs holding important positions first at a national level – he retired as a Rear Admiral from the Hellenic Coast Guard – and then at an international level. H.E. Mr. Mitropoulos joined IMO in January 1979 as Implementation Officer in the Maritime Safety Division and in October 1985 was appointed Head of the Navigation Section. In 1989 he was promoted to Senior Deputy Director for

Navigation and Related Matters and in May 1992 was appointed Director of the Maritime Safety Division and Secretary of the Maritime Safety Committee.

Between 1989 and 1998, he led IMO's efforts to establish a global Search and Rescue (SAR) Plan through regional Conferences in Lisbon, Cape Town, Seoul, Valencia and Fremantle and a Conference in Florence to specifically consider SAR matters pertaining to Africa.

In May 2000, he was appointed Assistant Secretary-General retaining his duties as Director of the Maritime Safety Division. Particularly as Director of the IMO Maritime Safety Division, he was active in the progressive development and codification of international maritime law.

IMLI recognizes H.E. Mr. Mitropoulos' dedication towards the Institute, particularly in his capacity as Chairman of its Governing Board. He has been instrumental in the continued development of the IMO International Maritime Law Institute as a centre of academic excellence for the teaching of international maritime law and its progressive development and codification.

In his acceptance speech, H.E. Mr. Mitropoulos said:

Ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to accept this prestigious award, which I do with a mixture of pride and humility on behalf of all whose hard work and dedication have enabled me to do my job as both the IMO Secretary-General and Chairman of the IMLI Governing Board, to the benefit of the objectives the Organization and Institute respectively strive to achieve. I have spoken many times in the past, and I repeated in my speech earlier on, about the importance of an effective legal framework to provide a cutting edge to the technical standards that are adopted by IMO. If, over the years, my own efforts to further that framework's development are deemed to be worthy of recognition, this then becomes a source of great satisfaction to me.



H.E. Mr. Efhimios E. Mitropoulos (IMO Secretary-General and Chairman of the IMLI Governing Board) delivering the acceptance speech

At the same time, when I see the illustrious names of those who have received this award in the past, including my predecessor at IMO, I am, of course, humbled to be in their company.

So, thank you very much indeed for this award; and I hope you will indulge me when I repeat that I accept it on behalf of all those, both within and outside IMO (including those at IMLI), who have devoted so much of their time and energy towards the development of international maritime law as we see it, and benefit from, today. What we have achieved so far has been very much the result of a team effort, and that will remain the case as my successors build on, and extend, that which is currently in place.

Thank you – this means a great deal.

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