



IMLI DIRECTOR ADDRESSES THE MTCC-AFRICA WEBINAR UNDER THE THEME “ROLE OF WOMEN IN DECARBONIZATION”

The Director of IMLI, Professor David Attard, addressed the Webinar under the theme ‘*Role of Women in Decarbonization*’ which was hosted by the Maritime Technology Cooperation Centre (MTCC-Africa) on the 29th October 2020.

Several distinguished personalities also graced the occasion and participated in various capacities, including the President of World Maritime University, the Principal Secretary-State, Department for Maritime and Shipping Affairs of Kenya, the Vice Chancellor of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology of Kenya, the IMO Women in Maritime programme coordinator, the Director of Climate Change Directorate of Kenya and the Chairlady of Women in the Maritime Sector in Eastern and Southern Africa (Kenya Chapter).



The distinguished speakers at the Webinar

In his address, Professor Attard noted that ocean industries have been traditionally known to be male-dominated and, despite the substantial increase of women in almost all economic He further explained that changes in the sector, due to technological advancement, have brought a shift in the notion of an effective employee in ocean industries as physical strength is no longer

the key yardstick. What the industry needs, he stated, is a strong mind, not just muscles. He informed the audience that, despite numerous women having been instrumental in the success of the maritime sector, the limited number of women participating and leading this vital sector of our economy and sustainable development, remains an ever-present challenge. This status-quo, Professor Attard said, deprives women from exploring their full potential and influencing progress and development, as well as it prevents the industry itself from having access to a valuable pool of human resources.

Professor Attard recalled that, to rectify this situation, international efforts are ongoing to minimize inequality in the roles available in ocean industries. Commending global and regional initiatives, he noted that the number of women in the industry, as their influence, is growing steadily. The issue of today's webinar is not an exception as women also have a great role to play in decarbonization. Even though 12 African countries have already acceded to Annex VI of MARPOL, said Professor Attard, he agrees with the statement of the IMO Secretary-General that, "... monitoring and enforcement are the responsibility of the IMO Member States."



Professor David Attard (Director, IMLI), addressing the Webinar

He stated that the crucial role played by IMLI in this regard cannot be understated. Professor Attard restated the mission of the Institute, which is to enhance capacity-building in all States, particularly developing States, to contribute to the fulfilment of the IMO objectives of promoting safe, secure, environmentally sound, efficient and sustainable shipping through cooperation. Committed to deliver the requisite training in this regard, Professor Attard informed the audience that IMLI has expanded its curricula by including in its programmes IMO's Regulatory Regime on Sulphur Emission Limits. In addition, IMLI has enhanced its efforts to assist governments with developing the cadre of specialists necessary to shape their national policies designed to achieve the Sustainable Developments Goals encapsulated in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and a more effective global ocean governance in the interest of present and future generations.

In discussing IMLI's policy to reserve 50 per cent of places of its admissions to deserving female candidates so as to enable them to get the requisite expertise, Professor Attard conveyed that the policy has been so successful that for many years now IMLI has distinguished itself as an institution where access to quality education is facilitated for all, especially women from developing economies. In promoting eradication of gender inequality, IMLI has provided a platform which has launched the professional careers of many distinguished women, improving the percentage of women at the senior management level within the maritime sector where they are making a difference and leaving their indelible mark.

At this juncture, Professor Attard remarked that it gives him great satisfaction that the Chairperson of MTCC for Africa, Mrs. Nancy Karigithu, is one of the most distinguished IMLI Alumna who has substantially contributed to the development of the maritime sector in Kenya and beyond and who has represented her country and IMLI proudly in many international fora. He also said that he was proud that the MTCC Head of Africa Office, Ms. Lydia Ngugi, is also an alumna of IMLI. He noted with pleasure and also commended the many other IMLI alumni, who were either presenting or attending this webinar, including Ms. Elda Kazara-Belja, thereby ensuring that their countries adopt sound policies and legislation in line with international standards, and promoting the uniformity of law, which will subsequently aid Decarbonization, globally.

In concluding, he noted that there is still a need for more women to participate in the reforms necessary (legal or institutional) for decarbonization at both national and international level to ensure results and sustainability. To be able to do so, Professor Attard acknowledged that a lot of advocating and positive measures must be put in place to safeguard the rights of women working in all areas within the industry. To achieve these goals, a lot of accessible maritime training and education of women is required to help empower and promote gender equality.

Professor Attard congratulated the organizers on their initiative, commenting that "...through such initiatives as the one of today, we raise awareness on the important role of women in the maritime industry as a whole including decarbonization."

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