



## IMO SECRETARY-GENERAL DELIVERS THE GRADUATION ADDRESS

Mr. Kitack Lim (Secretary-General, IMO and Chairman, IMLI Governing Board) delivered the Graduation Address during the Institute's 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Graduation Ceremony held on 3 September 2021.



*Mr. Kitack Lim (IMO Secretary-General, and Chairman of the IMLI Governing Board)  
delivering the Graduation Address*

In his address, Secretary-General Lim stated that he was delighted to deliver his message for the Institute's Graduation Ceremony to celebrate the success of the Class of 2021 and expressed great pleasure to be able to congratulate the graduands on their meritorious achievements. Secretary-General Lim remarked that the Graduation Ceremony marks the culmination of an

intensive academic year which required the graduands to show perseverance, determination, and passion for learning, and which has prepared them to contribute meaningfully to the maritime sector of their country. As he wished them all the best in their future endeavours, he also entreated them to remember their first day of studies at IMLI when they pledged to serve the rule of international maritime law.

Secretary-General Lim also thanked the Institute's Director, Professor David Attard, and the dedicated IMLI academic and administrative staff, for their hard work and relentless efforts to make the Institute rise to the highest standards.

The Graduation Address of the Secretary-General is reproduced below:

Excellencies,

Honourable Minister

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and gentlemen,

Today, we celebrate the success of 52 graduands. They have worked hard, and we are delighted to share with them the joy of their accomplishment.

I feel on such an important occasion it is appropriate to recall that IMLI was the first UN Institution to reserve in its 1988 Statute, 50% of its places to deserving women candidates. This provision has worked and today hundreds of women lawyers have become maritime law specialists contributing to their country's maritime and legislative sectors. Indeed, this year's class is a reflection of this success wherein the majority of participants are female lawyers.



Dear Graduands,

It is my great pleasure to congratulate you on your meritorious achievements. Today's Graduation Ceremony marks the culmination of an intensive academic programme which required you to show perseverance, determination and passion for learning, to prepare you to contribute meaningfully to the maritime sector of your country.

You have successfully overcome the unprecedented challenges you, your lecturers and mentors had to face in this era of the COVID-19 pandemic while you undertook your studies.

You are now embarking on a new journey which is supported by the vast knowledge you have acquired over the past months and the wonderful memories of shared experiences, exchange of ideas and setting up of professional goals for a better and more sustainable future.

You have been equipped with the necessary skills to contribute effectively to the realization of the International Maritime Organization' goals. You had the privilege of being trained at IMLI – a centre of excellence for the training of specialists in international maritime law and for the dissemination of knowledge and expertise in the field. IMLI capacity building is the cornerstone in the International Maritime Organization's efforts to encourage States to implement and enforce their international obligations through national laws.

I see a bright future for our maritime community and the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations in the interest of our planet. My advice however is for you to never rest on your laurels.

2021 marked a decade since the promulgation of the first set of IMO mandatory rules to improve the energy efficiency of new-build ships. These measures which will set shipping on a pathway to decarbonization thus contributing to the fight against climate change, need to be duly implemented in national legislation. As is the case with many other IMO instruments, implementation and enforcement measures are the responsibility of States.

Therefore, apply the lessons learnt at the Institute to develop your national legislative framework which is responsive to the needs of the maritime sector and contributes to the realization of our common goal of sustainable shipping for a sustainable planet.

As I welcome today's graduands to the formidable global network of the IMLI Alumni, I would like to take a moment and express my heartfelt appreciation to all organizations and institutions which provide support and assistance to the Institute to achieve its global mission. I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to the Government of Malta which has hosted IMLI since its inception and supported it throughout its existence.



To Professor David Attard and the dedicated IMLI academic and administrative staff, I wish to thank you for your hard work and relentless efforts to make the Institute rise to the highest standards.

In this regard, I wish to applaud this year's IMLI initiative to organize virtual specialized courses. These courses, which have attracted the appreciation and support of Member States from around the world, have led to hundreds of Government officials learning about various aspects of international maritime law. These programmes, which I trust will continue, have given IMLI a global outreach and further attracted Member States interested in IMLI's work.

Dear Graduands,

As you turn a new page in the book of your professional achievements, remember your first day of studies at IMLI in which you pledged to serve the rule of international maritime law.

You will now form part of the wider IMO community. I am confident you will continue flying high the IMLI flag and that you advance further the goals of sound ocean governance, protection of the marine environment, safe and secure shipping and decent working conditions for our seafarers.

The Institute has equipped you with the knowledge and skills you need to use for the benefit of all of us. Apply your newly acquired skills when advising or representing your country and when negotiating with your international partners. Dedicate yourselves not only to do well, but to do good. Above all, do not forget that we should all work towards delivering healthy and sustainable oceans to future generations.

I wish you all the best in your future endeavours and look forward to meeting you at IMO in the future.

Thank you.

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