

PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE LAW OF THE SEA INAGURATES THE IMLI COURSE ON PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF MARITIME DISPUTES

Judge Albert J. Hoffmann (President, International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)), delivered the Inaugural Lecture to the IMLI Course on Peaceful Settlement of Maritime Disputes on 6 April 2021. President Hoffman was warmly welcomed and introduced to the IMLI students and Course participants by Professor David Attard (Director, IMLI).



Judge Albert J. Hoffmann (President of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS))

President Hoffmann began his address by expressing his great pleasure to be delivering the Inaugural Lecture. He noted that the peaceful settlement of maritime disputes is the core function of the Tribunal. President Hoffmann's lecture focused on the advantages of resorting

to the Tribunal for the settlement of maritime disputes, as one of the options set out in article 287 of UNCLOS, its challenges and successes and outlined the context in which the Tribunal was created, the diversity of representation on its bench, and other practical considerations such as cost, speed and efficiency of proceedings.

In highlighting the long-standing relationship between IMLI and the Tribunal, President Hoffmann informed the participants that the focus on dispute settlement in the law of the sea is a natural and welcome extension of the work of the Institute, which, since its establishment, has made a remarkable contribution to capacity-building in maritime law and law of the sea, by training candidates from all over the world, particularly from developing countries, thereby helping those countries to build national capacity for implementing international maritime law. As such, in President Hoffmann's view, the Institute has played a key role in ensuring safer shipping and cleaner oceans.

President Hoffmann stated that the Tribunal is also deeply committed to helping States build their capacity in the law of the sea. He reiterated the Tribunal's belief that the rule of law at sea and effective ocean governance can be greatly strengthened through training experts and increasing the capacity of each State to implement the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). President Hoffmann recorded his confidence that the IMLI course on the Peaceful Settlement of Maritime Disputes will both complement and enhance the Tribunal's own capacity-building initiatives as it will provide participants with a comprehensive overview of different dispute-settlement mechanisms for maritime disputes, and the role of the Tribunal.

President Hoffmann expressed his gratitude to Professor Attard for the new initiative which will doubtlessly greatly increase knowledge of the dispute settlement mechanisms available under UNCLOS. He remarked that, for many years, Professor Attard has served as a bridge between the Tribunal and IMLI, bringing the two institutions closer together. He stated that he was particularly pleased to note the participation of many of his distinguished present and former colleagues at the Tribunal who have agreed to lecture in the programme. This Course, he noted, presents a unique opportunity for participants to hear directly from these judges and to learn about their perspectives on dispute-settlement and their views on the jurisprudence of the Tribunal.

In concluding his address, President Hoffmann reiterated his confidence that the Course will be informative and engaging and congratulated IMLI once again for this brilliant initiative.

The full address of President Hoffmann is attached hereto.

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