



## **PRESIDENT OF THE SEABED DISPUTES CHAMBER LECTURES AT IMLI**

Judge Neeru Chadha (Judge of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) and President of the Seabed Disputes Chamber) who has been a Member of the Tribunal since 1 October 2017, delivered a lecture on 15 April to the IMLI Class of 2020-2021. Her lecture entitled '*The Seabed Disputes Chamber*' forms part of the IMLI Specialized Course on Peaceful Settlement of Maritime Disputes and was attended by 103 participants from 68 countries. Judge Chadha was welcomed by Professor David Attard (Director, IMLI), who introduced her as an outstanding jurist with both administrative and diplomatic background.

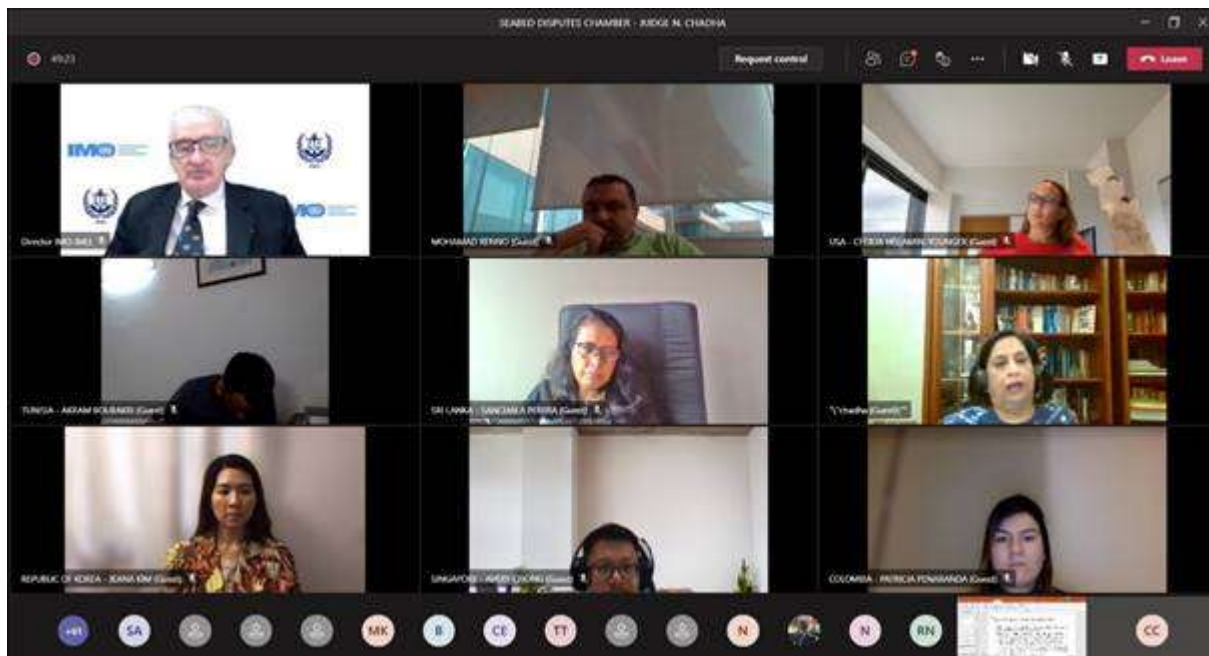


*Judge Neeru Chadha (Judge of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)  
and President of the Seabed Disputes Chamber)*

Judge Chadha thanked Professor Attard for his warm welcome before commencing her lecture. She explained to the participants that the Seabed Disputes Chamber is a standing body within

ITLOS with the exclusive function of interpreting Part XI Section 5 and related Annexes of the Convention. She explained further that Part XI sets out a detailed regime for the exploration and exploitation of the deep seabed and its resources in the areas beyond national jurisdiction, elucidating that all rights in the Area are vested in mankind as a whole.

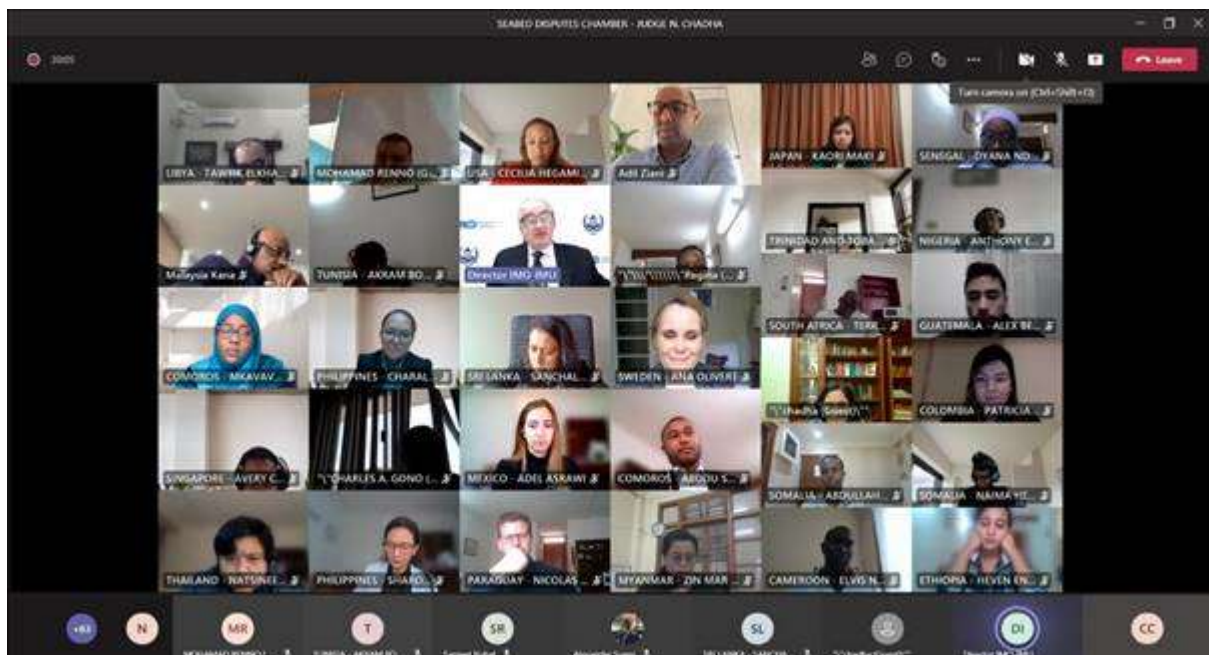
In order to put the role of the Seabed Disputes Chamber into context, Judge Chadha gave a brief overview of the regime of seabed exploration and exploitation. She then went on to explain that the current interest in the potential for commercial exploitation for marine minerals both from States and private entities has also increased the concern for the area and the marine environment. She noted further that giving the steady increase in the interest of seabed mining and the alleged possibility to proceed to exploitation phase, the role of the Seabed Disputes Chamber becomes extremely important to ensure that the Convention and the 1994 Agreement are properly applied. At this juncture, Judge Chadha then discussed in detail, the composition and jurisdiction of the Chamber and also the Advisory Opinion of the Seabed Disputes Chamber on “Responsibilities and Obligations of States Sponsoring Persons and Entities with Respect to Activities in the Area.”



Judge Chadha has held several positions in the Ministry of External Affairs of her country, India, from 1992 to 2015. These include Counsellor and Legal Advisor, Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations, New York. She was Additional Secretary/Joint Secretary and the

Legal Advisor for presentation of India's Third periodic Report on implementation of International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, in Geneva, 37th-42nd AALCO Annual Sessions (1998-2003) for the adoption of Second Protocol to the Convention on Protection of Cultural Property. Judge Chadha was part of the delegation of India during the adoption of the Convention on Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances, the adoption of Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Meetings of States Parties to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, and the Annual Sessions of the International Seabed Authority, in Kingston (Jamaica).

Judge Chadha was also Vice-Chair of UNCITRAL Annual Session, Vice-Chair of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority, Chairperson of the Final Clauses Committee, Diplomatic Conference for the Adoption of the Draft Protocol. She was President of AALCO, Chairperson of BIMSTEC Fifth Subgroup Meeting on Law and Legal Enforcement, Agent for India, Obligations concerning Negotiations relating to Cessation of Nuclear Arms Race and Nuclear Disarmament, International Court of Justice and also an Agent for India, Enrica Lexie case under Annex VII of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.



Judge Chadha is and has been a Member of several prestigious bodies and is active in academic writings with numerous impressive publications in her name including "Concept of the Common Heritage of Mankind under the Moon Treaty", "Reproductive Hazards at the Work Place and Employment of Women", "Protection of Cultural Property during Armed Conflict:

Recent Developments”, “Diverse Threats to the Health of the Oceans in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction” and “Inaugural Address on Contemporary Issues on the UNCLOS” .

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