Judge James Kateka (Judge of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)), a Member of the Tribunal since 1 October 2005, delivered a lecture on 27 April to the IMLI Class of 2020-2021 entitled ‘The Role of Ad Hoc Judges’ as part of the IMLI Specialized Course on Peaceful Settlement of Maritime Disputes, attended by 103 Government nominated participants from 75 countries. Judge Kateka was introduced by Professor David Attard (Director, IMLI), who expressed his delight to have him deliver a lecture at IMLI. He informed the participants that the lecture is an important one, considering the many questions sometimes raised on the role of an ad hoc judge. Professor Attard informed them further that Judge Kateka is the most suited to deliver such a lecture, he himself having served as one in several cases.
Prior to commencing his lecture, Judge Kateka said it was a great pleasure for him to participate in this highly specialized programme. In his lectures, he defined judge ad hoc as a judge appointed by a special procedure for a specific case, or period only, in contrast to, a regular judge, appointed through a regular procedure for a regular period of time. Judge Kateka explained further that a court or tribunal without regular judges cannot, by definition, have ad hoc judges. Having established this fact, Judge Kateka went on to discuss the genesis of ad hoc judges, referring to article 31 of the Statute of the Permanent Court of Justice (PCIJ) and its succeeding accord, the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The lecture then focused on the role and continued relevance of the institution of an ad hoc judge in international courts and tribunals with particular reference to ITLOS and ICJ, whilst making references to regional courts on human rights that have ad hoc judges.

He was the President of the Tribunal’s Chamber for Marine Environment Disputes. He is a member of the Institut de Droit International since 2009. He served as Judge ad hoc of the International Court of Justice in the case of Armed Activities on the Territory of the Congo (DRC v Uganda) and in the case of Immunities and Criminal Proceedings (Equatorial Guinea v France). He was an Arbitrator in the Chagos Marine Protected Area Arbitration between Mauritius and the United Kingdom and In the Matter of the Duzgit Integrity Arbitration between Malta and Sao Tome & Principe. He is a former member of the UN International Law Commission. He is an Advocate of the High Court of Tanzania.
Judge Kateka served as Legal Adviser of the Tanzania Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He was Ambassador of Tanzania to the Federal Republic of Germany, Ambassador to Russia and Ambassador to Sweden where he became the Dean of the diplomatic corps. He was the Dean of Tanzania Ambassadors.

He has participated in many international conferences, including the Third UN Conference on the Law of the Sea and 12 UN General Assembly sessions. Judge Kateka has published numerous articles on international law. He has also given lectures on international law at various academic institutions. He is a member of the American Society of International Law and also a member of the British Institute of International and Comparative Law. In 1993 he received the Papal Honour of the Grand Cross with the Star of the Order of Pius IX.

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