

IMLI *e*-NEWS

THE IMO INTERNATIONAL MARITIME LAW INSTITUTE OFFICIAL ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

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IMO SECRETARY-GENERAL DELIVERS THE GRADUATION ADDRESS

Mr. Kitack Lim (Secretary-General, IMO and Chairman of the IMLI Governing Board) delivered the Graduation Address during the 33rd Annual Graduation Ceremony of the Institute held on 3 July 2022.



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 it was a great pleasure and delight that, after three years, he is able to return to the beautiful Island of Malta to address the Graduation Ceremony in person and to celebrate with the graduating Class of 2022. Secretary-General Lim remarked to the graduands that it is a joy to see the pride in their faces and the sense of accomplishment that, despite the turbulent times and the difficulties the pandemic has caused, they have been able to achieve their goals. He noted that this graduation ceremony marks the culmination of an intensive year that required the graduands to show determination and passion for learning.



His Excellency Mr. Kitack Lim (Secretary-General, IMO) presenting the IMO Secretary-General's Prize for Best Dissertation to Mr. Darius Gustav Joseph (Antigua and Barbuda)

Secretary-General Lim announced the retirement of Professor David Attard. He stated that Professor Attard has been extremely instrumental in turning IMLI into the world-wide known centre of academic excellence that it is today. He stated further that his sterling work, tireless efforts and dedication ensured that IMLI continues to contribute to the advancement of IMO's mission and the related capacity-building of nations around the world. Secretary-General Lim, on behalf of IMO, expressed his utmost appreciation to Professor Attard, for his strong commitment to the work of IMLI over so many years, as well the outstanding services he provided as the Director of the Institution.

Further to this, Mr. Lim also announced that Professor Norman Martinez (Professor, IMLI) will succeed Professor Attard as the new IMLI Director.

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

Excellencies, President Emeritus, Honourable Ministers, distinguished guests, ladies, gentlemen, students,

It is a great pleasure to be here with you this morning on the beautiful island of Malta. I am delighted that, after three years, I have returned to address you in person and to celebrate the graduation of the Class of 2022. This prestigious Institute is very dear to me and the IMO family at large, and reaching yet another milestone for the Institute, especially during this very challenging time is commendable.

It is a joy to see the pride in your faces, the sense of accomplishment that, despite the turbulent times and the difficulties the pandemic has caused, you have achieved your goals. This graduation ceremony marks the culmination of an intensive year that required you to show determination and passion for learning. Day-by-day you focused on your studies, and while you faced some challenging moments, you chose to use those moments as a steppingstone in the pursuit of contributing to the common goal of safe, secure, environmentally sound, efficient, and sustainable shipping through cooperation. For this, we extend our heartfelt congratulations to the graduands.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Nelson Mandela said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world". You, the Class of 2022, have been empowered, through knowledge and skills, to contribute effectively to the realization of IMO's goals for a better world. You have had the privilege of being educated at IMLI – a centre of excellence in international maritime law, the dissemination of knowledge and expertise in the field, and a cornerstone of IMO's Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme.

Today we celebrate the success of 56 maritime professionals who will apply their newly acquired skills to develop national legislative frameworks that would be responsive to the needs of the maritime sector. I am particularly pleased to congratulate the graduands from El Salvador and Guinea-Bissau who have proudly represented their countries for the first time in the Institute's programmes.

I salute the female graduands, who I urge to follow in the footsteps of many of the Institute's female alumnae that are already highly regarded in the maritime world and occupy important international or national positions. The visionary policy adopted by IMLI since 1988 to reserve 50 per cent of the places for deserving female candidates has been instrumental in this regard.

Looking at today's graduands, I see a bright future for our maritime community. My advice, however, is for you to never rest on your laurels. As you have learnt throughout this year, IMO has led important initiatives in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Your attendance in the all-encompassing IMLI training has prepared you to advance these Goals and to contribute to their realization. Thanks to the numerous specialized programmes and courses offered by IMLI in niche areas of international maritime law, you have learned the importance of the oceans for economic growth and honed your skills in advocating for the sustainable use of the oceans.



You are cognizant of the crucial role of flag States in upholding the standards adopted in international maritime treaties and deepened your understanding of maritime security, freedom of navigation and peaceful settlement of maritime disputes. You have been exposed to the extensive work of IMO in the areas of maritime safety, security, environmental protection, and facilitation of trade. You familiarized yourselves with the legal aspects of efficient port management and operations and prepared yourselves to promote a more active participation of your countries in the development of international treaties with particular emphasis on treaties adopted under the auspices of IMO.

As I welcome today's graduands to the formidable network of IMLI Alumni, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to all organizations, governments and institutions providing 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.

I wish to take a moment to thank Professor David Attard and the IMLI staff whose work and unwavering dedication have steered IMLI to a new era of positive change.



Professor David Attard will be retiring from this noble Institution in the next few weeks. Over the past 30 years, Professor Attard has been a strong supporter of IMLI. Professor Attard has been instrumental in turning IMLI into the world-wide known centre of academic excellence that it is today. His sterling work, tireless efforts and dedication ensured that IMLI, through its training and research, continues to contribute to the advancement of IMO's mission and the related capacity-building of nations around the world. Professor Attard, on behalf of IMO, I would like to express my utmost appreciation for proposing, together with the late Dr. Joseph Fenech, former Maltese Parliamentary Secretary and Minister, the establishment of IMLI to IMO. I would also like to thank you for your strong commitment to the work of IMLI over so many years, as well as the outstanding services you have provided as the Director of the Institution. Since I took up my Office in 2015, I visited IMLI quite often and was impressed by Professor Attard's dedication and commitment to IMLI and his extraordinary contribution throughout. Please join me in thanking Professor Attard for his hard work and determination and wish him and his family all the best in their future endeavours.

Thank you, Professor Attard!

I have to note that I appreciated the excellent cooperation and legal advice on IMO issues received by Prof. Attard over the years and I also much respect the excellent collaboration and support IMLI has received from the Maltese Government. I would like to take this opportunity to also offer my thanks to all members of the IMLI Governing Board for their hard work and for promoting IMLI worldwide as a centre of excellence in maritime law.

Professor David Attard receiving a farewell gift from the IMLI Staff

At this stage I would like to advise that IMO decided that Professor Norman Martinez will succeed Professor Attard as the new IMLI Director. I believe IMLI will continue to sail ahead successfully following the steps of David Attard and I trust that Prof. Attard will continue to support the work of both IMO and IMLI in the field of international maritime law.

Dear Graduands,

As you turn a new page in your professional achievements, remember your first day of studies at IMLI on which you pledged to serve the rule of international maritime law. IMLI's policy to serve IMO Member States and particularly your countries, should now be your guiding principle in your future professional lives. You are now part of the wider IMO family. You will always be recognized as holders of a degree from a prestigious Institute that IMO is very proud of, and which the international maritime community recognises as a centre of excellence in maritime law.

My wish for you is to 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 seas, and decent working conditions for seafarers. Apply your newly acquired competences 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 it will be our concerted efforts that will ensure that our beautiful oceans are passed on to future generations.

I wish to congratulate you on your achievements and look forward to meeting you at IMO.

Thank you!

