

IMLI *e*-NEWS

THE IMO INTERNATIONAL MARITIME LAW INSTITUTE OFFICIAL ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

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IMLI GRADUAND DELIVERS THE VALEDICTORY ADDRESS AT THE 33RD GRADUATION CEREMONY OF THE INSTITUTE

Mr. Alexandr Boiciuc (Malta), delivered the Valedictory Address on behalf of the graduands during the Institute's 33rd Annual Graduation Ceremony on 3 July 2022.



Mr. Alexandr Boiciuc (Malta), who delivered the Valedictory Address on behalf of the IMLI Class of 2021-2022



In his address, Mr. Boiciuc expressed his appreciation to all those who contribute to make IMLI the excellent and unique institute that it is. He specifically thanked the Secretary-General of the IMO for the continuous and uninterrupted support he provides to the Institute

He extended also great appreciation to the Director Professor David Attard the Director for the wisdom he brings, for his outstanding concern to him and all his colleagues. He also expressed sincere thanks to the IMLI academic and administrative staff.

Reproduced below is the Valedictory Address delivered by Mr. Boiciuc:

My Fellow Graduands,
Distinguished Guests,
All protocols observed,

Greetings to you all!

On behalf of the class of 2022, I would like to thank all those who contribute to make IMLI the excellent and unique institute.

Upon commencement of the 2021/2022 academic year, my colleagues and myself could not envisage an in person graduation ceremony let alone having his Excellency, Secretary-General of the IMO present here today. For the continuous and uninterrupted support you provide us with, we thank you!!!

To the Director, of IMLI, Prof. Judge David J. Attard for the wisdom that you bring, for the vision you lay out, and for being the bonus pater familias to the whole IMLI family, we are grateful. Your concern for each and every one of us has had no boundaries. Recognizing that some of my colleagues are away from their families, you made sure that we were all comfortable and even provided us with meals after we finished our examinations. You shared your knowledge and expertise with us. You taught us how to evaluate all options and implement the principles. Your commitments to us did not waiver even at the times when you had health challenges, we thank you!!!

Professor Martinez, we are forever grateful for your interest and your dedication to teaching. Your academic knowledge and experience have also equipped with the necessary expertise for our future, we thank you!!!

Ms. Belja, for passionate lectures and in helping us to navigate safely through the course, Dr. Jimenez, for the detailed instructions during the lectures on how to govern the oceans, Ms. Jalloh, for impressing on us the importance of protecting the marine environment, Mr. Sumer, for guiding us in his ever calm character even if one wants to arrest a ship, and Dr. Ruhai for his passionate introduction to the entire fundamental course on maritime security. You all had more faith in us than we did ourselves. You never allowed us to give up. You are brilliant, you are incredible, we are humbled by every one of you. For giving your all each and every day, irrespective of the time of the day and personal challenges, for pushing us to do our best even on the days that we did not want to learn, for allowing extra time and building relationships between us that for some, will last a lifetime, we thank you!!!

To Alexander Scerri, Verica Cole and Ivana Riskova and administrative staff members, you are one of the kindest, helpful and most generous people we ever met. For coordinating our lives, events, while supporting all our needs, we thank you!!!

To all other staff members who kept our campus running efficiently in a hybrid manner and maintained the beautiful place for those who are in Malta to come and learn every day, we thank you!!!

To each sponsoring Organization and Government who made it possible for us to join the course in October 2021 and made our dreams come true, we thank you!!!

Specifically, to the host State that is the Government of Malta and Maltese people for their hospitality, and for accommodating students from various part of the world, we thank you!!!

To the Rector of the University of Malta who has allowed us access to the facilities and online database of the Library, we thank you!!!

To the members of each family represented in our class, whose support, sacrifice and dedication has not been overlooked, we thank you!!!

Especially to our parents, spouses, children and loved ones who have supported us throughout our study and in particular during the exam periods, we love you, and we thank you!!!

It is indeed an honor for me to present the Valedictory address on behalf of the graduands of the International Maritime Law Institute for the 2021/2022 academic year.

I am honored to share our unique experience during this year's academic program. It has been a challenging academic year, we sacrificed for it, we worked hard for it, we all wanted it and finally, we got it. We are all here today to celebrate our common and individual triumph, success, and achievement throughout this journey. It feels so good!

Before I proceed to share our experiences, I would like to tell you in brief my personal story with IMLI that started in 2014 when I joined the LL.B. (Hons) course at the University of Malta. I met Professor Attard during the first lecture of Introduction to Public International Law, where he spoke about the subjects of international law and the relationship between them. The one hour, he lectured, flew by. I was amazed. After the lecture, I rushed home to read about him. I'll be honest, I couldn't stop reading his biography that was available online. His education, professional qualifications, professional experience, his participation in public affairs, memberships, publications and distinctions. It didn't take me long to realize that he is a role model for many lawyers, academics, legal scholars and now, I may proudly say, mine too. I learned that Professor Attard is the Director of IMLI, the institute that I was seeing every day on my way in and out of University. Three years down the line, during an elective course on maritime security, I had the opportunity to meet yet another great academic, Dr. Felicity Attard, who happened to be the daughter of Professor Attard. She literally made me fall in love with Maritime Law. After getting to know that Dr. Attard is a graduate of IMLI, it was then that I decided I must join IMLI, SO... I also worked hard for it, I also sacrificed for it and yes, I got it.

Indeed, joining one of the world's most prominent institutions, such as IMLI, is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. When we received our letters of acceptance, our hearts raised and adrenalin pumped into our blood. But why? Because we were given such a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and could not afford to fail. Albert Einstein once said – 'Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value'. Our class strived for both, because once we became IMLI students, we realized that we can only be of a value to International Maritime Community after we succeed in our studies.

Today, we leave the burdens of academic struggle behind us, as this is the day of celebration. Unfortunately, our academic year, like of our predecessor, did not allow us to enjoy our lectures, lecturers, and distinguished academics and practitioners from around the world in person. We had to rely on internet platforms to keep everyone safe, and thanks to IMLI, we were able to make the most of it. COVID-19 caused havoc and devastation in every area, especially the international maritime industry. On this note, we thank the United Nations (UN), the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), and the International Labour Organization (ILO) for their tireless efforts in combatting the effects of the Coronavirus. It is through the contributions of International Community that we were able to gather here today.

We also use this opportunity to thank the IMO for its ongoing focus on the significance of shipping in international trade, the importance of the seafarers and the need for cooperation amongst the stakeholders.

Distinguished guests,

Our class is about to launch into new life, into the Legal World of Maritime Law. It is our maritime law career that we chose over other things, for some it was arts, for others sports, or even to the detriment of our personal relationships. Nevertheless, we are becoming an integral part of a new family, the IMLI family. We will share the knowledge, the experiences, the values and lessons. As the saying goes, a lesson learned should be a lesson shared. As Professor Attard always says – to be successful, we must understand the dynamics of the profession and the forum we will find ourselves in. We enriched our knowledge at IMLI throughout the last academic year with frequently complicated but thorough lectures and specialized courses on topics such as public and private international law, maritime security law, environmental law, ocean governance, and practical exercises such as moot court.

My fellow graduands,

On the first day of our academic year, we knew nothing about each other. We merely saw the name of the country followed by our names on the screen. Nonetheless, after a few weeks, we had formed friends, grasped the value of collaboration, and learned not only from the lectures but also from one another. At this point I would like to recognize our dearest and most distant colleague Buren from Kiribati. Buren stayed awake from 11 p.m. to 4 a.m. as we moaned about the schedule. I truly respect his devotion and perseverance.

IMLI provided us with more than just experience; each of us became more of a leader than a follower. This one-of-a-kind capacity to instruct students in this manner is exclusively accessible at IMLI. By earning an IMLI degree, the States we represent become increasingly reliant on us, on professionals who were trained and taught by the greatest minds in the field. It is not only a privilege, but also a great responsibility to uphold the trust and the name of IMLI.

We are now maritime lawyers. We shall, not may, be dimensional and shall not be confined within the parameters of a purely specialist focus. Each and every one of us shall be 'a jack of all trades and Master of all'. We had a lot of pleasant memories together, we laughed, we argued, we had fun, and this will be remembered forever, especially the arguments. Although we are very excited to have finally completed our program, we shall keep our focus on maintaining our proficiency level and remain up to date with changes that are rapidly taking place in the international maritime community. IMLI has prepared and given us the tools, knowledge, and network to succeed in our careers. Now it is up to us. Up to us to prove to IMLI that they made the right choice when they accepted us to become part of their family.

I thank all my fellow colleagues for unanimously entrusting me to be the class representative. It has been a roller coaster ride, but we made it through.

I may now, after seeing all these happy faces of my fellow colleagues, proudly say that '33rd academic class does not start things and not finish. We don't quit, there is nothing that comes out of quitting. We finish everything, we started and finished it. If we said we are going to do it, we did it, and we tried to be the best. Not better than others, but to be the best for ourselves'.

IMLI, you paved the way for us to have the brightest future possible; now it is our turn to walk and make you proud.

Thank you and congratulations to all of us!!!

Long live IMLI!!!

