

IMLI *e*-NEWS

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PROFESSOR NORMAN A. MARTÍNEZ GUTIÉRREZ TO BE APPOINTED AS NEW IMLI DIRECTOR

The IMO Secretary-General has announced that Professor Norman A. Martínez Gutiérrez has been selected to succeed Professor David Attard as the new Director of the IMO International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI). The announcement follows the forthcoming retirement of Professor David Attard who has been serving as IMLI Director for the past 30 years and was made by the Secretary-General during IMLI's Graduation ceremony held on 1 July 2022.



Professor Martínez read law at the National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH) and has been lecturing in international law and maritime law more than 25 years. In 1997 he was engaged by the Honduran General Directorate of the Merchant Marine where he occupied different posts. In 1998 he obtained a Master of Laws (LL.M.) Degree *with Distinction* from IMLI, where his research on delimitation of maritime boundaries was awarded the IMO Secretary-General's Prize for Best Dissertation. In 1999 he joined the Faculty of IMLI, where he has been the most Senior Officer after the Director for over 10 years. In 2005 he was admitted as an Advocate to the Honduran Lawyers' Bar Association and in 2010 he was awarded by IMLI the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in International Maritime Law *cum laude*.

In 2019, upon the recommendation of Professor Attard and following a rigorous assessment by two eminent independent assessors, namely The Right Honourable Lord Phillips of Worth Matravers, K.G. (former President of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom) and Professor Thomas J. Schoenbaum, JD, PhD (Shefelman Distinguished Professor of Law, University of Washington School of Law), the IMO Secretary-General conferred upon him the Title of Full Professor of International Maritime Law.



Professor Martínez has acted as an international maritime law consultant since the year 2000 and has drafted legislation for governments in several areas of maritime law. He joined the International Maritime Organization's Roster of Experts in 2003 and in 2013 he became a member of the Panel of Arbitrators of the Câmara Arbitral Marítima no Rio de Janeiro, Brasil. He joined the Roster of Experts of the Food and Agriculture Organization in 2018 and has been engaged by the Organization in the capacity of Consultant as a Fisheries Insurance Legal Expert and International Fisheries Policy and Legal Expert since 2019. Professor Martinez has also advised several international clients and Maltese State-owned companies (Sea Malta Company Ltd. and Enemalta PLC) in several cases heard by courts in Bangladesh, London, Malta, Marseilles, Singapore, and St. Kitts & Nevis.



He is the author of *Limitation of Liability in International Maritime Conventions: The Relationship between Global Limitation Conventions and Particular Liability Regimes*, Routledge, London / New York, 2011 (<http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415601405/>), and co-author of *Limitação da Responsabilidade Civil no Transporte Marítimo*, Editora Renovar, Rio de Janeiro, 2016 (<https://www.editorarenovar.com.br/index.php/livros/67/1000-detail>). He is the Editor of the books *Serving the Rule of International Law* (<http://www.imli.org/sites/default/files/uploads/flyerlibervol1.pdf>) and *Serving the Rule of International Maritime Law: Essays in Honour of Professor David Joseph Attard* (<https://www.routledge.com/products/9780415563987>) and is co-editor of *The IMLI Manual on International Maritime Law (3 Volumes)* Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2014-2016 (<https://global.oup.com/academic/product/the-imli-manual-on-international-maritime-law-9780199683925?cc=mt&lang=en&>).

Professor Martínez is the Editor of the book series “IMLI Studies in International Maritime Law” published by Routledge, and is also a member of the Editorial Board of *Benedict’s Maritime Bulletin*. He has published numerous articles in prestigious law journals around the world and is a frequent speaker at international conferences and courses



In 2011 the Government of Honduras presented him with a Diploma of Recognition for steadfast contributions to the international maritime community and in particular to the promotion of the good name of the Republic of Honduras.

Following the announcement of his forthcoming appointment, Professor Martínez delivered an address honouring Professor Attard, which he concluded in telling Professor Attard: “It has been a true honour to serve under your leadership!”

It is expected that Professor Martínez will take the reins of the Institute on 1 August 2022.



Below is reproduced his address which concluded the IMLI Graduation Ceremony 2022.

Your Excellency IMO Secretary-General,
Honourable Ministers,
IMLI Director,
Graduands,
Distinguished guests,

I stand in front of you today deeply honoured for the trust bestowed on me by finding me suitable successor of Professor Attard as the new IMLI Director. I am humbled by your faith in my abilities, and I am truly happy to follow Professor Attard's footsteps in serving the rule of international maritime law.

My journey at IMLI starts way back – some of today's graduands were not even born then! I came as a representative of Honduras to pursue studies in international maritime law, and it is at this point that my life became forever linked to IMO – whose generous funding made it possible for me to study at IMLI.

Two of the most important things in my life happened on the first day of classes at IMLI:

1. The first was that a beautiful girl came up to me and told me in Maltese "Ha npoggi hdejki" (which means: "I will sit next to you"). 25 years later, that gorgeous lady continues to sit next to me every day inspiring me to go on in everything I do.

2. The second was that I heard the lectures of Professor Attard. His lectures truly changed my life, as they instilled in me a profound love for international maritime law. During my LL.M. studies, Professor Attard was not only my professor, but also my mentor and dissertation supervisor. He pushed me to think outside the box and to never stop researching so that I could find answers to all my questions.

A year later, I joined IMLI as a member of the faculty and, since then, I have grown with and within the Institute where I have worn many hats over the years.

Today, 25 years after I first crossed the portals of the Institute, I stand in front of you pledging myself to serve the Institute in a new capacity and promise that I will ensure that it continues to deliver training of the highest academic standards.

But enough about me. There will be enough time to talk about the future. Today, we are celebrating our graduands who have overcome difficulties and have successfully completed their studies despite not having returned to normality since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. In this precise moment, however, I would like to honour Professor Attard.

If someone would ask me to describe Professor Attard in three words, I would initially choke as I honestly believe that there are not enough words to describe him and what he represents to me and the 33 generations of maritime professionals that have graduated from the Institute. Being constrained to three words, however, I would like to say that he is:

1.A sculptor – He took his initially abstract vision of an Institute that would serve the international maritime community in general, and developing countries in particular, and made it his mission to make it happen. First, he was instrumental in its establishment. Then, he worked tirelessly over the last three decades to turn IMLI into what it is today – what he describes as "A small Institution with a Global Mission". Indeed, although you have created and inspired many things throughout your life, Sir, IMLI is your Capella Sistina, your *opus magnum*.

2.A shepherd – he brought together under one roof, lawyers and maritime professionals from all corners of the globe and nurtured them as a father would do. He attended to their professional and personal needs throughout their studies through what he always described as "pastoral duties". I have heard him many a time say that "his biggest satisfaction is to see their transformation from the moment when they arrive at IMLI to the moment when they leave Malta". In fact, that transformation is what we usually refer to as "the IMLI magic". Professor Attard always encouraged and inspired each and every one of his students to serve their countries, and their respective regions to be dedicated to the preservation of the oceans for future generations.

3.A Beacon – For over three decades, Professor Attard has been a beacon of light for the Institute's staff, leading them not only through calm waters but also when we were facing the darkest of storms. He never gave up on IMLI and its sacred mission and, like a towering light house, he has guided the Institute to a safe port.

Words cannot describe our gratitude. And although THANK YOU may sound brief and not as a strong when I say it on my own, the IMLI Staff wish to present you with a small token of our everlasting appreciation. I am not sure if you remember sir, but when you were conferring the PhD Degree upon me and shook my hand, I said to you "Sir, if I am standing here today, it is because of you" and, not only do I repeat those words today "Sir, if I am standing HERE today, it is because of you", but I echo the gratitude of over 1500 of your students and that of the international maritime community in general.

May God lead your path in your future endeavours and may you forever remain a friend of IMLI.

Thank you for all you have done for each and every one of us! Thank you for all you have done for the international maritime community in general! Thank you for your service! And thank you for making IMLI what it is today – A true success story!

I invite you all to join me in thanking Professor Attard by using his words; Long Live: IMLI – Long Live: IMLI; and the third one, the most meaningful and most personal one – Long Live: Professor Attard.

It has been a true honour to serve under your leadership!