

IMLI *e*-NEWS

THE IMO INTERNATIONAL MARITIME LAW INSTITUTE OFFICIAL ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

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IMLI GRADUAND DELIVERS THE VALEDICTORY ADDRESS AT THE 34TH GRADUATION CEREMONY OF THE INSTITUTE



Lt. Dagoberto Ramon Astudillo (Argentina), delivered the Valedictory Address on behalf of the graduands during the Institute's 34th Annual Graduation Ceremony held on 30 June 2023.



Reproduced below is the Valedictory Address as delivered by Lt. Dagoberto Ramon Astudillo (Argentina):

Your Excellency, Mr. President of Malta,
Your Excellency, Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO),
Director of the IMO International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI),
Distinguished Lectures and staff of IMLI,
Distinguished Guests,
Fellow Graduands,

Greetings to you all,

Today we are gathered here to commemorate a significant achievement in our lives, our graduation from the IMO International Maritime Law Institute. This moment calls for reflection, gratitude, and a renewed commitment to the ideals that have guided us thus far. It is indeed an honour for me to deliver the Valedictory address on behalf of the IMLI class 2022/2023.

‘We stand on the shoulders of giants’



*Mr. Kitack Lim (IMO Secretary-General and Chairman of the IMLI Governing Board),
Professor Dr. Norman A. Martínez Gutiérrez (Director, IMLI),
Members of the IMLI Governing Board,
IMLI Faculty Members, and the Class of 2022-2023*

These words hold deep significance as we acknowledge the remarkable impact of those who have helped us. Our parents, families, friends, colleagues, professors, and countless others have paved the way for our success. Their unwavering belief in our abilities, constant support, and dedication to our growth has laid the foundation upon which we stand today. With utmost gratitude, we recognise their contributions and express our sincere appreciation for their guidance.

On behalf of the class of 2022/2023, I would like to thank all those who contributed to making IMLI an excellent and unique institution for their enthusiasm, kindness, empathy and passion.



*IMLI Class 2022-2023 taking the Oath of Allegiance
to the IMO International Maritime Law Institute*

At IMLI, we had the opportunity to connect with all the lecturers, residents and visiting, and learn from their experience and knowledge with the reassurance that no man or woman was left behind.

Director Professor Norman Martínez,

your leadership is inspiring. Leading by example, you are not only planting trees for future generations but also handing us seeds so that we pay forward. Judge Professor Attard, it has been a privilege to attend your lectures, learn from your experience and have the opportunity of having you share with us the intricacies of the Law of the Sea.

Ms. Belja,

you are our champion. You believed in us even when we doubted ourselves. Your dedication and love for knowledge, the Institution and its values are an example and praiseworthy. Ms. Jalloh, you have always offered us smiles and words of encouragement to keep us going. Dr. Sümer and Dr. Ruhai, you were always ready for responses and advice for our academic consultations. Dr. Prado, you were the new wind that helped to maintain our safety course. Dr. Jimenez you kept in touch with us, helping in every way possible, which shows the love that you have for the Institute and its people.

Ms. Riskova, Mr. Scerri, Mr. Mifsud, Ms. Fernando, and all the administrative staff, thank you all for your constant support. You have the endurance and the patience of saints, dealing with all of us during our most stressful days.

We would like to thank the Maltese Government and the people of Malta for their hospitality, the IMO and all the donors, sponsoring Organizations and Governments who are making it possible year after year that professionals of the entire world can gather here to gain knowledge in a cooperative way.

I would also like to acknowledge the student representative committee: Sara, Gabriella, Gabriel and Shannon: it had been a great honour to serve as one of the student representatives with you.

To my wife, my mother and my sister, I express my love and gratitude for all the love and support that they give me. I would also like to use this opportunity to remember the loved ones we lost, who would have loved to share this day with us. We hold them dear in our hearts. I am here because of my parents. They are my original giants, and I am sure you also have original giants as well.

They are the ones who pushed us, supported us and believed in us. Now, as we embark on the next phase of our journey, all the people that are a part of IMLI in their own capacity are our new giants. Thank you for having our backs.

Dear classmates,

I stand here before you to say that I also believe in you. For the last months, I got the privilege of getting to know you at your highs and lows. But mostly your strengths. After discussions, debates and shared stress, after laughter, drinks and gatherings, we have the joy of calling each other colleagues and friends.

Our time at IMLI has equipped us with the knowledge and skills to make a profound difference in the maritime industry and beyond. We must embrace the belief that we are capable of achieving greatness and contributing meaningfully to the world.

Yes, the programme was intense, the subjects were vast and time, as well as breaks, are always a scarce commodity. However, we came together from all corners of our planet with the same objective and together reached the final goal in the multicultural environment of study that IMLI has created, which is perfect for preparing us to take our next steps in the maritime world with confidence and dedication.

We have endured difficulties supporting each other with a meal, a talk, or just lending an ear because we are all in the same boat. We will hold dear in our hearts this experience for years to come. Today we have the honour of becoming part of an alumni network that can help the development of maritime law, just like previous generations are doing today. Dear friends, you have shown me your loyalty; I will always be grateful for that.



Dr. Yohei Sasakawa (Chairman, The Nippon Foundation) and Professor Dr. Norman A. Martínez Gutiérrez (Director, IMLI) with The Nippon Foundation fellows of the academic year 2022-2023

Throughout the academic year, we had exhaustive lectures and specialized studies of public and private International Maritime Law, reaching for a deeper understanding of the Law of the Sea, Marine Environmental Law, Shipping Law, Carriage of Goods and Passengers by Sea, Maritime Claims, Ocean Governance, Maritime Safety and Security, BBNJ and Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships, just to name a few, that have widened our knowledge and improved our love for the International rule of the Law of the Sea.

Among the most relevant endeavours that we engaged with the Institute are the Dissertation and Research projects, and I am sure that the work done by the 2022/2023 class will be of real use to our home governments and the maritime community in general. This is the first year that the Dissertation and Research projects were defended before a panel, a challenge on itself, which gave us the opportunity to discuss them further reaching more confidence and authority in the topic.

Our Maritime Legislation Drafting projects gave us the necessary skills to advise our home governments to ensure the incorporation and effective implementation of International Instruments into domestic legislation. It is also worth noting that the moot court session and the presentations that we gave throughout the year will be excellent tools of experience for each one of us.

Now it is our duty to pay it forward, to extend a helping hand to others as we have been supported. As maritime law professionals, now we set sail to our ports of origin with the responsibility to make a positive impact on our home countries and society at large. Let us be servants of the Rule of International Maritime Law, agents of positive change, advocates for justice, and champions of maritime safety, security, and sustainability.



Some of the members of the Graduating Class of 2022-2023

Our present success is not measured solely by personal achievements. Each one of us has the potential to become a giant in his/her own right. Let us strive to be compassionate leaders for future generations. Through our actions, we can help others to reach new heights.

Class of 2022/2023, let us stand tall, united by our shared dedication and determination to make a lasting impact. Together, let us forge a future that honours the giants who believe in us and empowers the generations to come.

Let me say it one more time: LONG LIVE IMLI.

Congratulations, thank you and ENJOY.



Mr. Jonathan Pace (Deputy Director, Subdivision for Programme Management and Coordination Technical Cooperation Division), Mr. Xiaojie Zhang (Director, IMO Technical Cooperation Division and Member, IMLI Governing Board) together with the IMO Fellows of Class of 2022-2023



Mr. Luca Tommasi (Grant Manager, ITF Seafarers' Trust) together with the ITF Seafarer's Trust Fellows of Class of 2022-2023



Some of the members of the Graduating Class of 2022-2023