



COMITE MARITIME INTERNATIONAL

PRESIDENT

17 July 2019

NMLA Presidents
Titulary Members
Consultative Members

Dear Presidents, Titulary Members and Consultative Members,

As indicated in my initial President's Letter of 20 December 2018, and further to my letter of 2 April 2019, it is my intention to communicate with you on a quarterly basis in an effort to keep you advised of relevant developments, and seek your comments and input on issues that may arise from time to time. A few developments of note are highlighted below in chronological order.

The CMI was well represented during the International Maritime Organization's Legal Committee's 106th Session held in London on 27 – 29 March 2019. In addition to the undersigned, President Honoris Causa Patrick Griggs (who also attended the meeting of the IOPC Funds at IMO Headquarters on 1 – 2 April 2019) and Executive Councillor Tom Birch Reynardson participated in LEG 106, which has begun its work on the regulatory scoping exercise of conventions that will need to be amended to accommodate Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS). IMO continues to acknowledge with appreciation the work of the CMI's International Working Group on Unmanned Ships and, in particular, the contributions of our Executive Councillor Tom Birch Reynardson and Robert Veal (lecturer in law at the University of Southampton and member of the IWG on Unmanned Ships). LEG 106 approved the establishment of correspondence groups to address fraudulent registries and a unified interpretation on the test for breaking a shipowner's right to limit liability under the IMO and compensation conventions (two new initiatives the CMI is following with interest), and is continuing its important work on abandonment of seafarers, fair treatment of seafarers in the event of detention on suspicion of maritime crimes, and ratifying and implementing the HNS Convention.

TEL: +1 504 566 5251 E-MAIL: codavis@bakerdonelson.com FAX: +1 504 636 3951
REGISTERED OFFICE CMI, AISBL: Ernest Van Dijckkaai 8, B-2000 Antwerp, Belgium
Enterprise n° 0867 385 381
www.comitemaritime.org

The Executive Council conducted a “virtual” meeting during the month of April 2019, via several rounds of e-mail interventions, in preparation for its next in-person ExCo meeting which will take place in Mexico City on Sunday, 29 September 2019. The CMI’s 2018 accounts have now been finalized, reviewed by the external auditors, and approved by the CMI’s Audit Committee. The 2018 Accounts, as well as the 2019 Budget, will be presented to the Assembly for approval in Mexico City on 2 October 2019.

The CMI had a strong showing at the 1st session of UNCITRAL Working Group VI on judicial sales of ships, which was held in New York City on 12 – 17 May 2019. Ann Fenech and Henry Li, Co-Chairs of the CMI International Working Group on Judicial Sales of Ships were in attendance, as were Alex von Ziegler of the Swiss delegation (and ExCo member), Beiping Chu of the Chinese delegation (and ExCo member), Tomotaka Fujita of the Japanese delegation (and former ExCo member), and Frank Nolan (President of the US MLA and member of the CMI IWG on Judicial Sales of Ships), all of whom were instrumental in explaining to the UNCITRAL Secretariat and delegates the importance of (and need for) an international instrument recognizing the validity of judicial sales of ships. Ann and her team are to be commended for their hard work and preparation which resulted in a very successful initial 1st session of UNCITRAL Working Group VI, and NMLA Presidents (as well as Titulary Members and Consultative Members) are urged to liaise with the appropriate authorities in their countries to ensure they are properly prepared to move this project forward (ideally in consultation with maritime law experts in their country) ahead of the next session of Working Group VI which is scheduled for November 2019 in Vienna.

I take this opportunity to thank our Consultative Members who have supported the judicial sales project at UNCITRAL, and note the CMI values its relationship with all Consultative Members (as evidenced by our recent outreach to organizations such as BIMCO, ICS, IUMI, IGP&I, IBA, FONASBA, and IVR, among others). In this regard, I very much appreciate the assistance of CMI Vice President Dieter Schwampe who has arranged for and coordinated a number of these meetings.

I also wish to congratulate Professor Stephen Girvin and Associate Professor Paul Myburgh and the Centre for Maritime Law (CML) at the National University of Singapore for their work on the Database of Judicial Decisions on Maritime Conventions (a joint project of the CMI and CML), which reached a significant milestone in June 2019. Specifically, the Database has now published 400 case summaries from 45 different countries (with users from 71 different countries, and visits to the Database having increased from around 300 users per month to 850 per month over the past year). I am convinced the Database of Judicial Decisions on Maritime Conventions will remain a signature project of the CMI for decades to come.

On another celebratory note, I had the honor of attending IMLI’s 30th graduation ceremony in Malta on 15 June 2019, and take this opportunity to congratulate the Class of 2019, wish them all the best as they pursue their careers in international maritime law, and thank IMLI Director David Attard for his courtesies and kindness during my visit to Malta. Likewise, I had the pleasure of speaking at the 70th annual meeting of the Spanish MLA earlier that week, and take this opportunity to congratulate them on

reaching this important milestone, and thank President Eduardo Albors and the Spanish MLA's Board of Directors for their courtesies during my stay in Madrid.

My sincere appreciation and thanks go to John Hare and the judges of the 2019 yCMI Essay Prize Competition (Bulent Sozer, Henrik Ringbom, and Filippo Lorenzon), all of whom spent substantial time and effort reviewing the entries submitted. I understand the judges have agreed on a winner whose identity will be announced shortly.

Last, but not least, I remind everyone that the deadline for proposing new Titulary Members is 2 August 2019 (i.e., 60 days before the Assembly in Mexico City on 2 October 2019). Proposals for Titulary Membership, with supporting documentation establishing in detail the qualifications of the candidate in accordance with Article 3(l)(c) of the CMI Constitution, must be received by the Administrator, Lawrence Teh (lawrence.teh@dentons.com), by 2 August 2019 (with a copy to the Secretary General and the undersigned).

We look forward to welcoming you to Mexico City and seeing you at the Assembly and Colloquium (which promises to be a memorable event). In the meantime, an enjoyable summer to all (and winter to those in the Southern Hemisphere).

Yours faithfully,



Christopher O. Davis