



COMITÉ MARITIME INTERNATIONAL

PRESIDENT

1 October 2020

MLA Presidents
Titulary Members
Consultative Members

Re: *2021 Tokyo Conference and Assembly, CML-CMI Database of Judicial Decisions on International Conventions, and Unauthorized 125th CMI Anniversary Book Solicitation*

Dear Presidents, Titulary Members and Consultative Members,

I hope this letter finds you, your family and colleagues healthy, safe and in good spirits as we begin the final quarter of what has undoubtedly been an *annus horribilis* for many around the world. While COVID-19 infections continue to be alarmingly high in a number of countries, there is widespread optimism that a number of vaccines will soon be available for distribution. Additionally, past history suggests the pandemic may run its course by the summer of 2021 (historians report the world was disrupted for 18 months by the Spanish Flu which was considerably more lethal than COVID-19).

I write principally to confirm the Tokyo Conference and Assembly remain scheduled for 26-30 September 2021, the Tokyo Conference Organizing Committee continues to meet on a monthly basis via Zoom videoconferences, and the venue (New Otani Hotel), substantive work programme, and social events remain much the same as outlined in the Welcome Letters from President Kenjiro Egashira of the Japan MLA, and Rosalie and me, which were attached to my correspondence of 18 March 2020, and can be accessed on the CMI website under "Correspondence of the President." We hope to go live with the conference registration website in mid-March 2021, by which time we should have more clarity on the availability of a COVID-19 vaccine and delegates' willingness to travel. The 2021 Tokyo Conference Organizing Committee is also mindful that the deadline for cancelling (without penalty) the contract with the New Otani Hotel is on or about 28 March 2021.

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In sum, I remain optimistic the 2021 Tokyo Conference and Assembly will take place as scheduled, look forward to welcoming delegates one year from now in Tokyo, and note the International Olympics Committee (IOC) President recently announced the delayed Tokyo Olympic games can be held even without a COVID-19 vaccine.

Turning to other positive news, I am pleased to attach the email and statistical summary received earlier today from Stephen Girvin, the Director of the Centre for Maritime Law (CML) at the National University of Singapore, announcing the *CML-CMI Database of Judicial Decisions on International Conventions* has now reached the significant milestone of over 1,000 published case summaries. This is an impressive achievement, as is the overall quality and breadth of coverage of jurisdictions in the *Database* and the number of visits to the CML-CMI website, and it is only fitting we should congratulate Stephen, Paul Myburgh (as Editor of the *Database*), the entire CML research staff, and Taco van der Valk (the Chair of the CMI Standing Committee on Publications and Website). I would encourage National Associations, both from civilian and common law jurisdictions, to continue submitting case summaries of interest to the *Database*, which is likely to remain one of the CMI's signature projects for decades to come.

Finally, it has come to my attention that a company by the name of Brooklands New Media based in the United Kingdom and the United States is promoting a 125th Anniversary Book celebrating the CMI's upcoming milestone anniversary. Please be advised the CMI does not support, nor is in any way affiliated with, this publication. Additionally, the CMI intends to commission its own 125th anniversary publication ahead of the Antwerp Assembly in 2022.

Faithfully yours,



Christopher O. Davis

COD/gef
Attachments
cc: Executive Council