

United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea

11th Meeting

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Statement by

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Mr. Co-Chairs,

I would like first of all to extend my congratulations to both of you on your election and for the manner you have been conducting this meeting.

The UNSG interesting report A/65/69, which confirms in no uncertain way that capacity-building in ocean affairs and the law of the sea is of paramount relevance in the development process of many Member States but especially to coastal States, and in particular to small island States. I thank also the Panelists for their insight of the various affiliations for their inspiring presentations. Our appreciation is also extended to DOALOS for the assistance and co-operation given to my Delegation during the past months.

Malta would like to take this opportunity to share its own experiences and its contribution to the capacity-building in this important sector.

Malta is host to three international bodies that since their inception have been offering to hundreds of participants courses and programmes, enabling them not only to advance in their careers but also serving as a contribution to the development of the maritime sectors of their countries.

Established under the auspices of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI) is an international centre of postgraduate education and training in all aspects of maritime law. IMLI was established to provide States, particularly developing States, with the facility of training their legal officials in the field of international maritime law. As pointed out by the Secretary-General of the IMO, IMLI has become an indispensable part of IMO for it allows Governments to have at their disposal experts in the field of international maritime law who are able to consult Governments on the advisability of adhering to international maritime treaties. Another important and unique aspect of training at IMLI relates to the emphasis given to legislation drafting. Government legal officials are trained to draft domestic laws which will incorporate the international obligations found in international maritime treaties. This enables Governments to enforce treaty provisions through their courts, thereby ensuring that international treaties are implemented and enforced. I am happy to state that to date IMLI has trained 518 lawyers from 116 States from the five Continents. Given this valuable training, States are advised to communicate with the Institute if they wish to send their legal officials to attend the academic programmes.

Incidentally, and referring to the point raised by the distinguished delegation of India this morning, with regard to follow-up courses, IMLI organizes every year short courses on a modular basis

where students are taught the latest developments of international maritime law. Thus past students can attend such courses in order to keep themselves updated with these developments.

Malta is also host to the Headquarters of the International Ocean Institute (IOI), an independent, non-governmental, international non-profit organisation incorporated in the Netherlands with its Operation Centre at the University of Malta. Mr. Virapat, Executive Director of IOI will explain *in extenso* IOI's role in this sector.

Malta is proud to be the host country of the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), a regional activity Centre of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), the first Regional Seas Programme established by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1976. Such Centres and regional co-operation schemes have proved to be very useful tools to assist countries by enhancing, at the regional level, the enforcement of multilateral treaties on the protection of the marine environment. Besides providing technical assistance, advisory services, workshops, seminars, and training courses, related to the prevention of, preparedness for and response to marine pollution from ships, REMPEC has assisted more than 13 Mediterranean coastal States in drafting their national contingency plans and also facilitated the conclusion of sub-regional response agreements and is currently participating in the informal consultative process regarding the issue of protected areas beyond national jurisdiction which is being led by IUCN and MAP's Regional Activity Centre on Specially Protected Areas in the Mediterranean.

Through the Commonwealth Port Operations and Management Programme, Malta under the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC), offers an intensive short-term programme for middle Management staff employed in port and terminal operations, assisting participants to assess and improve their continued growth and effectiveness in such areas as transport systems, yard management, marine operations, port privatization, containerization, port security, planning operations, interpersonal skills, delegation, management and authority, motivation, culture and organizations as well as financial aspects of ports management.

Before concluding, I would like to leave for consideration by this Panel a suggestion.

Considering the many on-going capacity-building initiatives in ocean affairs and the law of the sea, perhaps it would be appropriate to explore whether the time has come to adopt a cohesive and coordinated approach to these initiatives within the UN System. In this context, the CEB which has done an excellent job on Climate Change, could study and evaluate what kind of a coordinated approach could be adopted by the various UN programmes and bodies to promote an effective and sustainable strategy in capacity-building towards the enhancement of the peaceful uses of ocean space and its resources, their management and regulation, the protection and conservation of the marine environment, including the impact of climate change on the oceans as well as the phenomenon of piracy.

Thank you.