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WMU in the News

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Training the law-makers and enforcers

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Training the law-makers and enforcers

WHILE maritime legislation is fundamental in the effective implementation of IMO conventions, as equally important is the ability of a country's maritime administration to handle the adoption and enforcement of those laws.

As the IMO Secretary-General, Mr C. P. Srivastava, has pointed out, without sufficient numbers of well-qualified staff it would be virtually impossible for a country to carry out its obligations as an IMO member.

The difficulties of effective implementation are exacerbated in developing countries where a combination of factors — relatively undeveloped maritime infrastructure, financial constraints and a lack of suitably qualified personnel — hampers national administrations in their efforts to comply with IMO conventions.

To counteract this situation which threatens the harmonisation of international maritime laws, the UNDP has made two initiatives: its technical co-operation programme and the World Maritime University.

The latter is now in its fourth year of existence and has seen its intake of graduates increase from 72 students in the first year to 102 for the current year.

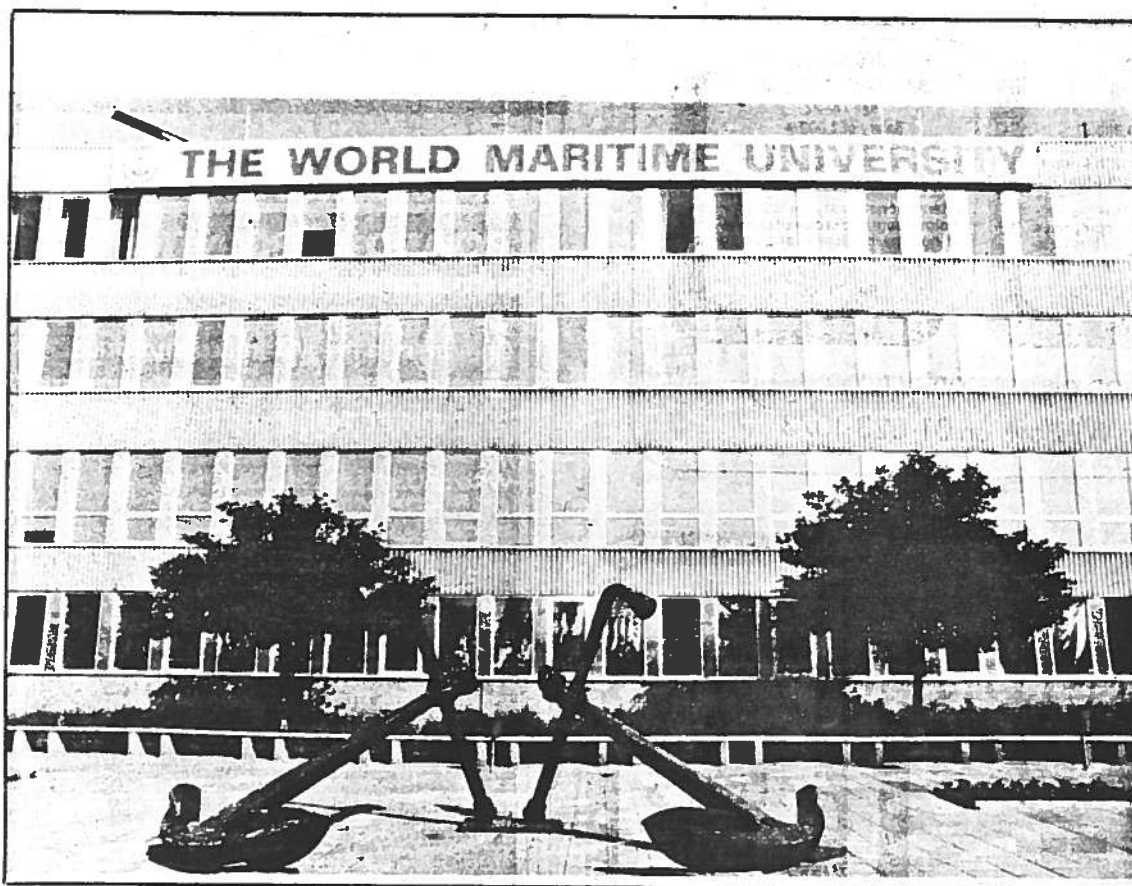
The majority of the students at the World Maritime University come from developing countries. Four came from developed countries this year, from Canada, Spain and Greece, but the emphasis of the University is on producing maritime administrators, educators and senior management personnel for marine industries in the developing world.

With a total of 405 students enrolled from 89 countries, almost 300 will have graduated by the end of this year, many to take up senior positions in their home countries.

An increasing number of WMU graduates are also appearing regularly at international maritime conferences such as IMO itself.

The growth in the student population has now levelled off and been determined at 100 a year, the academic and administrative staffs have reached their full complement and efforts are now being concentrated on two areas: medium-term planning and financing, and maintenance of high standards of training.

The WMU has an annual budget of around \$6 million, which comes entirely from voluntary contributions. Host country Sweden provides around \$2m, the United Nations Development Programme \$1.2m and Norway \$500,000. These are all recurring contributions, with the rest of the funding coming in the form of fellowships. The leading donor is West Germany, followed by Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Japan and the Commonwealth Secretariat.



Other donations and contributions are in the form of freely-given equipment, text books, on-site training facilities and the services of "renowned maritime personages" as visiting professors.

The UNDP plays an important part in the WMU. Not only does it directly fund the University, it also provides developing countries with the funds necessary to send students to Malmö. WMU fellowships cost \$14,000 a year for the standard two-year course (\$26,000 for students from developed countries).

The WMU provides its students with free accommodation, a monthly allowance of around \$200, morning and evening meals and a cash food allowance, a warm clothing allowance of around \$260 and free travel on Malmö city buses. Pre-course intensive English language lessons are also provided free of charge.

Sponsoring governments normally pay their students their normal salary and may also have to bear the cost of students' dependents travelling to and residing in Malmö for the duration of the course. It may also be necessary to replace the student — normally a government official — in his absence.

The World Maritime University points out that, although the

developing countries are its main beneficiaries, they send students at sacrifice. "Within the limited amount of aid available, necessary priority must be given to the WMU courses at the cost of something else."

As well as the developing countries themselves, other beneficiaries of the WMU and its graduates include shipping and port operations, crew standards, the environment and business in general, as delays in ports and administration are reduced.

Following a recent review of the WMU's progress, the Board of Governors has decided to limit the intake to 100 while maintaining the highest standards in admissions and in the training.

While encouragement has been gained from the steady increase in fellowship support by private individuals and foundations, the WMU feels it is necessary in future to secure more support to enable the poorer countries to benefit.

"Of great importance, and greater uncertainty," says a WMU report, "is the question of the University's long-term financial viability. Establishing the University on a firmer financial footing well into the future remains a continuing problem and further efforts are being made and indications of financing are needed to

The World Maritime University in Malmö (above) and (below) a corner of the study section.



secure adequate recurrent financial support for the University in the coming years."

A capital fund set up to help secure longer term funding had received contributions totalling \$317,488 by February this year. Obviously, more, much more, needs to be found, before fears of financial problems are allayed.

Meanwhile, IMO's technical co-operation programme continues to organise workshops and seminars around the world in order to assist developing countries in the implementation of IMO conventions.

Future scheduled workshops and seminars include maritime safety and marine pollution — Libreville, Gabon; dangerous goods — Buenos Aires; facilitation — Douala, Cameroon; safety of tankers and terminals and pollution prevention — Rio de Janeiro; and safety of containers — Mexico City.

IMO organises these seminars in conjunction with other organisations and relies on funding from other sources such as the UN Development Programme, individual governments and aid agencies.

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