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IMO International Maritime Law Institute inaugurated

The IMO International Maritime Law Institute was formally inaugurated in Valletta, Malta, by the Secretary-General of IMO, Mr. C.P. Srivastava, on 6 October.

In his opening address, Mr. Srivastava stressed the importance of providing developing countries with 'a reasonable cadre of national legal personnel who are available to oversee, on a systematic basis, the implementation of existing law, to review and evaluate the provisions and arrangements for the implementation, to advise on the need for new or revised laws and regulations and, as necessary, to prepare suitable texts for consideration and adoption by the relevant legislative bodies.'

However, the Secretary-General

said, his inquiries revealed that there were no institutions in the world where the necessary training facilities were available. During a visit by Mr. Srivastava to Malta earlier this year the Parliamentary Secretary for Maritime and Other Affairs, Dr. Joseph M. Fenech, raised the possibility of training nationals from developing countries. In response the Secretary-General suggested a centre specialising in maritime law.

This proposal was supported by the Maltese Government, which also offered to provide the facilities necessary for the establishment of the centre which will cater for 20 students and three visiting professors.

A unique feature of the Institute

is that it will make special provision for the training of women, with 50 per cent of the places on each course being reserved for women candidates. Mr. Srivastava said: 'I believe this is the first time that a United Nations body has taken such a concrete and specific action to integrate women into a major project of this kind.'

The administrative arrangements for the Institute will be modelled on those of the World Maritime University. It will be under the supervision of the Board of Governors and the resident faculty will initially consist of a director and a small administrative and secretarial staff. Visiting professors from all over the world will be invited to give lectures.