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Edition

# Faculty of Laws Newsletter

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## Comment from the Dean

At a recent book launch, during my speech I passed a comment on the fact that research and publishing helps us make a name in our respective legal field. To this I would like to add, by way of reminder, that apart from researching and publishing, it is extremely important for all Academics to ensure that their work is uploaded to the institutional repository of the University of Malta. In this manner, one's work can be found more easily by other researchers; it also serves as a long-lasting record of our work: indeed, we have even taken to uploading this very same newsletter to the UM's institutional repository, because we want our Faculty, its work evolution and achievements, to be recorded as well as well- publicised.

Another very important reason for having one's work uploaded to OAR is that when it comes to applying for (academic) promotions, only work which is uploaded to OAR is given consideration.

To get in touch with our colleagues responsible for the actual uploading of our work to OAR, send an email to [oar.lib@um.edu.mt](mailto:oar.lib@um.edu.mt) .

To view our past newsletters on OAR click [here](#).

## *Honoris Causa* ceremony at University of Messina

On Thursday 4th April 2024, Prof. David J. Attard was awarded the Research Doctorate Honoris Causa in Legal Sciences by the University of Messina.

The Research Doctorate Honoris Causa in Legal Sciences was conferred on Professor Attard in recognition of his extraordinary contributions - also as a Judge - to the Law of the Sea.

At the ceremony, held in the Aula Magna of the University of Messina, Prof. Attard delivered the *lectio doctoralis* on the theme "Enhancing the effectiveness of international maritime law". Prof.ssa Francesca Pellegrino, full professor in Maritime Law, who delivered the *laudatio*, spoke about Professor Attard's accomplishments during his prestigious career.<sup>1</sup>



The Dean of the UM Faculty of Laws attended the ceremony, together with IMLI Director Professor Norman Martinez and Professor Attard's family. A copy of [\*University of Malta Legacies and Bearings\*](#) was also presented to the University of Messina.

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<sup>1</sup> The wording for most of this article was copied from an article which appeared in *Newspoint*.

## First ELSA Union debate under the auspices of Dr Stefano Filetti

On 17th April 2024, at the Auberge d’Aragon, ELSA (Malta) held its first ever ‘ELSA Union Debate’ under the auspices of Dr Stefano Filetti. A motion was presented, debated between two teams one being in favor of it, the other against, and following such debate voted on by the audience.



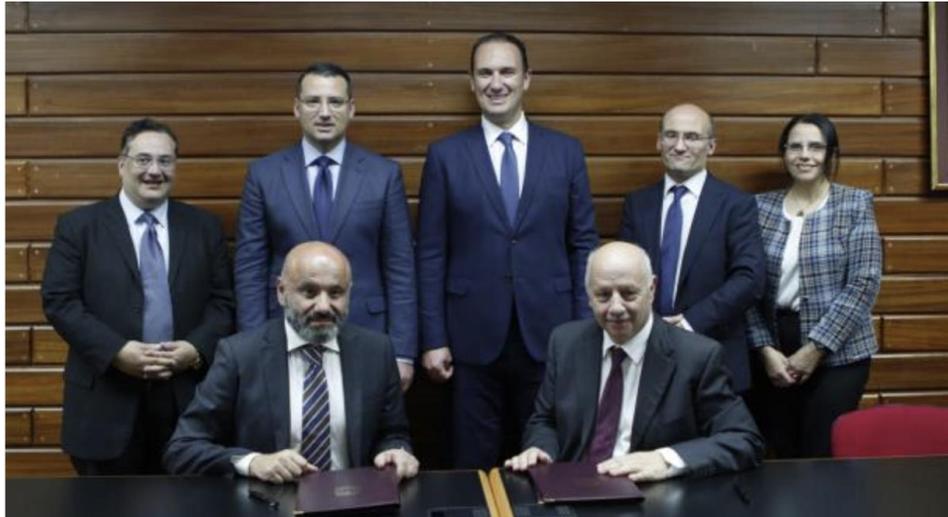
The motion on this particular occasion concerned the Maltese electoral system, the motion being a confirmation that it is ‘fair, representative and proportionate’. The debate was won by those against the motion, on the basis that Malta’s electoral system requires such a number of improvements that in its present form it cannot be regarded as ‘fair, representative and proportionate’.

## Signing of MoU with the Ministry for Justice

On 18th April the Faculty of Laws (as part of the University of Malta) signed a long-awaited Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry for Justice.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The photo was lifted from *The Malta Independent*



This MoU has paved the way for the Faculty of Laws' planned journal to materialise. It will also enable Faculty of Laws' Academics opportunity to contribute to various Ministry for Justice projects including the TEMI digital platform which the Ministry is currently working on. This platform is intended as a means of disseminating knowledge on various themes related to the justice sector.

### **Recent Faculty Board – related news**

Faculty Board met on 19th April; at this last meeting Ms Nadia Abdilla, Equity Coordinator at UM, delivered a presentation on "Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at the UM: A Faculty-Based Approach". This led to such a long discussion that, in order to stick to the Faculty Board's time allocation, the Dean had to bring said discussion to a close; this closure however came with a promise to invite Ms Abdilla to the Faculty Annual Seminar, which this year will be held on 27th September 2024. Indeed invitations were subsequently sent out.

Faculty Board also approved a new Masters which is being offered jointly with FEMA's Department of Public Policy, on Ombudsman Law & Governance. This was created after a number of meetings between the Faculty of Laws and FEMA's Department of Public Policy, and the Parliamentary Ombudsman.

Board members also had another presentation, made by two M.Adv. students Ms Laura Chetcuti-Dimech and Mr Matthew Charles Zammit, on moot courts and on adding moot court preparation into our curriculum; the Faculty Board recognized the validity of this suggestion and undertook to look into this further; indeed meetings on the same are being held with Dr Joseph Bugeja taking the lead on this issue.

## Member of the Department of International Law invited to the IMO to attend the 35th Anniversary of the IMO International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI)

Dr. Felicity G. Attard attended a commemorative seminar to celebrate the 35th Anniversary of IMLI's establishment. It was held during the IMO's Legal Committee at the IMO Headquarters in London on 22nd April. The occasion was presided and addressed by the IMO Secretary-General, Mr. Arsenio Dominguez. He was followed by other eminent speakers: Professor Norman A. Martinez Gutierrez (Director, IMLI), Mr. Christopher Cutajar (Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and Trade of Malta), and Dr. Yohei Sasakawa (Chairman, the Nippon Foundation). A panel discussion on IMLI's role in enhancing global maritime legal expertise followed. It was moderated by Ms. Dorota Lost-Sieminska, the IMO's Director of Legal Affairs and External Relations and IMLI graduate. The event was attended by distinguished guests, including representatives of IMO Member States, international organizations and IMLI graduates.

The Faculty of Laws has a long-standing academic relationship with IMLI. Students and members of staff have undertaken their studies at the Institute. For many years, the IMLI Director was also a member of the Faculty of Laws.



Dr Felicity G. Attard with the IMO Secretary-General, Mr. Arsenio Dominguez, and IMLI graduates.

## Visit to the University of Catania

On 23rd April Professor Tonio Borg and Dr Ivan Mifsud visited the Faculty of Laws of the University of Catania. They were hosted by Constitutional Law Professor Giancarlo Ferro and dott. Costanza Nicolosi.



Apart from meetings with a number of academics, Professor Borg and Dr Mifsud delivered a joint presentation on aspects of Constitutional Law to the law students at the same university, also fielding various questions ranging from constitutional law-related issues to queries on the possibility of coming to the UM on an Erasmus exchange.

Plans were laid out for further reciprocal visits, the idea being to revive past links between us as neighbouring universities, to create a channel for exchange of information and knowledge whether related to constitutional law or other areas of law, and to facilitate exchanges between the two faculties, both for academics and for students opting for an Erasmus experience.

## Visit from Georgia University Academic

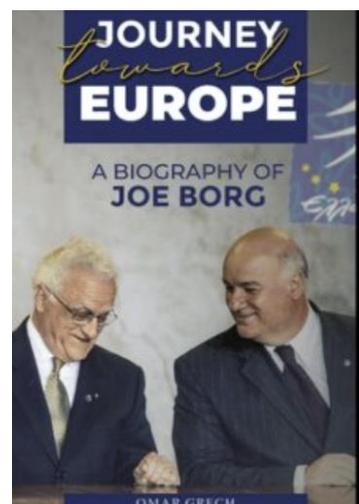
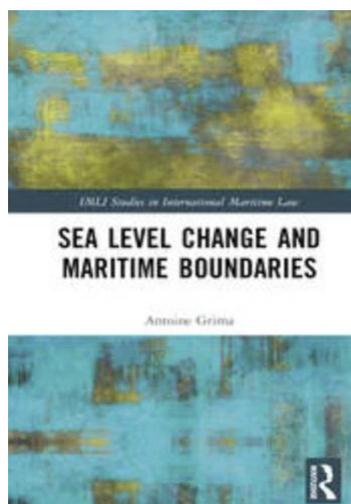
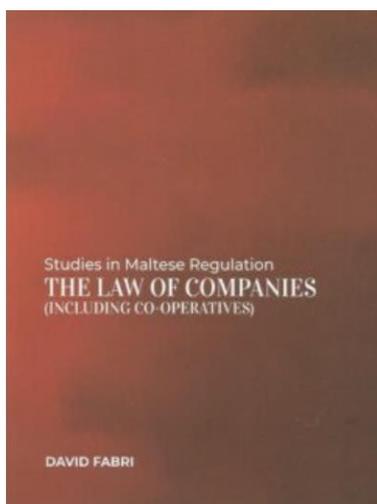
This month the Faculty of Laws was also graced by a visit from Dr Tisia Oktopiridze, from Sulkhani-Saba Orbeliani University in Georgia. Dr

Oktopiridze, who specializes in comparative law, came on an Erasmus exchange (her second one, having spent a semester at the UM as an Erasmus student during academic year 2017-2018); during this second visit she delivered a number of lectures and also met with various academics from the Faculty of Laws, at which



meetings a number of topics were discussed, including Georgia's bid to join the European Union and the 'foreign influence' bill which the Georgia government is attempting to pass, and which has led to public protests, which protests are widely reported in the international press.

### Three book launches by Members of Faculty of Laws



During the month of April three books were launched, these being Dr Omar Grech's [\*Journey towards Europe: A Biography of Joe Borg\*](#), Dr Antoine Grima's [\*Sea Level Change and Maritime Boundaries\*](#) and Dr David Fabri's [\*Studies in Maltese Regulation: The Law of Companies \(including co-operatives\)\*](#). While congratulating the authors on their contributions to academia, the readers are encouraged to purchase these books by hovering over the hyperlinked titles (above) and clicking them.

**Have you got any news to share?** If you have any item of relevance to this newsletter, feel free to inform us about it. You may contact any member of the editorial board, these being Prof Tonio Borg, Prof Ivan Sammut, Ms Rowena Leontijevic and Dr Ivan Mifsud. The Board reserves the right to refuse to publish an item submitted to it for its consideration.