

IMO Secretary-General Visits Magsaysay, Reaffirms Future of Filipino Seafarers in the AI Era and Champions Women in Maritime



Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), MARINA Administrator Sonia Malalua, Philippine Ambassador to the United Kingdom Teodoro Locsin Jr., MOL Magsaysay Maritime Academy President Dr. Michael C. Morales, Magsaysay Group President and CEO Doris Magsaysay Ho, MPRC chairman and JMG Chairman Marlon R. Roño, MMC President Arnold B. Javier and MLRI President Alex M. Enriquez during the visit, highlighting the Philippines' commitment to advancing maritime education and training.

CAVITE, Philippines – MOL Magsaysay Maritime Academy (MMMA), led by its president Dr. Michael Morales, welcomed International Maritime Organization (IMO) Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez on February 18, 2026. The visit underscored the Philippines' key role in shaping the future of global maritime education. The delegation included Philippine Ambassador to the United Kingdom Teodoro Locsin Jr., Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) Administrator Sonia Malaluan, and MARINA Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping (STCW) Executive Director Samuel Batalla. Magsaysay Group President and CEO Doris Magsaysay Ho, Magsaysay People Resources President and Joint Manning Group Chairman Marlon Roño, and Magsaysay Maritime Corporation President Arnold Javier also welcomed the delegation and joined the program.

The visit included a symbolic tree-planting ceremony which reinforces the Academy's commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship. The delegation also toured the campus to observe MMMA's state-of-the-art facilities and meet cadets in training. The program concluded with an open dialogue, where Secretary-General Dominguez shared key

insights and addressed the cadets' concerns about automation and gender equality in today's maritime industry.

Reaffirming the Vital Role of Human Judgement in the AI Era

The discussion focused on the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) and autonomous vessels, with cadets asking how these technologies may reshape their responsibilities at sea.

Secretary-General Dominguez assured the cadets that seafarers remain essential, stressing that technology cannot replace human judgment, particularly when systems fail.

He added that technology's purpose is to support seafarers. *"Our objective," Dominguez shared, "is not to replace seafarers, but to use technology to assist them, reduce fatigue, and make life on board easier while maintaining safety and operational readiness."*

Shaping the Future for Women in Maritime

Gender equality remains a priority for the IMO. While women have made progress in the maritime sector, they are still underrepresented in the traditionally male-dominated industry. Addressing a female cadet's question about gender representation, Secretary-General Dominguez emphasized:

"Gender policies are important, and while we have made significant progress, shipping has historically been male-dominated. It is essential that people on board ships are treated the same way they are treated ashore, including investing in proper accommodation and facilities. Training on harassment and sexual harassment is also helping to protect, in particular, female seafarers."

He urged the next generation of maritime leaders to promote equality and foster a culture of inclusivity at sea, ensuring every crew member is treated as a valued equal, regardless of gender.

The visit to MMMA underscored the Philippines' commitment to advancing maritime education and training. Delegates saw firsthand how Magsaysay integrates hands-on learning, innovation, and real-world skills to prepare cadets for a modern maritime industry, emphasizing the enduring importance of human expertise, safety, and leadership in shaping future seafarers.

About MMMA

Founded on the virtues of excellence, discipline, and service, MOL Magsaysay Maritime Academy (MMMA) is a premier maritime higher education institution established through the partnership of Mitsui O.S.K. Lines (MOL) of Japan and Magsaysay Maritime Corporation (MMC) of the Philippines.

MMMA offers two (2) degree programs: Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation (BSMT), preparing students for careers as Marine Deck Officers and future Master Mariners, and Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering (BSME), leading to roles as Marine Engineers and Chief Engineers. Both are four-year programs consisting of three years of academic study on campus and a 12-month onboard cadetship during the final year.

MMMA integrates academic excellence, character formation, and shipboard readiness, producing graduates who embody discipline, competence, and integrity — the hallmarks of the MOL and Magsaysay legacy.

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