49th Conference on Oceans Law & Policy

Maritime Security in the Mediterranean Sea and Beyond

Athens, 21-22 September 2026

MONDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2026

CEREMONIAL HALL

09.30-10.00	**Registration**
10.00-10.30	**Welcome** Professor Gerasimos Siasos, Rector, National & Kapodistrian University of Athens Professor James Kraska, Charles H. Stockton Chair of International Maritime Law, US Naval War College Professor Ronán Long, Director, WMU-Sasakawa Global Ocean Institute, Nippon Foundation Professorial Chair of Ocean Governance & the Law of the Sea, World Maritime University – WMU Dr Dionyssia-Theodora Avgerinopoulou, MP, President, Parliamentary Committee on the Environment, The Prime Minister's Special Envoy for the Oceans Professor Maria Gavouneli, Athens PIL, National & Kapodistrian University of Athens
10.30-11.30	**Keynote address** ***Maritime Security in a regional context: The Mediterranean*** Ms Dora Bakoyannis, MP, Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on National Defence and Foreign Affairs, *fm* Minister of Foreign Affairs
11.30-12.30	*Networking and bilateral meetings*
12.30-13.30	*Lunch break* VR Simulation Demonstration: *Enhancing Maritime Education through Immersive Learning* Ms S L Madhumita, Lawyer, International Financial Services Centres Authority – IFSCA, GIFT City, Gandhinagar

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STRAND I – ARGYRIADIS AMPHITHEATRE

13.30-15.00	Panel IA: **Setting the scene: Maritime Security in the 21st century** *Maritime security is increasingly shaped by developments beyond regional boundaries as the security of NATO and the European Union becomes ever more interconnected with maritime stability in East Asia* **Chair:** Professor Pete Pedrozo, Stockton Center for International Law, US Naval War College Dr Young Kil Park, Research Fellow, Korea Maritime Institute – KMI Mr Hideshi Tokuchi, Board Director, The Japan Institute of International Affairs – JIIA Professor Jacqueline Joyce F. Espenilla, Associate Professor, University of the Philippines College of Law Professor Rob McLaughlin, Australian National University **Rapporteur:** Ms Sofia Zanin, Consultant, Challenger Research Ltd.
15.00-15.30	*Coffee Break*
15.30-17.00	Panel IIA: **Contemporary challenges to maritime security – The shadow fleet** *The growing use of shadow fleets presents significant challenges to maritime security, sanctions enforcement, and international governance, prompting states and international organizations to strengthen efforts to identify and counter substandard and sanctioned vessels* **Chair:** Professor Alex Oude Elferink, Director, Netherlands Institute for the Law of the Sea – NILOS & School of Law, Utrecht University Professor David Letts, University of Wollongong Professor Richard Kilpatrick, Associate Professor, William H. Bowen School of Law, University of Arkansas at Little Rock Ms Michelle Wiese Bockmann, Senior Maritime Intelligence Analyst, Windward Consultancy Professor Kristina Siig, University of Aalborg **Rapporteur:** Dr Adel Asrawi Elias, IMO International Maritime Law Institute – IMLI
17.00-17.30	*Coffee Break*
17.30-19.00	Panel IIIA: **Maritime Security and the IMO** *As maritime security challenges become more complex and interconnected, the International Maritime Organization remains central to the development of effective global regulatory and governance frameworks*

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	Chair: Professor Ronán Long, Director, WMU-Sasakawa Global Ocean Institute, Nippon Foundation Professorial Chair of Ocean Governance & the Law of the Sea, World Maritime University – WMU *The IMO Legal Committee work on contemporary maritime security threats and fraudulent ship registration* Dr Dorota Lost-Siemińska, Director, Legal Affairs and External Relations Division, IMO *The development of the concept of maritime security from the perspective of the IMO* Professor Atsuko Kanehara, Research Director, Canon Institute for Global Studies & Senior Fellow, Sasakawa Peace Foundation *Shipping under pressure: Managing maritime operations and investments in an era of expanding compliance obligations* Mr George C. Xiradakis, President, Association of Banking and Financial Executives of Hellenic Shipping; CEO, XTRC Ltd *Protecting the Ship, the Seafarer and the Signal: The IMO's recent Regulatory Practice against Contemporary Maritime Security Threats* Dr Sanjeet Ruhal, The Nippon Foundation Lecturer, IMO International Maritime Law Institute – IMLI **Rapporteur**: Ms Akrita Kaur, WMU-Sasakawa Global Ocean Institute

MONDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2026

STRAND II – DRAKOPOULOS AMPHITHEATRE

13.30-15.00	Panel IB: **Maritime security aspects of ocean resources and biodiversity** *The sustainable use of ocean resources and the protection of marine biodiversity are becoming increasingly important as states, international organisations, and industry seek to balance economic development, environmental stewardship, and maritime security* **Chair:** Professor George Theocharidis, World Maritime University *Beyond catching the vessel: IUU fishing and the emerging architecture of maritime security in the Mediterranean* Professor Kübra Var Türk, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Law, Ankara Üniversitesi Dr Vicky Tzatzaki, Athens PIL, National & Kapodistrian University of Athens *Due diligence in contested waters: Baseline obligation for protecting maritime security and equitable utilization of ocean resources in the Mediterranean* Ms Dominique Virgil, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Indonesia *Open registries, AIS integrity and maritime security risks to ocean resources and biodiversity*

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	Professor Orestis Schinas, University of the Aegean **Rapporteur**: Ms Milagros Varela, Inspector Officer, Maritime Security, European Commission
15.00-15.30	*Coffee Break*
15.30-17.00	Panel IIB: **Litigating Maritime Security** *As maritime security disputes become more complex, courts and tribunals play an increasingly important role in clarifying legal obligations and resolving competing claims* **Chair:** Professor Linos-Alexandre Sicilianos, National & Kapodistrian University of Athens, *fm* President, European Court of Human Rights Professor Alina Miron, University of Angers *Litigation and protection of the crew* Ms Penelope Nevill, Barrister, Twenty Essex, London *The ITLOS Seabed Dispute Chamber: A sui generis litigation* Professor Niki Aloupi, Université Paris 2 Panthéon Assas *Procedural challenges and opportunities in maritime security litigation* Nikiforos Panagis, Legal Officer, International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea – ITLOS Professor Mariko Kawano, Waseda University School of Law **Rapporteur:** Dr Nikolas Voulgaris, National & Kapodistrian University of Athens
17.00-17.30	*Coffee Break*
17.30-19.00	Panel IIIB: **Challenges to connectivity: Choke points, value chains and shipping** *The security and resilience of maritime trade routes, global supply chains, and strategic chokepoints are increasingly important in an era of geopolitical tensions and economic interdependence* **Chair:** Leonidas Dimitriades Eugenides, IMO Maritime Ambassador, President & CEO, Eugenides Group Professor Lia Athanassiou, ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations – CEACR, National & Kapodistrian University of Athens Professor Dimitris Gavalas, Associate Professor, Department of Port Management and Shipping, National & Kapodistrian University of Athens *Connectivity challenges due to the new EU climate requirements* Dr Giorgos Dikaios, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Postdoc Fellow, University of Leiden *Typology of Security Threats to Shipping in Europe's Southeastern Neighbourhood* Plamen Tonchev, Head of Asia Unit, Institute of International Economic Relations – IIER **Rapporteur:** Mr Angelos Bozios, University of Hamburg

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TUESDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 2026

STRAND I – ARGYRIADIS AMPHITHEATRE

09.00-10.30	Panel IVA: **Maritime security aspects of ocean observation systems, marine scientific research, robotics and AI** *Advances in ocean observation systems, marine scientific research, robotics, and artificial intelligence are transforming maritime domain awareness while raising important questions regarding data sovereignty, governance, and security in the maritime domain* **Chair:** Professor Aleke Stofen-O'Brien, Associate Professor, WMU-Sasakawa Global Ocean Institute *The Jurisprudence of MSR: Biologging data, detection & dominion* Professor Tafsir Matin Johansson, Associate Professor, WMU-Sasakawa Global Ocean Institute *Exploring Extreme Marine Environments: Hydrothermal Systems, Data, and Discovery* Professor Paraskevi (Evi) Nomikou, National & Kapodistrian University Deputy Commander Melissa Desjardins, Combined Task Force 154, Combined Maritime Forces, Canadian Armed Forces *Marine Biodiversity and Bathymetry Data: The Frontier of Maritime Security* Professor Aspasia Pastra, Assistant Professor, WMU-Sasakawa Global Ocean Institute **Rapporteur:** Commander Jesús Menacho Piérola, WMU-Sasakawa Global Ocean Institute
10.30-11.00	*Coffee Break*
11.00-12.30	Panel VA: **Legal Processes in the Law of the Sea** *States increasingly pursue their interests in the law of the sea through international institutions, courts, tribunals, and other legal processes, reinforcing the importance of rules-based mechanisms for resolving maritime disputes* **Chair:** Professor Erik Franckx, Vrije Universiteit Brussel Ms Lea Kolmos Weis, Practice Area Counsel, Advokat (L), Gorrissen Federspiel Dr Tom Grant, Senior Fellow, Lauterpacht Centre for International Law, University of Cambridge Professor Aslıhan Erbaş Açıkel, Associate Professor, Kadir Has University Professor Maiko Raita, Associate Professor, Osaka University Law School **Rapporteur:** Ms. Aslı Başol, Tohoku University Graduate School of Law

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12.30-14.00	*Lunch break* VR Simulation Demonstration: *Enhancing Maritime Education through Immersive Learning* Ms S L Madhumita, Lawyer, International Financial Services Centres Authority – IFSCA, GIFT City, Gandhinagar *Networking and bilateral meetings*
14.00-15.30	Panel VIA: **Law of Naval Warfare** *The law of naval warfare operates as lex specialis during armed conflict at sea, shaping how belligerent and neutral rights, maritime zones, targeting, capture, blockade, and other naval operations are applied in the unique legal and operational environment of the ocean* **Chair:** CDR Sara Neugroschel, US Naval War College Professor Dale Stephens, University of Adelaide Law School Professor Wolff Heintschel von Heinegg, Europa-Universität Viadrina in Frankfurt (Oder) Dr Abhay Singh Thakur, Director (I/C), School of Maritime Law, Policy and Administration, Gujarat Maritime University Mr Tomoyuki Yoshida, Chief Executive Director, The Japan Institute of International Affairs – JIIA **Rapporteur:** Mr Quinten DeGroote, Ghent University
15.30-15.45	*Coffee Break*
15.45-17.15	Panel VIIA: **Marine technology and infrastructure** *Technological innovation is accelerating the digital transformation of the maritime sector, with autonomous systems, smart infrastructure, and advanced technologies reshaping maritime security operations* **Chair:** Lt(N) Jin Shin, Combined Maritime Forces, Canadian Armed Forces *Drones as an emerging threat for the maritime domain: Kinetic v Direct Energy Solutions* Professor Dimitrios Dalaklis, World Maritime University *Exploring Knowledge and Capacity Readiness to Counter Naval Blockades and Maritime Route Closures in the Interaction Military-Civilian Obligations: A Harsh Reality or a Wake-Up Call for Navigation of Risky Waters?* Dr Adriana Ávila-Zúñiga Nordfjeld, Senior Lecturer, Swedish Defence University *The Past, Present and Future of Ocean Observation: Submarine Cables and Cabled Ocean Observatories in the Mediterranean and Multilateral Frontiers* Professor Tafsir Matin Johansson, Associate Professor, & Suriya Sundararajan, WMU-Sasakawa Global Ocean Institute *The protection of submarine cables and pipelines within and beyond the UNCLOS framework* Professor Kentaro Nishimoto, Graduate Schools for Law and Politics, University of Tokyo

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	Rapporteur: Mr Ilias Diamantopoulos, National & Kapodistrian University of Athens

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STRAND II – DRAKOPOULOS AMPHITHEATRE

09.00-10.30	Panel IVB: **Maritime security and critical infrastructure** *Critical maritime infrastructure, including ports, offshore installations, and submarine cables, is becoming increasingly vulnerable to physical and cyber threats with potentially far-reaching consequences* **Chair:** Dr Elena Lazarou, Director-General, Hellenic Foundation for European & Foreign Policy – ELIAMEP Dr Thanos Dokos, Secretary General for National Security, Hellenic Republic *Regulating a gap? – The ILA Vienna Conclusions on Monitoring, Prevention and Response at Sea in Respect of Intentional Damage to Submarine Cables and Pipelines* Professor Maria Gavouneli, Athens PIL, National & Kapodistrian University of Athens Professor Norihito Samata, Musashino University *Developing national processes for maritime security* Dr Brian Wilson, Captain (Rt), US Navy **Rapporteur:** Aakarsh Banyal, University of Oxford
10.30-11.00	*Coffee Break*
11.00-12.30	Panel VB: **Human maritime security: The challenge of migration** *Migration remains one of the major challenges on both sides of the Mediterranean Sea, raising complex humanitarian, legal, and security issues* **Chair:** Professor Photini Pazartzis, Director, Athens PIL, National & Kapodistrian University of Athens *The human side of maritime security: Recent developments* Professor Irini Papanicolopulu, School of Oriental and African Studies – SOAS, University of London *Deadly crossings, externalized migration controls and fisheries partnerships: Navigating EU policy dilemmas* Professor Markos Karavias, Assistant Professor, University of Piraeus *The Human Side of Maritime Security: A View from the Field* Ms Laura de Castro, UNHCR Representative Greece

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	The Instrumentalisation of Migration as a Hybrid Threat: Human Rights and the Maritime Dimension Professor Sofia Galani, Associate Professor, Panteion University **Rapporteur:** Dr Maria-Louiza Deftou, Athens PIL, National & Kapodistrian University of Athens
12.30-14.00	*Lunch break* *Networking and bilateral meetings*
14.00-15.30	Panel VIB: **Maritime security implications of extreme weather, oceanographic events and environmental change** *Extreme weather, oceanographic events, and environmental change are reshaping maritime security by disrupting navigation, infrastructure, resource access, and coastal stability, while creating new operational, legal, and governance challenges for states and maritime stakeholders* **Chair**: Ambassador Hasanthi Urugodawatte Dissanayake, Sri Lanka Professor Beatriz Martinez Romera, Head, Centre for Climate Change Law and Governance – CLIMA, University of Copenhagen *The establishment of area-based management tools to address environmental threats: The case of the Hellenic Trench in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea* Dr Sophia Kopela, Democritus University of Thrace *Offshore wind power in contested East Asian waters: Reconciling renewable energy transitions with maritime boundary delimitation, navigation, and hybrid maritime security* Professor Seokwoo Lee, Inha University Law School *Protecting Submarine Cables from Natural and Geopolitical Risks: Investment Resilience as an Emerging Analytical Framework* Professor Thomas Nektarios Papanastasiou, Associate Professor, School of Law, UNIC Athens – University of Nicosia **Rapporteur:** Suriya Sundararajan, WMU-Sasakawa Global Ocean Institute
15.30-15.45	*Coffee Break*
15.45-17.15	Panel VIIB: **Compliance and enforcement issues in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction** *A round-table discussion on topical and critical issues of compliance and enforcement in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction organized by the UNODC Maritime Crime Programme* **Chair**: Giuseppe Sernia, Programme Coordinator, Global Maritime Crime Programme – GMCP, UN Office on Drugs and Crime – UNODC Niels Peters Williams, Programme Officer, Global Maritime Crime Programme, UNODC Ms Priyal Bunwaree, Barrister & Senior Legal Counsel, Blue Marine Foundation

	Professor Eva van der Marel, Norwegian Centre for the Law of the Sea, University of Tromsø – The Arctic University of Norway Professor Efthymios (Akis) Papastavridis, Assistant Professor, School of Law & Athens PIL, National & Kapodistrian University of Athens **Rapporteur:** Dimitris Panousos, European University Institute – EUI

CEREMONIAL HALL

17.30-18.30	**Farewell debate: Maritime security in an uncertain world** **Chair:** Professor Petros Liacouras, University of Piraeus Professor James Kraska, Charles H. Stockton Chair of International Maritime Law, US Naval War College Professor Ronán Long, Director, WMU-Sasakawa Global Ocean Institute, Nippon Foundation Professorial Chair of Ocean Governance & the Law of the Sea, World Maritime University – WMU Professor Maria Gavouneli, Athens PIL, National & Kapodistrian University of Athens Professor Yücel Acer, National Center for the Sea and Maritime Law – DEHUKAM, University of Ankara **Rapporteur:** Dimitris Panousos, European University Institute – EUI
18.30-19.00	**Closing ceremony**

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