

The INTERNATIONAL OCEAN INSTITUTE IOInforma 0714

Visit by Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand
The International Ocean Institute had the honour of receiving Her Royal Highness at IOI HQ
26 August 2014



Her Royal Highness, Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand, was in Malta on a private visit at the invitation of the University of Malta and the International Ocean Institute (IOI), the Headquarters of which is located at the University. The invitation was extended to her during the presentation of the Elisabeth Mann Borgese Medal to HRH last year in Bangkok, Thailand during the IOI's *Pacem in Maribus* Conference XXXIV.

HRH was awarded the medal by IOI for her contribution to issues of environmental protection and education in Thailand in support of Thailand's role in international fora through her outstanding leadership and initiatives aimed at using education as a means of community and social development and environmental protection.

During her brief stay in Malta Her Royal Highness visited the Msida Campus, where she attended presentations about the University and the IOI. The Rector of the University of Malta, Professor Juanito Camilleri, showed Her Royal Highness around the Library, the Arvid Pardo Garden, where the monuments to Elisabeth Mann-Borgese and Arvid Pardo are situated, and the IT Services Building. Her Royal Highness also visited the historic Valletta Campus.

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Photo above from left to right: Dr Awni Behnam, Honorary President IOI; Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand, Prof Juanito Camilleri, Rector, University of Malta and, in the background, the bust of Elisabeth Mann Borgese at the Arvid Pardo Study Area of the University of Malta, Msida Campus.

Elisabeth Mann Borgese (1918 - 2002) was a passionate campaigner for a world order founded on distributive justice and therefore on the doctrine of the common heritage, espoused with her good friend Arvid Pardo. To her, these offered the best laboratory for the application of a set of ethical principles guiding humanity to the equitable use of natural resources. She instituted the *Pacem in Maribus* Conference series with PIM I in 1970 in Malta and founded the International Ocean Institute in 1972.

Arvid Pardo (1914-1999) was Malta's first Permanent Representative to the United Nations in 1964 and is recognised most especially for his contribution to the development of the Law of the Sea. His vision was based on two fundamental principles: first that all aspects of ocean space are interrelated and should be treated as an integral whole; and second, that the sea-bed beyond national jurisdiction and its resources are the common heritage of mankind – a striking departure from earlier thinking on ocean space.

During her visit, Her Royal Highness discussed potential tertiary education cooperation with the University of Malta with respect also to the Master of Arts Degree in Ocean Governance jointly offered by the Faculty of Laws at the University of Malta and the International Ocean Institute.



From left to right: Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand; Dr Awni Behnam, Honorary President IOI, Ambassador Prof Salvino Busuttill (representative of the Government of Malta to the IOI Governing Board) and Mr Peter Leder (Treasurer, IOI Governing Board).

IOI had the honour of receiving Her Royal Highness at the Headquarters offices on Campus on Tuesday the 26 August 2014 with a most cordial welcome by Dr Awni Behnam (Honorary President of the IOI), Ambassador Prof. Salvino Busuttill (representative of the Government of Malta to the IOI Governing Board) and Mr Peter Leder (Treasurer) and the IOI management staff.

During the afternoon meeting, Her Royal Highness discussed issues pertaining to education and capacity building in ocean governance and the IOI's programme of ocean literacy. Discussions with Dr Behnam, Ambassador Busuttill and other IOI representatives, focussed on the IOI's current work and future plans in Thailand where the IOI has been active since the establishment of the Operational Centre there in 2001 by Elisabeth Mann Borgese. The IOI was also represented at the meeting by Antonella Vassallo, Interim General Manager at IOI HQ and responsible for the IOI's MA Degree on Ocean Governance as well as the current director of IOI Thailand, Dr Kunjapong Anuratpanich; former IOI Executive Director, Dr Cherdsak Virapat, was also present at the meeting. HRH also visited the IMO International Maritime Law Institute premises on Campus where she was welcomed by Professor David Attard (Director of IMLI), and other members of staff.

Photos courtesy of the University of Malta.



Award of the Elisabeth Mann Borgese Medal: High level representatives of IOI including Dr Awni Behnam and Ambassador Salvino Busuttill were granted an audience with HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn on 6 September 2013 at Chitralada Villa in Bangkok for the award of the Elisabeth Mann Borgese Medal during *Pacem in Maribus (PIM) XXXIV: International Forum on Sustainable Governance of the Ocean*. The Princess was awarded the medal by the IOI in recognition of her contribution to issues of environmental protection and education in Thailand in support of Thailand's role in international fora through her outstanding leadership and initiatives aimed at using education as a means of community and social development and environmental protection. *The photograph is used with Her Royal Highness' gracious permission*