



Cleopatra Doumbia-Henry | Class of 1984

Dr. Cleopatra Doumbia-Henry is a distinguished academic in international law and an international advocate for sustainability and innovation, as well as a global leader on maritime law, labour standards, and international organisational law. Beginning as a law lecturer at the University of the West Indies, Barbados, she later joined the International Labour Organisation (ILO) where she became the first woman Director of the Labour Standards Department. She significantly contributed in various ways to the successes of the organisation, amongst other things, by playing an important role in the development of the Maritime Labour Convention (2006). She returned to the Graduate Institute in 2011 to teach a course on International Labour Law and Globalisation, before becoming the first woman to serve as President for the World Maritime University (WMU) in 2015.



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Dr. Doumbia-Henry was responsible for developing ILO Maritime Labour Convention, 2006. By providing rights and protection at work for over 1.2 million seafarers in the world and updating more than 65 international labour standards related to seafarers, the development of the Convention is considered by Doumbia-Henry to be one of her major accomplishments.



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In 2015, Dr. Doumbia-Henry became the first woman President of the WMU, a post-graduate institution established within the framework of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) with the aim of educating future leaders in the maritime and ocean sectors as well as conducting research in several crucial fields. She stepped down from WMU at the end of June 2023.



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As President of the WMU, Dr. Doumbia-Henry was invited by the Secretary General of the IMO to attend the visit of the Queen Elizabeth II to the IMO.

