

**2026 Edition of the Public International Maritime Law Conference
LAWSEA 2026**

Venue: Gujarat National Law University, Gandhinagar, Gujarat

16 and 17 September 2026

***MARITIME DISPUTES IN AN ERA OF CONTESTATION:
SHIFTING BETWEEN “LAW IN ABSTRACTION” AND “LAW IN OPERATION”***

PROGRAMME

as on 04 September 2026

DAY ONE		
LEGAL FOUNDATIONS & EMERGING FAULT LINES		
0900-0930 (30 min)	Tea and Registration	
OPENING SESSION (50 min)		
0930-0932 (02 min)	Introductory Remarks	Ms Muskan Rai Emcee
0932-0935 (03 min)	Welcome Remarks	Ms Simran Dhingra Head of International Cooperation Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, India Office
0935-0945 (10 min)	Presidential Remarks	Professor (Dr) S Shanthakumar Director Gujarat National Law University (GNLU) Gandhinagar, Gujarat
0945-0955 (10 min)	Inaugural Address	Vice Admiral Pradeep Chauhan AVSM & Bar, VSM, IN (Retd) Director-General National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi
0955-1015 (20 min)	Special Address <i>Maritime Disputes Today: From Delimitation to Day-to-Day Contestation</i>	Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi PVSM, AVSM, NM, IN (Retd) Chairman, NMF and former Chief of the Naval Staff
1015-1020 (05 min)	Group Photograph	
PROFESSIONAL SESSION ONE (1 h 45 min)		
UNCLOS Under Pressure: Interpretation, Compliance, and Contestation		
1020-1025 (05 min)	Session Instructions	Ms Muskan Rai Emcee
1025-1035 (10 min)	Moderator's Remarks	Vice Admiral Tarun Sobti UYSM, AVSM, VSM, IN (Retd) Former Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff
1035-1055 (20 min)	UNCLOS after Forty Years: What International Courts Have Clarified—and What They Cannot	Dr Maria Gavouneli Professor, Faculty of Law and Athens PIL Director, Refugee and Migration Studies Hub- RMS Hub, National & Kapodistrian University of Athens
1055-1115 (20 min)	From Treaty to Practice: How Maritime Powers Selectively Invoke UNCLOS	Mr Neil Simon Silva Lecturer

		Institute for Maritime Affairs and Law of the Sea University of the Philippines Quezon City, Philippines
1115-1135 (20 min)	<i>Beyond UNCLOS: Why Naval Operations Depend on More Than One Legal Regime</i>	Captain Himadri Das , IN National Maritime Security Coordinator (NMSC) Staff
1135-1200 (25 min)	Audience Interaction	Vice Admiral Tarun Sobti UYSM, AVSM, VSM, IN (Retd) <i>Former Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff</i>
1200-1205 (05 min)	Group Photograph	
1205-1305 (60 min)	LUNCH	
PROFESSIONAL SESSION TWO (1 h 45 min) Maritime Boundaries, Baselines, and Sovereignty Claims		
1305-1310 (05 min)	Session Instructions	Ms Muskan Rai Emcee
1310-1320 (10 min)	Moderator's Remarks	Professor (Dr) S Shanthakumar Director Gujarat National Law University (GNLU) Gandhinagar, Gujarat
1320-1340 (20 min)	<i>Expanding Coastal State Jurisdiction: The Contiguous Zone in Contemporary Maritime Security</i>	Ms Fretti G Ganchoon [Online] Senior State Counsel Department of Justice Republic of the Philippines Manila, Philippines
1340-1400 (20 min)	<i>Evidence at Sea: Hydrography, Climate Change and Scientific Data in Maritime Claims</i>	Rear Admiral Peush Pawsey Chief Hydrographer (Officiating) National Hydrographic Office Dehradun
1400-1420 (20 min)	<i>Straight Baselines, Archipelagic Claims and Strategic Cartography</i>	Dr Nguyen Ba Cuong Director Scientific Research Institute of Sea and Islands (SRISI) Hanoi, Viet Nam
1420-1445 (25 min)	Audience Interaction	Professor (Dr) S Shanthakumar Director Gujarat National Law University (GNLU) Gandhinagar, Gujarat
1445-1450 (05 min)	Group Photograph	
1450-1520 (30 min)	TEA BREAK	
PROFESSIONAL SESSION THREE (1 h 45 min) Military Activities, Marine Scientific Research, and Surveillance in the EEZ		
1520-1525 (05 min)	Session Instructions	Ms Muskan Rai Emcee
1525-1535 (10 min)	Moderator's Remarks	Dr Harsha Rajwanshi Assistant Professor of Law Gujarat National Law University (GNLU) Gandhinagar, Gujarat

1535-1555 (20 min)	<i>Can a Coastal State Restrict Foreign Military Activities in its EEZ?</i>	Wg Cdr (Dr) U C Jha (Retd) Secretary General Indian Society for International Law, New Delhi
1555-1615 (20 min)	<i>Freedom of Navigation versus Security Interests in Operational Practice</i>	Mr Aristyo R Darmawan [Online] PhD Scholar School of Regulation and Global Governance Australian National University, Australia
1615-1635 (20 min)	<i>Reconciling Operational Necessity with Legal Restraint</i>	Mr Himanil Raina Honorary Adjunct Fellow, NMF, & PhD and Teaching Assistant Department of International Law Geneva Graduate Institute
1635-1700 (25 min)	Audience Interaction	Dr Harsha Rajwanshi Assistant Professor of Law Gujarat National Law University (GNLU) Gandhinagar, Gujarat
1700-1705 (05 min)	Group Photograph	
1705-1730 (25 min)	TEA BREAK	
PROFESSIONAL SESSION FOUR (1 h 45 min) Technology as a Dispute Multiplier		
1730-1735 (05 min)	Session Instructions	Ms Muskan Rai Emcee
1735-1745 (10 min)	Moderator's Remarks	Commodore Manish Kumar Sinha, IN (Retd) Senior Fellow National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi
1745-1805 (20 min)	<i>Emerging Technologies and the Future of Maritime Law</i>	Cdr Abhimanyu Singh, IN Judge Advocate CJA Office HQSNC Kochi
1805-1825 (20 min)	<i>Technology Outpaces Law: Where Existing Maritime Law No Longer Fits</i>	Ms Antara Jha Advocate Cyber Law Government of India
1825-1845 (20 min)	<i>Grey-Zone Competition Below the Threshold of Armed Conflict</i>	Dr Abhay Singh Director (I/C) and Assistant Professor School of Maritime Law, Policy and Administration (SMLPA) Gujarat Maritime University (GMU) Gandhinagar, Gujarat
1845-1910 (25 min)	Audience Interaction	Commodore Manish Kumar Sinha, IN (Retd) Senior Fellow National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi
1910-1915 (05 min)	Group Photograph	
1930	DINNER	
END OF THE PROCEEDINGS FOR DAY ONE		

DAY TWO		
DISPUTE MANAGEMENT, LAWFARE & POLICY CHOICES		
1000-1025 (25 min)	Tea and Registration	
OPENING SESSION (25 min)		
1025-1030 (05 min)	Introductory Remarks	Ms Muskan Rai Emcee
1030-1050 (20 min)	Special Address <i>Law as Compass: Managing Maritime Disputes Without Escalation</i>	Prof Manimuthu Gandhi Vice President Indian Society for International Law New Delhi
1050-1055 (05 min)	Memento Presentation	
PROFESSIONAL SESSION FIVE (1 h 45 min)		
Lawfare and Maritime Disputes: Strategy, Narrative, and Response		
1055-1100 (05 min)	Session Instructions	Ms Muskan Rai Emcee
1100-1110 (10 min)	Moderator's Remarks	Vice Admiral Pradeep Chauhan AVSM & Bar, VSM, IN (Retd) Director-General National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi
1110-1130 (20 min)	<i>Narrative Competition at Sea: How States Shape Maritime Legitimacy Without Litigation</i>	International Committee of the Red Cross
1130-1150 (20 min)	<i>Lawfare through Domestic Legislation, Cartography and Administrative Practice</i>	Ms Raaga Manjari Researcher Ocean Law and Policy Maritime Institute of Malaysia (MIMA) Malaysia
1150-1210 (20 min)	<i>International Courts Are Only One Arena: Alternative Legal Strategies in Maritime Disputes</i>	Dr Christian Schultheiss [Online] Senior Research Fellow Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law Heidelberg, Germany
1210-1235 (25 min)	Audience Interaction	Vice Admiral Pradeep Chauhan AVSM & Bar, VSM, IN (Retd) Director-General National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi
1235-1240 (05 min)	Group Photograph	
1240-1340 (60 min)	LUNCH	
PROFESSIONAL SESSION 6 (1 h 45 min)		
Beyond Courts: Managing Maritime Disputes in the Indo-Pacific		
1340-1345 (05 min)	Session Instructions	Ms Muskan Rai Emcee
1345-1355 (10 min)	Moderator's Remarks	Commander Sandeep Bali, IN (Retd) Delegate for the Relations with Armed & Security Forces International Committee of the Red Cross
1355-1415 (20 min)	<i>Beyond Litigation: Provisional Arrangements, Joint Development and Cooperative Mechanisms</i>	Professor Yoshifumi Tanaka [Online] Professor Centre for Private Governance (CEPRI)

		Faculty of Law University of Copenhagen, Denmark
1415-1435 (20 min)	<i>What Governments Actually Need from Maritime Lawyers</i>	Dr Madhumita Kothari Advocate, Supreme Court of India, <i>and</i> Former Senior Advisor, International Seabed Authority, New Delhi
1435-1455 (20 min)	<i>From Dialogue to Deterrence: Preventing Escalation While Preserving Legal Claims</i>	Mr Martin Egknud Petersen Deputy Chief of Mission, & Minister Counsellor, Political Affairs Embassy of Denmark
1455-1520 (25 min)	Audience Interaction	Commander Sandeep Bali, IN (Retd) Delegate for the Relations with Armed & Security Forces International Committee of the Red Cross
1520-1525 (05 min)	Group Photograph	
CLOSING SESSION (25 min)		
1525-1530 (05 min)	Session Introduction	Ms Muskan Rai Emcee
1530-1540 (10 min)	Summative Guidance (NMF)	Vice Admiral Pradeep Chauhan AVSM & Bar, VSM, IN (Retd) Director-General National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi
1540-1545 (05 min)	Vote of Thanks	Ms Simran Dhingra Head of International Cooperation Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, India Office
1545-1550 (05 min)	Group Photograph	
END-OF-CONFERENCE & HIGH TEA		