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THE REPORT ON THE 5TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MARITIME LAW ‘SEAPORTS – COMPETITIVENESS AND INNOVATION’

Between 25–26 February 2016 at the Faculty of Law and Administration, University of Gdańsk, the 5th National Conference on Maritime Law “Seaports - competitiveness and innovation” organized by the Department of Maritime Law of the Faculty of Law and Administration at the University of Gdańsk and the European Law Students’ Association ELSA Gdańsk was held. For the first time the Conference was accompanied by M.A. and PhD students’ panel during which young researchers were given an opportunity to present their findings.

The Conference was attended by numerous entrepreneurs, academics, representatives of science and administration, and a large group of students. This time the organizers decided to focus on the topics related to the seaports. All participants could take part in the debate *‘Polish ports on the way to competitiveness and sustainable development’*, as well as learn how to manage the seaports effectively and operate them efficiently. As each year, the organizers provided the forum for debate, not only for lawyers and scholars, but also for a wide range of entrepreneurs representing the maritime sector and students from various academic centers in Poland.

The honorary patronages over the Conference were taken by: the Marshal of the Pomorskie Voivodeship – Mr Mieczysław Struk, the President of Gdańsk – Mr Paweł Adamowicz, the Rector of the University of Gdańsk – prof. Bernard Lammek and the Dean of the Faculty of Law and Administration of the University of Gdańsk – prof. Jakub Stelina.

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The first part of the Conference was a debate *'Polish seaports on the way to competitiveness and sustainable development'* chaired by dr Magdalena Adamowicz. The debate was attended by representatives of the ports and maritime administration. The Deputy Marshal of the Pomorskie Voivodeship – Wiesław Byczkowski, the Vice President of Gdynia – Mr Marek Stępa, the Vice President of Gdańsk – Mr Andrzej Bojanowski, the President of the Managing Board of Port of Gdańsk Authority S.A. (i.e. Joint Stock Company) – Ms Dorota Raben, the President of the Managing Board of the Port of Gdynia Authority S.A. (i.e. Joint Stock Company) – Mr Janusz Jarosiński, an expert in seaports economics – dr Zbigniew Miklewicz and the President of the Board of InvestGDA – Mr Alan Aleksandrowicz were invited to the discussion. The participants discussed various topics, inter alia: how to obtain investors and how to create favourable conditions for investments in the seaports; which investment projects are planned for the next programming period, i.e. until 2020, and then until 2027, and how the individual ports will increase their transshipment potential through the investments of the port authorities, operators and investors. The statements by the representatives of both port cities, Gdańsk and Gdynia Mr Andrzej Bojanowski (the City of Gdańsk) and Mr Marek Stępa (the City of Gdynia) respectively, concerning the actual impact of the ports on the position of the city, region and state, as well as the impact that further investments in ports will have on them were immensely interesting. The experts were trying to predict what position the ports will be able to reach in international rankings after the completion of these investments and whether they have a chance to move higher in the European ranking.

The second part of the Conference was devoted to the issues of an effective use of a seaport. In this part the speeches were delivered by: prof. Joanna Kruczałak-Jankowska – *'Corporate governance in port companies with shareholding of the Treasury'*, dr Magdalena Adamowicz – *'Port company as a special state-owned company'*, dr Tomasz Nowosielski – *'Models of management of seaports in the EU countries'*, dr Monika Grottel – *'The implementation and execution of 'Ports 24h' package upon 4th deregulation act'* and Mr Jakub Puszkarski – *'Strategies for the development of the ports of primary importance for the national economy.'*

The third part of the Conference was entitled *'How to operate a port effectively?'*. The following speakers were invited to deliver their speeches: dr Piotr Lewandowski from the University of Business and Administration in Gdynia, who gave a lecture on *'The legal relations of the managing entity and entities operating in the port'*. The next speech, given by Mr Rafał Czyżyk from Marek Czernis & Co. Law Office, was devoted to the current legal issues of the port terminals' operators. Mr Adam Żołnowski, Chief Financial Officer of DCT Gdańsk S.A. commented on the selected issues of financing the port's investments. The presentation on the safety of Polish seaports was provided by capt. prof. Cezary Łuczywek, Chairman

of the State Marine Accident Investigation Commission. At the end of the panel, Mr Jerzy Czuczman, Director of the Association of Polish Maritime Industries Forum Okrętowe spoke, whose presentation was entitled '*Shipyard in the port or next to the port?*' The Conference was finished with a discussion, which enabled the speakers to answer numerous questions from the audience. The Conference was summarized and closed by prof. Dorota Pyć, Head of Department of Maritime Law, Faculty of Law and Administration of Gdańsk University.

The main partner of the Conference was Remontowa Holding S.A. The strategic partners included: Marek Czernis & Co. Law Office, the Port of Gdynia and the Port of Gdańsk Authorities. Other partners were: the Association of Marine Cities and Municipalities, InvestGDA, DCT Gdańsk S.A., Kacprzak Law Firm, the Pomeranian Special Economic Zone, Misiewicz, Mosek & Partners Law Firm, the Association of Polish Baltic-Adriatic Transport Corridor Regions and the City of Gdańsk.

