

Welcoming Remarks of Myron Nordquist

April 17, 2021

Welcome to the 44th Annual Conference on Oceans Law and Policy.

The planning for this Annual Conference originated during the 43rd Center for Ocean Law and Policy (COLP) Conference held in May 2019 at the World Maritime University (WMU) Sasakawa Auditorium in Malmö, Sweden. The idea then was to hold the next conference as normal in May 2020 in Tokyo. As all of you know, however, the COVID-19 pandemic struck throughout the world. As a result, the Japanese co-hosts and the prospective sponsors reluctantly decided to postpone the event for the year 2020. In the meantime, the impact of the virus lingered longer than expected. Nevertheless, the organizers of the 44th Annual Conference were unwilling to postpone again. Instead, they chose to hold this 2021 session as scheduled, but to do so virtually instead of in-person. We hope to resume the Annual Conference normally next year as an in-person event.

The agreed plan for this year was to hold as much as possible to the original agenda and invitees. This goal was largely achieved due to flexibility of our Japanese co-hosts, WMU's steadfast support, and the willingness of the Stockton Center at the United States Naval War College (Stockton Center) to assume leadership for the COLP Annual Conference, both now and in the future.

Therefore, it is with great personal pleasure that I not only welcome all of you virtual participants but also introduce the Chair of the Stockton Center, Professor James Kraska. He is an established scholar of international law as seen in his program biography and is personally very well-known to those at Virginia where he earned his S.J.D.