THE HONOURABLE SOCIETY OF THE
MIDDLE TEMPLE

COMMONWEALTH BIOS

(Listed in order of Country, alphabetically)

The Hon Robert French, Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia	
Robert Shenton French was appointed Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia in September 2008. At the time of his appointment he was a judge of the Federal Court of Australia, having been appointed to that office in November 1986. He graduated from the University of Western Australia in science and law. He was admitted in 1972 and practised as a barrister and solicitor in Western Australia until 1983 when he went to the Western Australian Bar. From 1994 to 1998 he was President of the National Native Title Tribunal. At the time of his appointment he was an additional member of the Supreme Court of the Australian Capital Territory and a member of the Supreme Court of Fiji. He was also a Deputy President of the Australian Competition Tribunal and a part-time member of the Australian Law Reform Commission. From 2001 to January 2005 he was president of the Australian Association of Constitutional Law. Chief Justice French was appointed a Companion in the General Division of the Order of Australia in 2010. He is Patron of the Australian Academy of Law and an Honorary Life Member of the Australasian Law Teachers Association.	

Mdm Justice Susan Kiefel, Justice of the High Court of Australia	
Susan Mary Kiefel was appointed to the Court in September 2007. At the time of her appointment she was a judge of the Federal Court of Australia and the Supreme Court of Norfolk Island. She served as a judge of the Supreme Court of Queensland in 1993–94 before joining the Federal Court. She was admitted to the Queensland Bar in 1975 and was the first woman in Queensland to be appointed Queen's Counsel, in 1987. Justice Kiefel served as a part-time Commissioner of the Australian Law Reform Commission from 2003 to 2007. She has a Masters of Laws degree from Cambridge University. Justice Kiefel was appointed a Companion in the General Division of the Order of Australia in 2011. She was elected a titular member of the International Academy of Comparative Law in June 2013. She was elected an Honorary Bencher of the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn in November 2014.	

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Mdm Justice Virginia Bell, Justice of the High Court of Australia	
Virginia Bell was appointed to the Court in February 2009. At the time of her appointment she was a judge of the New South Wales Court of Appeal. She graduated from the University of Sydney as a Bachelor of Laws in 1977. After seven years as a solicitor with the Redfern Legal Centre, she was admitted to the New South Wales Bar in 1984 and was appointed a Senior Counsel in 1997. Justice Bell practised as a public defender between 1986 and 1989 before returning to the private Bar. Between 1994 and 1997 she was a counsel assisting the Royal Commission into the New South Wales Police Service. Justice Bell was appointed a judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales in March 1999. She served as president of the Australian Institute of Judicial Administration 2006 to 2008.	

The Rt Hon Beverley McLachlin PC, Chief Justice of Canada	
Chief Justice McLachlin spent her formative years in Pincher Creek, Alberta and was educated at the University of Alberta, where she received a B.A. (Honours) in Philosophy in 1965. She pursued her studies at the University of Alberta and, in 1968, received both an M.A. in Philosophy and an LL.B. She was called to the Alberta Bar in 1969 and to the British Columbia Bar in 1971 and practised law in Alberta and British Columbia. Commencing in 1974, she taught for seven years in the Faculty of Law at the University of British Columbia as a tenured Associate Professor. Her judicial career began in April 1981 when she was appointed to the Vancouver County Court. In September 1981, she was appointed to the Supreme Court of British Columbia. She was elevated to the British Columbia Court of Appeal in December 1985 and was appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of British Columbia in September 1988. Seven months later, in April 1989, she was sworn in as a Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada. On January 7, 2000, she was appointed Chief Justice of Canada. She is the first woman in Canada to hold this position. In addition to her judicial duties at the Supreme Court, the Chief Justice chairs the Canadian Judicial Council, the Advisory Council of the Order of Canada and the Board of Governors of the National Judicial Institute. The Chief Justice is the author of numerous articles and publications.	

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The Honourable Justice Rosalie Silberman Abella	
Justice Abella was appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada in 2004. She attended the University of Toronto, where she earned a B.A. in 1967 and an LL.B. in 1970. In 1964 she graduated from the Royal Conservatory of Music in classical piano. She was called to the Ontario Bar in 1972 and practised civil and criminal litigation until 1976 when she was appointed to the Ontario Family Court. She was appointed to the Ontario Court of Appeal in 1992. She was the sole Commissioner of the 1984 federal Royal Commission on Equality in Employment, creating the term and concept of "employment equity". The theories of "equality" and "discrimination" she developed in her report were adopted by the Supreme Court of Canada in its first decision dealing with equality rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1989. She subsequently served as Chair of the Ontario Labour Relations Board (1984 to 1989), Chair of the Ontario Law Reform Commission (1989 to 1992), and Boulton Visiting Professor at the Faculty of Law of McGill University (1988 to 1992). She also served as a commissioner on the Ontario Human Rights Commission; as a member of the Ontario Public Service Labour Relations Tribunal; as Co-Chair of the University of Toronto Academic Discipline Tribunal; as a member of the Premier's Advisory Committee on Confederation; and as Chair of the Study on Access to Legal Services by the Disabled.	

The Honourable Madam Justice Suzanne Côté	
The Honourable Suzanne Côté was appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada on December 1, 2014. Before her appointment to the Supreme Court of Canada, Justice Côté was a partner at Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP, where she was head of the Montréal office's litigation group. She specialized in complex civil and commercial litigation, including cases involving manufacturer's liability, class actions, shareholder disputes and public law. Justice Côté received the Advocatus Emeritus distinction from the Barreau du Québec in 2011. In addition, she has been a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers since 2005. She had received an LL.B. from Université Laval before being called to the Quebec Bar in 1981. Justice Côté has taught evidence and litigation at the École du Barreau du Québec, and has also lectured at the Université du Québec à Rimouski and at the Université de Montréal. She has also contributed for many years to the organization of the annualCoupe Guy-Guérin trial advocacy competition, a provincial competition that leads to participation in the Sopinka Cup.	

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Mr. Gib van Ert, Executive Legal Officer	
Gib van Ert is counsel at Hunter Litigation Chambers in Vancouver. He has a broad civil litigation practice including commercial, real estate, environmental, administrative and public law matters. He appears regularly as counsel in cases before the Supreme Court of British Columbia and the BC Court of Appeal, and has also appeared before the Supreme Court of Canada and the Federal Court of Appeal. Gib is the author of Using International Law in Canadian Courts and other works on international law and its reception in Canadian law. He is an annual contributor to the Canadian Yearbook of International Law and a frequent speaker on international law topics at academic and professional conferences around the country. Gib served as law clerk to the Hon. Charles Gonthier of the Supreme Court of Canada and the Hon. Joanne Prowse of the Court of Appeal for British Columbia. He has been a visiting scholar at the Lauterpacht Research Centre for International Law at the University of Cambridge, England, a visiting professor in the Faculty of Law, University of Ottawa and a sessional instructor in public international law at the University of Victoria. Gib is currently on a leave of absence from his firm to serve as Executive Legal Officer of the Supreme Court of Canada.	

The Hon Mr Justice Roberto Ribeiro PJ	
Mr Justice Ribeiro was appointed a Permanent Judge of the Court of Final Appeal on 1 September 2000. He was born in Hong Kong in 1949 and was educated here before reading law in the United Kingdom. He obtained his LLB (1971) and LLM (1972) degrees from the London School of Economics. On returning to Hong Kong, he taught as a Lecturer in Law at the University of Hong Kong from 1972 to 1979. He was called to the English Bar at the Inner Temple and to the Hong Kong Bar in 1978 and entered full-time private practice in Hong Kong in 1979, practising generally in the field of commercial law. He was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1990 and was made a Recorder of the Court of First Instance in 1997. He joined the Judiciary in 1999 as a Judge of the Court of First Instance. Then in January 2000, he was appointed a Justice of Appeal and, in September of that year, he was appointed a Permanent Judge of the Court of Final Appeal. Mr Justice Ribeiro was the Vice-Chairman of the Chief Justice's Working Party on Civil Justice Reform and drafted the Interim and Final Reports on which the procedural reforms adopted in 2009 were based. From 2008 to 2014, he was a member of the Judicial Officers Recommendation Commission which recommends judicial appointments. He presently chairs the Judiciary's Committee on Information Technology.	

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The Hon Dame Glazebrook, Judge of the Supreme Court of New Zealand	
Justice Susan Glazebrook DNZM. Justice Susan Glazebrook is a judge of the Supreme Court of New Zealand. She was appointed in August 2012 after serving ten years as a Court of Appeal judge and two years as a High Court judge. Before her elevation to the Bench, Justice Glazebrook was a partner at a national law firm. She also served on a number of commercial boards. Justice Glazebrook has a particular interest in the Asia/Pacific region and in 1998 was the President of the Inter-Pacific Bar Association. From 2002 to 2010, she was a member of the Advisory Council of Jurists for the Asia-Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions. She chaired the Institute of Judicial Studies from 2007 to 2012 and is currently a Board member of the International Association of Women Judges.	

Mr Justice Terence Arnold, Judge of the Supreme Court of New Zealand	
Terence Arnold graduated from Victoria University (BA and LLM) and New York University (LLM). He taught criminal law at Victoria University in Wellington as well as at several Canadian universities, including Dalhousie University and the University of Calgary. He was a partner of Chapman Tripp Sheffield Young between 1985 and 1994. He became a barrister sole in 1994 and shortly thereafter, was appointed Queen's Counsel. He was Solicitor-General between 2000 and 2006. He was appointed a judge of the Supreme Court on 11 June 2013.	

The Rt Hon Dame Sian Elias, Chief Justice of New Zealand	
The Right Honourable Dame Elias is the Chief Justice of New Zealand and the first woman to be appointed to that office. She graduated from Auckland University with an LLB Honours Degree in 1970 and was admitted to the New Zealand Bar the same year. She studied at Stanford University, from which she graduated in 1972 with a Master's Degree in Law. Following her return to New Zealand, she worked first as a solicitor and then as a barrister in Auckland. In 1984-1989 she was a member of the Law Commission working particularly on the reform of company law. In 1988, Dame Sian was appointed a Queen's Counsel. She appeared in a number of significant cases, including cases concerning the Treaty of Waitangi. She was awarded a Commemorative Medal in 1990 in recognition of services to the legal profession. In 1995, Dame Sian was appointed Judge of the High Court in Auckland. On 17 May 1999, she was appointed Chief Justice of New Zealand and was made a Dame Grand Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit. The Chief Justice was appointed a Privy Councillor in 1999 and first sat on the Privy Council in 2001. When in 2003 the Supreme Court Act established a final Court of Appeal in New Zealand, the Chief Justice became the head of the new Supreme Court	