



INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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Press Release

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It is with great sadness that the Court announces the passing of H.E. Judge James Richard Crawford

THE HAGUE, 31 May 2021. It is with great sadness that the International Court of Justice announces the passing of H.E. Judge James Richard Crawford on 31 May 2021 in The Hague. Judge Crawford had been a Member of the Court since 6 February 2015. His term of office was due to expire in February 2024.

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James Richard Crawford was born in Adelaide, Australia, on 14 November 1948. He dedicated his life to international law and enjoyed a long and distinguished career.

After obtaining undergraduate degrees from the University of Adelaide, he pursued his studies as a postgraduate at the University of Oxford. He later obtained further postgraduate qualifications from various universities across Europe.

Judge Crawford was called to the Bar as Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court of Australia in 1977. He was called to the Bar as Barrister of the Supreme Court of New South Wales on 6 November 1987 and was appointed Senior Counsel on 7 November 1997.

During his illustrious career, Judge Crawford held a number of key positions in his home country. Most notably he served as Commissioner of the Australian Law Reform Commission (1982-1990) and as a member of the Australian National Commission for UNESCO (1984-1988). He was also a member of the Advisory Committee on the Australian Judicial System, Constitutional Commission (1985-1987) and a member of the Admiralty Rules Committee (1989-1992).

At the international level, Judge Crawford's positions included member of the United Nations International Law Commission (1992-2001) and Special Rapporteur on State Responsibility (1997-2001).

Prior to his election to the International Court of Justice, he served as senior counsel, counsel or co-counsel in some 30 contentious and advisory proceedings before the Court.

He also served as president, judge, arbitrator or counsel in a number of other proceedings before various national and international courts and tribunals.

In addition, he testified as an expert witness in the highest domestic courts of several States, and produced expert reports and opinions.

Throughout his career, Judge Crawford published books, official reports and academic articles on a wide array of topics of international law, many of which are well known to legal practitioners and students. He also held many academic positions in renowned universities and research centres.

The recipient of various honorary titles and prizes, Judge Crawford participated in a number of professional associations and learned societies in different capacities. He was a former member of the Curatorium of The Hague Academy of International Law (elected in 1999), and an associate (elected in 1985) and member (since 1991) of the Institut de droit international.

Note: The Court's press releases are prepared by its Registry for information purposes only and do not constitute official documents.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. It was established by the United Nations Charter in June 1945 and began its activities in April 1946. The Court is composed of 15 judges elected for a nine-year term by the General Assembly and the Security Council of the United Nations. The seat of the Court is at the Peace Palace in The Hague (Netherlands). The Court has a twofold role: first, to settle, in accordance with international law, through judgments which have binding force and are without appeal for the parties concerned, legal disputes submitted to it by States; and, second, to give advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by duly authorized United Nations organs and agencies of the system.

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