

MEDIA RELEASE

The Commonwealth Lawyers Association (CLA) joins lawyers and human rights campaigners in the Commonwealth and beyond in mourning the death of Lord Tom Bingham.

Lord Bingham was a close friend of the CLA and a regular participant at its Commonwealth Law Conferences. Most recently, he chaired the “Commonwealth at 60” Law Lecture in December 2009 in London, which was co-hosted by the CLA.

Lord Bingham was the quintessential jurist, displaying a razor-sharp intellect, clarity of thought, lucidity of expression, independence of thought and an unyielding commitment to the Rule of Law and human rights.

In 2004 and 2005, Lord Bingham delivered seminal judgments entrenching the rights of persons not to be detained indefinitely without charge and rejecting the admissibility of evidence obtained through torture.

After his retirement, he argued forcefully and courageously that the Iraq war was a serious violation of international law.

Lord Bingham's rise within the legal profession and the judiciary was meteoric. He took silk at an early age of 38. He became a High Court judge in the Queen's Bench Division at the age of 43 and was elevated to the court of appeal six years later, eventually being appointed senior law lord. In recognition of his contribution to the Bench, he was made a Knight of the Garter in 2005, the first judge to have been accorded this honour.

Rightly hailed as one of the most influential and greatest judges of our time, Lord Bingham has left an indelible imprint on Rule of Law and human rights jurisprudence and in the hearts and minds of those who were privileged to come into contact with him.

Whilst mourning his death, we celebrate his achievements and recognise his enduring legacy. The best tribute to his life's work would be to dedicate ourselves to the ideals and principles which he fearlessly stood for.

We will miss him very much.

Mohamed J Husain

President : Commonwealth Lawyers Association.