



Commonwealth Lawyers Association

Upholding the rule of law

## SOLI SORABJEE CONFIRMED AS HON. LIFE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

The Commonwealth Lawyers Association (CLA) is delighted to announce that during the General Meeting of its members held at the 19<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Law Conference in Glasgow, Scotland, Mr Soli Sorabjee, CLA council member for India, was elected to the position of Honorary Life President\* for his long and distinguished service to the organisation.

Soli Sorabjee was admitted to the bar in 1953. At Government Law College, he was awarded the Kinloch Forbes Gold Medal in [Roman Law](#) and [Jurisprudence](#) (1952).<sup>[1]</sup> In 1971, Sorabjee was designated Senior Advocate of the [Supreme Court of India](#).

He served as Solicitor-General of India from 1977 to 1980. He was appointed [Attorney-General of India](#) on 7 April 1998, a post he held until 2004.<sup>[1]</sup> In March 2002, Soli Sorabjee was awarded the [Padma Vibhushan](#) for his defense of the freedom of expression and the protection of human rights.<sup>[3]</sup> He worked on the [Citizen's Justice Committee](#) which represented *pro bono* the [1984 anti-Sikh riots](#) victims.<sup>[4]</sup> In March 2006 he was appointed an Honorary Member of the [Order of Australia](#) (AM), "for service to Australia-India bilateral legal relations".<sup>[5]</sup>

Some of the other important cases he has appeared for are: Keshavananda Bharati, Maneka Gandhi, S.R. Bommai, I.R. Coelho, etc. He recently appeared in the case of B.P. Singhal, where the Apex Court held that Governors could not be dismissed without due cause.

Mr Sorabjee holds several offices in organizations of national and international repute. He is the chairman of [Transparency International](#) and Convenor of the [Minority Rights Group](#). He has served as [Special Rapporteur](#) to the [United Nations Human Rights Commission](#) since 1997, a member of the [United Nations](#) Sub commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities since 1998. Sorabjee served as member of the [Permanent Court of Arbitration](#) at [The Hague](#) from 2000 to 2006.<sup>[2]</sup> Soli J. Sorabjee is also President of the [United Lawyers Association](#), Vice-President of the Human Rights Committee of the [International Bar Association](#), Executive Committee member of the [International Association of Constitutional Lawyers](#) and member of the Committee on Arms Control and Disarmament Law of the [International Law Association](#). He is also a Patron of the [Media Legal Defence Initiative](#), a UK-based charity that provides legal aid and assistance to journalists and news media organizations around the world, supports training in media law and promotes the exchange of information, litigation tools and strategies for lawyers working on media freedom cases. He currently serves the CLA as council member for India.

CLA President Alexander Ward said: *"I am delighted that CLA has recognised Soli Sorabjee as an Honorary Life Presidency of the Commonwealth Lawyers Association for his outstanding contribution to the CLA and his life work in the legal profession. I look forward to formalizing this presentation at the 20<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Law Conference in 2017."*

*\*The CLA has only appointed an Honorary Life President on two other occasions during its long history. Mr Colin Nicholls QC was the first Honorary Life President appointed in 2007, the second appointment was Dato Cyrus Das, appointed in 2009*

The Commonwealth Lawyers Association is not-for-profit membership association for legal professional. CLA is a pan-Commonwealth organisation which seeks to uphold the rule of law in the Commonwealth by encouraging exchange of ideas between legal professionals, academics and students, through projects and by driving improvements in legal education.