

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

**Honorary Degree Citations
The degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*,
conferred on Dr. Louise Arbour
Friday, October 9, 2009**

Mr. Chancellor, the Honourable Louise Arbour is one of Canada's pre-eminent jurists. Throughout a long and luminous career, she has championed those noble but fragile ideals of truth and justice with courage and grace. In so doing, she has earned the respect and admiration of all who abhor violence and who cherish peace and justice.

Educated at the Collège Regina Assumpta in Montréal and at the Faculté de Droit of the Université de Montréal, she was called to the Quebec Bar in 1971 and the Ontario Bar in 1977. Her talent and dedication were recognized with a series of distinguished appointments, first as Law Clerk for the Supreme Court of Canada and then as an Assistant and ultimately as an Associate Professor and Associate Dean of Osgoode Hall Law School. In 1987, she was appointed to the Supreme Court of Ontario and later to the Court of Appeal for Ontario. In 1995, she became Commissioner to conduct an inquiry into the Prison for Women in Kingston, Ontario.

Her stature as a wise and perceptive jurist grew in legal circles both at home and abroad. In 1996, the Security Council of the United Nations signaled to the world its complete confidence in her experience and judgment by asking her to serve as Chief Prosecutor to the 1990s tribunals examining war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide in Rwanda and in the former Yugoslavia. She carried out her duties with an even-handed dignity that impressed everyone. Indeed, her conduct in this exceptionally challenging and sensitive role gave new meaning to the expression grace under pressure.

Subsequently, she was elevated to the Supreme Court of Canada, where her tenure was highlighted by several decisive and far-reaching criminal law rulings. In 2004, the United Nations once again turned to Louise Arbour and appointed her its High Commissioner for Human Rights. In this capacity, she courageously promoted humanitarianism and justice for all. Just recently, she assumed the twin roles of President and Chief Executive Officer of the International Crisis Group.