

# Final sitting for Sir Ian Barker

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High court registrar Claudine Henry-Anguna with Justice Sir Ian Barker, ombudsman Noopii Tearea and Justices of the Peace Georgina Williams and Carmen Temata. 19040521

## **A final ceremonial sitting was held at the Cook Islands High Court to farewell Justice Sir Ian Barker last week.**

Chief Justice Sir Hugh Williams QC said Sir Ian played an enormous part in the judicial life of New Zealand and the Cook Islands and he has had the opportunity to admire it.

“He was always ready with friendly advice, always helpful, never condescending and never overbearing. He was always interested in his role on the bench and the welfare of other judges,” Chief Justice Williams said.

He said in the mid-1980s, Sir Ian was largely responsible for redrafting the outdated New Zealand code of civil procedure.

“I salute Sir Ian’s decades of illustrious service to the bench and the bar in New Zealand. As in the Cook Islands he began coming here in the early 1990s when the Court of Appeal was not established on the full basis it is now.

“In 2006 he led the constitution legislative establishment of the Cook Islands Court of Appeal on a much more formal basis. He judged a wide range of criminal civil and land matters of the court of appeal,” he said.

He said Sir Ian worked on the Crimes Bill and hopes it will be passed soon. He also played a part in drafting the Family Protection and Support Act.

President of the Court of Appeal Justice Sir David Williams thanked Sir Ian for his outstanding contribution to the law and administration of the Cook Islands over the last 20 years.

He said Sir Ian started with his judicial service in the high court from 1976-1997 in New Zealand and the Cook Islands court of appeal from 1994 to 2019.

He was also a university law school teacher from 1960-1973 and chancellor at the University of Auckland from 1991-1999, the longest term of any chancellor.

On behalf of government, the Solicitor-General Stuart Baker said: “When a lot of people mention your name they do so with pride and a smile on their face. We are fortunate to have had you. You will be truly missed.

“Not only the Court of Appeal, but it will be a big loss to the government and all involved in your work here in the Cook Islands.”

President of the law society, Wilkie Rasmussen also conveyed the well wishes of the law society to Sir Ian.

He said Sir Ian has set the threshold so high, that those who could stand his rigorous questions would do well as an advocate.

“You have been here for 29 years, behind the scenes you have shaken a lot of things,” he said.

Rasmussen gave Sir Ian a gift from the law society, a hat which a woman from the northern group had woven.

Sir Ian in his final statement to the judicial society said he was overwhelmed with the addresses made and was grateful with all that was said and acknowledged the judiciary staff.

He said there are signs of young Cook Islanders returning to the profession and hope they continue to do so.

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