

Public Lecture

“The Supreme Court”

New Zealand Law Foundation Distinguished Visiting Fellow

Lord Phillips of Worth Matravers

This lecture explores the origin and development of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom. The court was established in 2009 by the Constitutional Reform Act 2005. It is an independent court of appeal that replaced the House of Lords as the highest appellate court in the United Kingdom (other than for Scottish Criminal cases). The move was a milestone in the constitutional history of the United Kingdom, separating the powers exercised by the judiciary and the upper house of Parliament. Symbolically, the court sits alongside, but separate to, the executive and legislative arms of the state.

Lord Phillips, as the first President of the Supreme Court, explains the history behind the development of the court. He touches on foundational concepts such as the separation of powers, and provides insight on the organisation and structure of the court as it exists today. He considers some of the key cases that have come before the court and the dialogue between the Supreme Court and the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

NICHOLAS PHILLIPS (Lord Phillips of Worth Matravers) was the first President of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom. He was educated at King's College, Cambridge after completing national service with the Royal Navy. He was called to the Bar at the Middle Temple in 1962. He was made a Queen's Counsel in 1978, became a Recorder in 1982, and was appointed a High Court Judge (Queen's Bench Division) in 1987. He sat in the Commercial Court and presided over the Barlow Clowes and Maxwell prosecutions. He became a Lord Justice of Appeal in 1995 and a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary in 1999. Lord Phillips became Master of the Rolls in 2000 and Lord Chief Justice of England and

Wales in 2005. He was the first Lord Chief Justice to be Head of the Judiciary when this role was transferred from the Lord Chancellor in 2006. Lord Phillips became the Senior Lord of Appeal in Ordinary (the senior law lord) in 2008 and the first President of the Supreme Court when it was established in 2009. He was President of the Supreme Court from 2009 to 2012 and is a Knight Companion of the Order of the Garter.

Lord Phillips is currently a Dixon Poon Distinguished Fellow and Visiting Professor at King's College, London, the President of the Qatar International Court and a judge on the Court of Final Appeal of Hong Kong.

5.30pm Thursday 14 March

Lecture Theatre 2

Old Government Buildings

55 Lambton Quay

Wellington

Followed by refreshments

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