

Courting Confidence Preserving Trust in Judicial Independence

June 21st, 2023
8:30am – 2:00pm

Fairmont Château Laurier
1 Rideau Street, Ottawa, ON
Ballroom

- 8:30 Registration & Continental Breakfast
- 9:15 Welcome & Opening Remarks
Steeves Bujold, President, Canadian Bar Association
- 9:20 Keynote Address
The Right Honourable Richard Wagner, P.C.
Chief Justice of Canada
- 9:35 Remarks
Shalene Curtis-Micallef
Deputy Minister of Justice and Deputy Attorney General of Canada
- 9:40 Crisis of Confidence: The Role of Media & An Informed Public in Upholding Democratic Institutions

Judicial independence is a matter of trust. Appropriate media coverage of judicial rulings, as well as education and knowledge are at the core of this public trust – a trust that is essential to Canada's justice system. At the same time, the right to comment on and even criticize the legal system and decisions of the courts is part of our democratic process. But when does the message turn from education to disinformation and begin to harm public confidence in the judicial system?

Our distinguished panel of judges and media experts will discuss the importance of free speech and the right to criticize legal decisions, while examining what can be done in a free and democratic society to counteract the negative effects of the spread of disinformation.

Moderator Jennifer Ditchburn
President & CEO of the Institute for Research on Public Policy

Panel The Honourable Glenn D. Joyal
Chief Justice of Court of the King's Bench Manitoba

Patrick Bourbeau
Vice-President, Legal Affairs, La Presse and President, Canadian Media Lawyers' Association

Althia Raj
Toronto Star

10:40 Questions and Answers

10:50 Health Break

11:00 Strengthening Judicial Independence

Judicial independence is for the benefit of citizens, not judges. But threats to it in an era of polarization and underfunded justice can sow seeds of doubt in the judiciary's ability to deliver high standards of fair and impartial justice. To address these challenges, our panel will share their insights on how judicial independence can be preserved and strengthened. They will explore solutions that support a better functioning justice system and ways to promote greater public trust in the judiciary.

Moderator Jennifer Ditchburn
President & CEO of the Institute for Research on Public Policy

Panel The Honourable Marie-Anne Paquette
Chief Justice of the Superior Court of Quebec

The Honourable Michael Tulloch
Chief Justice of Ontario

The Honourable Paul Favel
Federal Court of Canada

The Honourable Michèle Monast
President, Canadian Superior Court Judges Association (CSCJA)

12:00 Questions and Answers

12:15 Closing Remarks

12:20 Luncheon with Indigenous Celebrations
(to be served in the Laurier Room)