



INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

AT 20



Reflections on the Past,
Present and the Future

Philippe Kirsch

Chair of the Rome Conference and former President of the International Criminal Court (2003-2009)



Philippe Kirsch, OC, QC served as a judge of the International Criminal Court's Appeals Chamber as well as the Court's first President from 2003 to 2009. In 1998, he had chaired the Committee of the Whole of the Rome Conference which created the ICC, and until 2002 the Preparatory Commission for the Court. He later chaired for six years the Advisory Committee on Nominations of ICC judges of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute.

Mr. Kirsch had earlier occupied a variety of positions at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of the Canadian Government until 2003, including that of Director General of the Legal Bureau and Legal Adviser to the Department, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations and Ambassador to Sweden. He also chaired a number of UN treaty-making bodies dealing in particular with various forms of terrorism, as well as conferences on international humanitarian law in the context of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

After leaving the ICC, Mr. Kirsch was Judge ad hoc at the International Court of Justice in a case concerning the conduct of criminal proceedings against Hissène Habré, former dictator in Chad. He chaired the UN Human Rights Council's Commission of Inquiry for Libya. He also was a member of a Commission of inquiry in Bahrain and of an International Bar Association's Fact-finding mission in Myanmar, and assumed a number of other responsibilities.