Justice Kirby to receive one of the University’s highest honours

One of Australia’s most celebrated jurists will be honoured by the University of Tasmania today (Tuesday, 19 December).

The Honourable Justice Michael Kirby AC, CMG, will be admitted to the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws at 11am as the summer graduation round in Hobart continues into day two.

Acting Vice-Chancellor Professor Mike Calford said the honorary degree recognised Justice Kirby’s rich and ongoing contribution to the University and celebrated his achievements in the national and international arena.

“He is an inspiration to our law students: a true giant of their chosen field who exists not as a name in a text, but as a man who regularly visits their faculty to teach.

“The University is privileged to bestow this honour upon him.”

A renowned jurist, educator and former judge, Justice Kirby has had ties with the University since the 1960s when he was, in his words, “a very respectable student trouble-maker” at the University of Sydney involved in student unionism.

His career is storied. He was Deputy President of the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, Inaugural Chairman of the Australian Law Reform Commission, Judge of the Federal Court of Australia, President of the New South Wales Court of Appeal, President of the Court of Appeal Solomon Islands, and Justice of the High Court of Australia.
When he retired from the High Court in 2009, he was Australia’s longest-serving judicial officer. While his relationship with the University of Tasmania had grown during those years, it was after retirement that it developed significant strength.

Justice Kirby has been an Adjunct Professor with the Faculty of Law since 2009, and is also the chief editor of the Faculty’s *Journal of Law and Information Science*. He regularly supports the staff and students with lectures, seminars, meetings and in ceremonies.

He has also delivered a number of key public lectures for the University.

Justice Kirby is a prominent figure on the international human rights stage, having served as President of the International Commission of Jurists, as a special representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations for Human Rights in Cambodia, and several other United Nations bodies.

Most recently, he was the Chair of the UN Human Rights Council’s Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

**Media information**

Justice Kirby will be available for photographs and filming in the Robing Room (Harbour View 2, mezzanine level, Grand Chancellor Hotel) prior to the ceremony, **from 10.15am-10.45am** only.

Contact for the Robing Room is Pat McConville on 0400 216 634.

Alternatively media are invited to photograph or film Justice Kirby during the **11am** ceremony. Justice Kirby will give his address at approximately **noon**.

The ceremony will also be livestreamed at [https://livestream.com/UniversityofTasmania/events/7944633](https://livestream.com/UniversityofTasmania/events/7944633)

**Information released by:**
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