



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE
REFORM OF CRIMINAL LAW



ISRL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2026

THINKING BEYOND THE BARS: REIMAGINING BAIL, SENTENCING, AND IMPRISONMENT

AGENDA

HONOURARY CHAIR

The Right Honourable Richard Wagner, Chief Justice of Canada



The Right Honourable Richard Wagner is the 18th Chief Justice of Canada. As such, he presides over the Canadian Judicial Council and the National Judicial Institute and chairs the Advisory Council for the Order of Canada. Chief Justice Wagner was president of the Association des Cours Constitutionnelles Francophones from 2019 to 2022. The Chief Justice also fulfilled his duty to serve as administrator of the Government of Canada from January 23 to July 26, 2021. Born and raised in Montreal, Chief Justice Wagner earned his Bachelor of Social Science and Licentiate in Laws at the University of Ottawa. He was called to the Quebec Bar in 1980 and was a partner in the law firm of Lavery, de Billy until

2004. His areas of specialization included professional liability, commercial litigation and class action lawsuits. As a litigator, he argued cases before every level of court in Quebec, and quasi-judicial tribunals, as well as the Federal Court and the Supreme Court of Canada. Throughout his legal career, he led initiatives to help lawyers constantly upgrade their skills and knowledge, such as the creation of the Centre d'accès à l'information juridique, for which he was awarded the Mérite du Barreau du Québec. He also received Doctor of Laws honoris causa degrees from the Faculty of Law of the University of Ottawa, the Law Society of Ontario, Western University and the Université du Québec à Chicoutimi. In recognition of his longstanding contribution to the advancement of the law, the Bar of Montreal awarded him its highest distinction, the Medal of the Bar of Montreal, in 2022. In addition, for his outstanding contribution to upholding and promoting the rule of law, the World Jurist Association presented him with its Medal of Honor at a ceremony at the United Nations in New York in 2023. Most recently, in 2024, France awarded him the insignia of Commander of the national order of the Legion of Honour, the country's highest decoration, for his exemplary services to the cause of justice.

Chief Justice Wagner was appointed a judge of the Superior Court of Quebec in 2004 and the Quebec Court of Appeal in 2011. In 2012, he was appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada. He was sworn in as Chief Justice of Canada on December 18, 2017.



SUNDAY – JULY 12

- 2:00 – 5:00 PM ● **Registration**
- 5:00 – 7:00 PM ● **Opening Reception**

MONDAY – JULY 13

- 8:30 – 9:30 AM ● **Welcoming Remarks**
Cynthia Orr, ISRCL President
The Right Honourable Richard Wagner, P.C., Chief Justice of Canada
- 9:30 – 10:30 AM ● **'Bail not jail': Legal Contradictions, Public Safety and Misguided Bail Reform**
Prof. Nicole Myers, Queen's University
- Bail Reform in Canada: Civil Liberties at a Crossroads**
Howard Sapers, Canadian Civil Liberties Association
- Bail on Appeal: The United States Model and Its Distinctive Features**
Prof. Ellen Podgor, Stetson University College of Law
- Moderator: Judge Satinder Sidhu, Provincial Court of British Columbia*

10:30 – 11:00 AM	<p>● Topic: TBA Jonathan Rudin, Aboriginal Legal Services</p>
11:00 – 11:20 AM	<p>● Break</p>
11:20 – 12:30 PM	<p>● Sentencing Emerging Adults: Comparative Perspectives from Victoria, New South Wales, and Canada Dr. Natalia Antolak-Saper, Monash University</p> <p>Who Decides When a Child Becomes an Adult? Institutional Design and the Gate to Adult Punishment Prof. Cara Shaffer, South Texas College of Law Houston</p> <p>The CHILD DIVERSION ACT, 2018 – Changing the face of Criminal Youth Justice in Jamaica Nicole Wright, Legal Reform Department</p> <p><i>Moderator: Isabel Schurman, CCCDL-CCAD</i></p>
12:30 – 2:00 PM	<p>● Lunch</p>
2:00 – 3:00 PM	<p>● Shame on you! The historical and modern role of shaming in sentencing Trevor Shaw, British Columbia Prosecution Service</p> <p>Two-Tier Justice? Sentencing, Deportation and the Principle of Proportionality in Canada Meritxell Abellan-Almenara, University of Montréal</p> <p>Where Justice Meets Mercy: The Role of Community Courts in Rehabilitation and Restoration Judge Carol Ling, The State Courts of Singapore</p> <p><i>Moderator: Hon. Justice Kashim Zannah, High Court of Borno State, Nigeria</i></p>

3:00 – 3:20 PM

Break

3:20 – 4:30 PM

From Trial to Reparation: What Canada Can Learn from Victim-Centered Justice at the ICC

Hon. Justice Simon Ruel, Quebec Court of Appeal

Sentencing Battered Women who Kill their Abusers – Reimagining Sentencing for Imperfect Victims and the Myth of “Mutual Violence”

Prof. Frances Chapman, Lakehead University

Diversion instead of prosecution, personalized legal consequences for the accused instead of prison time

Dr. Ágnes Czine, The Hungarian Constitutional Court and Károli Gáspár University of Reformed Church in Hungary

Moderator: Laurence Juillet, AADM

Evening

Reception

Court of Appeal of Quebec, located 100 Notre-Dame St. East, Montreal, Quebec H2Y 3A7



TUESDAY – JULY 14

9:00 – 10:10 AM ●

Restoring Justice: Why Victim-Offender-Community Conversations Matter

Hon. Justice Anna Loparco, Alberta Court of King's Bench
Deputy Chief Justice Joanne Durant, Alberta Court of Justice
Hon. Justice Michelle Christopher, Alberta Court of Justice
Megan Stephens, Megan Stephens Law, Toronto
Matthew Hinshaw, Alberta Crown Prosecution Service

Moderator: TBA

10:10 – 11:10 AM ●

The Role of Public Prosecutors in Sentencing in Punjab, Pakistan: Ensuring Fair and Proportionate Punishment

Asmat Ullah Khan, Punjab Public Prosecution Dept.

Prisons in Crisis – The Role of the Independent Public Prosecutor

John Logue, Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal Service

Take My Word for It: Diplomatic Assurances and Preventing Mistreatment, Torture or Death

Arshana Lalani, Department of Justice Canada

Moderator: Trevor Shaw, BC Prosecution Service

11:10 – 11:30 AM ●

Break

11:30 – 12:30 PM ●

Victim Protection: From limiting rights to improving victims' well-being

Prof. Jo-Anne Wemmers, Université de Montréal

The Victim's Right to Convey their Views as Part of the Public Interest under the Crime Victims' Rights Act

Prof. Marie Manikis, Faculty of Law, McGill University

Sentencing Online Child Sexual Exploitation Offenders: An Analysis of Victorian Court Practice

Prof. Jonathan Clough, Monash University

Moderator: Raelene Sharp, K.C.

12:30 – 2:00 PM ●

Lunch

2:00 – 3:10 PM ●

Moving from barriers to inclusion: Supporting people with disability in the courts

Prof. Lorana Bartels, Australian National University

Mental Health Concerns and Punishment; How should moral blameworthiness in the context of mental health issues be addressed in assessing fitness of sentence?

Thomas Arbogast, K.C., TA Law

Sentencing Offenders with a Mental Health/Intellectual Impairment

Magistrate Tina Previtera, Magistrates Court of Queensland

*Moderator: Hon. Justice Michael Tammen,
Supreme Court of British Columbia*

3:10 – 3:30 PM ●

Break

3:30 – 4:30 PM ●

Appellate Guidance on Individualized Justice: Mitigation and Collateral Consequences in Ontario Sentencing Jurisprudence

Hon. Justice Craig A. Brannagan, Ontario Court of Justice

The Myth Behind Bars: Why Alternatives to Imprisonment Matter for Reducing Reoffending

Tommaso Trincherà, Bocconi University

Adult time for adult crime? Sentencing law reform lessons from a case study of moral panic in Melbourne, Australia

Paige Darby, Monash University

*Moderator: Natalia Antolak-Saper,
Monash University*

● **Local Group Dinners**

WEDNESDAY – JULY 15

9:00 – 10:10 AM

Topic: TBA

Hon. Justice Patrick Healy, Court of Appeal of Quebec

Sentencing Guidelines around the World

Professor Julian Roberts, University of Oxford

Sentencing and Remand – The Scottish Perspective

Sheriff Adrian Cottam, Judicial Institute for Scotland

Lady Drummond, Chair of the Judicial Institute for

Scotland & member of the Scottish Sentencing Council

Sheriff Joanna McDonald, Sheriff at Glasgow and

member of the Scottish Sentencing Council

Moderator: Judge Jeff Campbell, Provincial Court of British Columbia

10:10 – 11:10 AM

"One life at a time" – enhancing citizen security through transformative correctional services- A paradigm policy shift in Jamaica.

Shauna Trowers, Ministry of National Security

The View from the Other End of the Criminal Justice System: From Denunciation and Deterrence to Rehabilitation in the Canadian Parole System

Prof. Terry Hancock



Freedom from Within: A Meta-Analytic Review of Mindfulness Meditation-Based Interventions in Prison

Nicolette Pankovics, Royal Melbourne University of Technology (RMIT)

Moderator: Marie Comiskey, Public Prosecution Service of Canada

11:10 – 11:30 AM

Break

11:30 – 12:30 PM

Organized Crime in Canada: The Challenges with Bail, Sentencing and Imprisonment

Prof. Neil Boyd, Int'l Centre for Criminal Law Reform
Jeffrey Simser, Int'l Centre for Criminal Law Reform

Moderator: Dr. Peter German, K.C., ICCLR

12:30 – 2:00 PM

Lunch

2:00 – 3:30 PM

The Potential for Socio-Legal Theory in Bail Reformation

Dr. Megan Beatrice, Deakin Law School

Risk, Race, and Bail Reform in Canada

Dr. Danardo Jones, University of Windsor
Dr. Camisha Sibblis, University of Windsor

Beyond Cash Bail: Reimagining Pretrial Justice through Equity and Risk Management

Omoyemen Lucia Odigie-Emmanuel, Nigerian Law School

Moderator: Cynthia Orr, ISRCL

Closing Dinner

Le Balcon, 463 Sainte-Catherine Ouest, Montréal, Québec, Canada, H3B 1B1

THURSDAY – JULY 16

9:00 – 10:10 AM

Bail, Disclosure, Evidence, Parole, and Compensation in the Context of Wrongful Convictions

Tamara Levy, UBC Innocence Project
Jerome Kennedy, Innocence Canada
Cynthia Orr, President of ISRCL
Nicholas St Jacques, Ad. E., FACTL

Moderator: Hon. Justice Elizabeth Bennett

10:10 – 11:10 AM

From the West Coast to the Deep South: A Litigator's Perspective of How Judicial Politics Have Shaped American Prison Conditions

Kelly Knapp

Beyond the Walls, but Still Under Watch: The Paradox of Electronic Monitoring and Prison Overcrowding in Brazil

Prof. André Mendes, FGV Rio Law School

Normalization and Reintegration: Rethinking Canada's Justice Path Through a Danish Perspective

Lee Vandergust, British Columbia Prosecution Service

Moderator: Stacey Repas, BC Prosecution Service

11:10 – 11:30 AM

Break

11:30 – 12:30 PM

Reimagining Reintegration: Acknowledging the Value of Peer Support

Kate Kennedy, Royal Melbourne University of Technology

Investing Outside of the Bars

Sara Tessier, Northpine Foundation

Moderator: John Logue, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service

Closing



In July 1987, over 200 experts from Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, other Commonwealth countries, the United States, Europe, and Israel gathered at the Inns of Court in London to discuss the reform of criminal law and the criminal justice system. Over the course of the London conference, the participants analyzed the sources and the possible outcomes of movements for criminal law reform which had developed in their own countries. They examined the present need for reform; the social context for reform; the general principles which should form its basis; and how reforms should be accomplished. Delegates also looked at possible specific reforms in a number of areas. At the conclusion of the London conference, the participants called for the establishment of an international body to bring together those actively working for the improvement of the criminal law and the administration of criminal justice. A number of the participants took up that challenge and founded the ISRCL in January 1988.

The ISRCL is a non-profit charitable association incorporated under the laws of Canada. In the discussions that led to its formation, the founders were strongly of the view that the ISRCL must retain its independence of thought and action from government. Accordingly, the ISRCL's key activities and its member services are primarily funded by an annual membership levy and donations. The ISRCL does, however, solicit financial assistance for specific conferences, seminars, or projects from government departments, agencies, law foundations, and other foundations. Funding for specific projects has been obtained from The British Council, the Departments of Justice of Canada and New Zealand, The Home Office, the Attorney General's Department of Australia, the Victoria Law Foundation, the Law Foundation of British Columbia, the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia, and the Canadian International Development Agency. The Law Reform Commission of Canada, the Correctional Service of Canada, and the British Columbia Corrections Branch have also provided important material and financial assistance in the past.