



## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond was appointed British Columbia's first Representative for Children and Youth in November 2006, for a five-year term. The Representative for Children and Youth is an independent officer of the Legislature.

Ms. Turpel-Lafond, who took a five-year leave from the Saskatchewan Provincial Court, was appointed to the bench in 1998. She was the Administrative Judge for Saskatoon, involved in the administration of the Provincial Court of Saskatchewan in relation to access to justice, judicial independence projects, technology and public outreach.

She has also worked as a criminal law judge in youth and adult courts, which led her to work at developing partnerships to better serve the needs of young people in the justice system, particularly sexually exploited children and youth, and children and youth with disabilities, such as those who suffer from fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.

Prior to her judicial appointment, Ms Turpel-Lafond was a lawyer in Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan and a tenured professor of law at Dalhousie University Faculty of Law. She taught law at the University of Toronto, the University of Notre Dame and other universities, and held the position of Aboriginal Scholar at the University of Saskatchewan. She has been a visiting professor at the University of British Columbia and the University of Victoria law schools.

As a practicing lawyer, she appeared before all levels of Courts in Canada, including the Supreme Court of Canada.

Ms Turpel-Lafond has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Carleton University, a law degree from Osgoode Hall, a master's degree in international law from Cambridge University and a doctorate of law from Harvard Law School. She also holds a certificate in the international and comparative law of human rights from the University of Strasbourg in France.

She holds two honorary doctorates from the University of Regina (2003) and Mount Saint Vincent University (2005). In 2007, the Indigenous Bar Association awarded her the distinction of "Indigenous Peoples' Counsel."

Time Magazine has twice bestowed honours upon Ms Turpel-Lafond, naming her one of the "100 Global Leaders of Tomorrow" in 1994, and in 1999 as one of the "Top 20 Canadian Leaders for the 21st Century".

She has been active in supporting healthy families and seeking greater respect and recognition of the unique situation that children in society, particularly vulnerable children, find themselves in.

Ms Turpel-Lafond, her husband George E. Lafond, their son and three daughters, (including twins), are members of the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation in Saskatchewan. They now reside in Victoria, B.C.