



**Admission Ceremony  
27 May 2010, 10am  
Cairns**

In welcoming you to the legal profession, I congratulate you on your substantial achievement, while adding an expression of thanks to those who will have helped you along the way, your families and friends.

What distinguishes a profession from equally respectable callings is that a professional person is committed to serving the public.

What distinguishes the legal profession from other professions is that a lawyer owes his or her professional legitimacy to the courts of law.

I hope those axioms will guide your practise of your profession. Recognizing a fundamental obligation to serve the public should shield you from the unduly materialistic approach for which some

practitioners are sometimes criticized.

Recognizing your curial lineage, as officers of the court, will remind you of the primacy of impeccable ethics.

From the point of view of the courts, the operation of the legal profession is of critical concern. The courts depend on an efficient, ethical profession in which disputants and potential disputants have confidence; along with those who rely on expert assistance in non-contentious matters. But there is a supervening characteristic which is pivotal, and that is the independence of the profession.

Independence is important for public trust in the profession. It is also critical to perceptions of the judiciary which is drawn

from the profession. Just as there can be no compromising the independence of the judiciary, there can be no compromising the independence of the source from which it is drawn.

Your devotion to those qualities – public service, efficiency, ethical commitment and independence, will ensure that by serving your clients well, you also play your part in assuring the stipulation upon which our civil society depends, and that is, maintenance of the rule of law.

I wish you well as you undertake these substantial responsibilities.