Biography for the Honourable Frank Iacobucci

Frank Iacobucci has had a distinguished career in private practice, academia, government, and the judiciary. He was born, raised, and educated in Vancouver, British Columbia, where he received his B. Comm. and LL.B. from the University of British Columbia. He went on to receive his LL.M. and Dip. International Law from Cambridge.

He began his career in 1964 as a lawyer at a large New York firm, where he practiced corporate and securities law. In 1967, he joined the Faculty of Law, University of Toronto, where he was a professor until 1985. He also served as vice-president, Internal Affairs at the University of Toronto from 1975 to 1979 and was the dean of the Faculty of Law from 1979 to 1983. From 1983 to 1985, he was vice-president and provost of the University. In 1985, Mr. Iacobucci was appointed deputy minister of justice and deputy attorney general for Canada; in 1988, he was made the chief justice of the Federal Court of Canada; and in 1991, he became a justice of the Supreme Court of Canada.

Mr. Iacobucci has received numerous awards, honours, and other recognitions in Canada, the United States, England, and Italy. In addition to authoring and co-authoring judgments of the Supreme Court of Canada and the Federal Court of Canada, he has written extensively on a wide variety of legal and policy subjects.

Mr. Iacobucci retired from the Supreme Court of Canada in June 2004 and served as interim president of the University of Toronto from September 2004 until June 2005. On 1 July 2005, he joined Torys LLP as counsel and became chairman of Torstar Corporation.

In 2005, the Government of Canada appointed Mr. Iacobucci to lead discussions with legal counsel for former students, legal counsel for churches, the Assembly of First Nations and other Aboriginal organizations, in order to conclude an agreement to achieve a fair and lasting resolution of the legacy of Indian residential schools. The resulting Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement was approved by all parties in 2006 and represents the largest class action settlement in Canadian history. It resulted in the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, which, in 2014, appointed Mr. Iacobucci as an honorary witness.

In recent years, Mr. Iacobucci has contributed his expertise as a negotiator and advisor. In 2013, he was appointed by the Government of Ontario as lead negotiator in discussions with the Chiefs of Matawa Tribal Council on resource developments in the province’s Ring of Fire.

Mr. Iacobucci has also chaired two notable independent reviews in recent years. In 2013, he conducted an independent review of First Nations representation on juries on behalf of the Government of Ontario. That same year, he also conducted an independent review of police encounters with people in crisis on behalf of then-Toronto Police Services Chief, William Blair.

Mr. Iacobucci is a Companion of the Order of Canada and a member of the Queen's Counsel.