

Note biografiche di Navi Pillay

Navanethem (Navi) Pillay, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

On 28 July 2008, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, following approval by the General Assembly, appointed **Navanethem (Navi) Pillay** of South Africa as the new High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Judge Pillay's nomination came at the end of an extensive selection process, which included consultations with Member States and with the broad-based non-governmental organization community. She has outstanding credentials in human rights and justice. Since 2003, she has served as judge on the International Criminal Court. In 1999, she was elected Judge President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, which she joined in 1995, having been elected as judge by the General Assembly; her four-year term with the Rwanda Tribunal was renewed in 1998. Judge Pillay was an attorney and conveyancer of the High Court of South Africa from 1967 to 1995, and was appointed acting judge of the High Court in 1995. In 1967, she became the first woman to start a law practice in South Africa's Natal Province, providing legal defence for opponents of apartheid. She exposed the practice and effects of torture and solitary confinement on detainees held in police custody, and successfully established the rights of prisoners on Robben Island.

She co-founded the Advice Desk for the Abused and ran a shelter for victims of domestic violence. As a member of the Women's National Coalition, she contributed to the inclusion in South Africa's Constitution of an equality clause prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of race, religion and sexual orientation. Judge Pillay participated in the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda's groundbreaking jurisprudence on rape as genocide, and on issues of freedom of speech and hate propaganda. She is also co-founder of Equality Now, an international women's rights organization based in New York.

Born on 23 September 1941, Ms. Pillay holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Laws from Natal University South Africa. She also holds a Master of Laws and a doctorate in juridical science from Harvard University. She has two daughters.

Ms. Pillay will replace Louise Arbour. The Secretary-General is grateful for Ms. Arbour's principled stewardship and tireless dedication to the United Nations and to human rights around the world.

The Secretary-General is committed to ensuring that human rights remain high on the United Nations agenda. He expects that the new High Commissioner will preserve the independence of her Office and maintain effective working relations with the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council. The Secretary-General is determined to give the High Commissioner full support, including with increased resources, as approved by the General Assembly.