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THE DISTRICT COURT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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WELCOME CEREMONY FOR HER HONOUR
JUDGE HAYLEY CORMANN

WAGER CJDC

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

AT PERTH ON MONDAY, 24 FEBRUARY 2025 AT 9.16 AM

MR J.R. QUIGLEY MLA Attorney-General of Western Australia

MR G.N. MACK President, the Law Society of Western
Australia

MS J.K. TAYLOR SC Western Australian Bar Association

MS B.E. SOJAN President, Criminal Lawyers' Association of
Western Australia

WAGER CJDC: This is a special sitting to welcome her Honour Judge Hayley Cormann to this Court. Her Honour having received her commission from His Excellency the Governor on 23 December 2024.

I acknowledge that we're sitting today on the land of the Whadjuk people of the greater Noongar nation, and I pay my respects to their elders past and present. The District Court jurisdiction covers the entire State of Western Australia, and I pay my respects to Aboriginal peoples all over the State and to the elders past and present of all of the lands over which we preside.

We sit today as a full Court to welcome our newest judicial sibling. I welcome and thank the Honourable Chief Justice Peter Quinlan for joining us today. It gives me great pleasure to welcome her Honour's family this morning, particularly her Honour's husband, the Honourable Mathias Cormann and their daughters, Isabelle and Charlotte.

I also welcome her Honour's mother, Mrs Yvonne Messina and her Honour's stepfather, Mr Nino Messina. There are many special guests here today for Judge Cormann, and be they family, personal friends or members of the legal fraternity, you are all welcome.

I welcome the Honourable Justice Banks-Smith and Justice Vandongen of the Federal Court of Australia, the Honourable Kate Glancy, President of the State Administrative Tribunal, Mr Craig Bydder SC, Solicitor-General, Ms Joanne Stampalia PSM, Deputy Director General of the Department of Justice, Mr Rob Owen SC, Director of Public Prosecutions for the State of Western Australia, Ms Ros Fogliani, State Coroner, Ms Catriona Macleod, President of the Women Lawyers Association of Western Australia, and a number of executive representatives of Court and Tribunal Services.

I welcome Justices of the Supreme Court including Appeal Justices Mazza, Vaughan, Hall and Archer, and Justices McGrath, Hill, Strk, Solomon, Whitby, Musikanth, Cobby, Gething and Palmer, as well as Master Russell. I welcome former judges of this Court and partners and spouses of former judges and sitting judges of this Court, together with Ms Lucette Quinlan, wife of our Chief Justice.

I particularly welcome former Chief Judge His Honour Kevin Sleight, who's here for both Judge Cormann, and also in recognition of the service performed by our Attorney General. I welcome members of the Bar and the wider profession, and I note the level of respect shown to

her Honour by the attendance of about 15 of our Senior Counsel.

I especially welcome the speakers at the Bar table. Firstly, the Honourable John Quigley MLA, Attorney-General for the State of Western Australia, who I will return to later, Mr Gary Mack, President of the Law Society of Western Australia, Ms Julie Taylor SC, President of the Bar Association of Western Australia, and Ms Brooke Sojan, President of the Criminal Lawyers' Association.

Today is the last time Mr Attorney will speak on behalf of the Government of Western Australia to welcome a new judge to this Court. Since 17 March 2017, you, Mr Attorney, have unwaveringly been committed to the independence of the judiciary and the need to increase the number of judges appointed to this Court in order to address the unacceptable backlogs in this jurisdiction.

Mr Attorney, you have appointed 36 judges in that time to this Court, starting with her Honour Judge Belinda Lonsdale, who is now our 10th most senior judge, and ending today with her Honour Judge Hayley Cormann, who is our 38th most senior judge.

You have always consulted prior to making an appointment appropriately through the Solicitor General, ensuring the whole of the profession including Women Lawyers of Western Australia, Criminal Lawyers' Association of Western Australia, the Law Society of Western Australia and the Bar Association of Western Australia and others comment on the proposed appointee, to make sure they have the skills, merit and character that make them suitable for appointment.

Mr Attorney, it's also fitting that your first appointment was a woman and your last appointment is a woman. Our Bench is now very different from the Bench you first saw in 2017. Presently, 18 of our 38 judges are women, being 17 of the 35 judges who sit regularly in the District Court. Over the past seven years, you've introduced over 60 pieces of legislation and this has changed many aspects of the work of this Court.

In January 2018, the District Court legislatively was granted jurisdiction to deal with all matters that carry a maximum of life imprisonment except for homicides. You were instrumental in the removal of the limitation periods to enable victims of childhood sexual abuse to proceed civilly and more recently, the introduction of the Criminal Law (Mental Impairment) Act has changed the way in which

courts deal with those charged with criminal offences who are unfit to stand trial due to mental health, intellectual disability and other impairments.

In fact, her Honour is known as our CLMI appointment being an appointment of an additional judge to the Court made by the Government of Western Australia in recognition of the significant increase in the workload following the introduction of the Criminal Law (Mental Impairment) Act and I thank you and the Government for the judicial position. Mr Attorney, your personal contribution to the legal profession and to the judiciary has been enormous.

You were admitted to practice on 23 December 1975, when as a young practitioner, you no doubt stood before a Bench, but appeared far more fierce to you than the Bench you now face today. It's almost 50 years since your admission date and what an achievement. We thank you for the work you've performed on this Court's behalf and we look forward to seeing you at the Bar table, if that's the future direction that your career takes you. Her Honour Judge Cormann's appointment was of course, as the additional appointment and I've already commented on that.

But I want to make it very clear that her Honour will not be sitting in Criminal Law (Mental Impairment) Act matters alone. Her Honour has significant experience and will, no doubt, enjoy presiding over a wide variety of matters in both the civil and criminal jurisdictions in Perth and throughout Western Australia. Prior to her appointment, her Honour was known to the Court for being a well-prepared hard-working counsel and a committed representative and spokesperson for the profession.

Over the last two months, her Honour has demonstrated her focus, determination and commitment to her judicial appointment and her ability to be a collegiate judicial team player. I warmly welcome her Honour to the Court and I'm sure her Honour will master and enjoy many judicial challenges ahead.

Yes, Mr Attorney.

QUIGLEY, MR: May it please the Court. Thank you, Chief Judge. And I'd like to also commence by recognising the Whadjuk people of the greater Noongar nation upon whose lands the Court convenes this morning to celebrate the appointment of Judge Cormann to this Bench. I'd also like to welcome and pay my respects to Judge Cormann's family, the Honourable Mathias Cormann, daughters Isabelle and

Charlotte, your parents and other family members that are here today.

Your Honour was admitted to practice in 2007 and a short four years later, rapidly rose through the ranks to become an associate at the firm Clayton Utz. Your Honour practised across commercial, professional negligence, healthcare, law litigation as well as disciplinary proceedings brought by regulatory bodies. In 2012, your Honour became a graduate member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Your Honour has also served as counsel member of the Law Society of Western Australia between 2012 and 2015 and held positions as Treasurer, Senior Vice President and President of the Law Society. It was in those capacities that I first dealt with you after I came to office as the Attorney General and always found you to be most professional, as the Chief Judge has said, "Well prepared and a pleasure to deal with".

Until 2019, your Honour was also a member of the Society's Professional Indemnity Insurance Management Committee, a member of the Society's Ethics Committee and a Director of the Law Access Board. In 2019, your Honour was called to the Bar and joined Quayside Chambers, taking briefs across a wide variety of areas and jurisdictions, general, commercial and insurance disputes, personal injury and professional negligence claims including the healthcare and legal sectors and disciplinary work for both the health and legal professions.

Your Honour's commitment to the profession and to the wider community continued after joining the Bar. Your Honour has provided legal education to solicitors and barristers from 2020 to 2022 and served as a director of the Perth Children's Hospital Foundation. Your Honour also served as a member of the WA Bar Association Council from 2023. I'm told your Honour also has a commitment to the humble facsimile and still uses it, but I don't know that the Department is providing one to this building. We think it's from another age.

I would like to say also in closing my remarks that I'm very grateful for the very generous comments that your Honour the Chief Judge made about me in your speech this morning. Yes, the Court does look considerably different than what it did and certainly different from what it did when I practised, but now that it is gender equality nearly achieved on this Bench, it depends from who

resigns and who gets appointed and also some ethnic diversity as well.

It was always my ambition, that during my tenure, to increase the Court by one judge per year and through the pipeline of justice, I think I've achieved that. Also you mentioned my commitment to the independence of the Court. I think that is one of the central roles of an Attorney is to protect the rule of law and central to that is protecting the independence of the judiciary.

As far as appointments go, yes, I've made a lot of appointments to this Court, and to other courts, and taken advice at all times from the Solicitor-Generals: the Honourable Chief Justice of Western Australia when he was the Solicitor-General; Mr Joshua Thomson SC when he was Solicitor-General; and now Mr Craig Bydder SC.

But, I must say, through all those experiences of making selections and appointments, this particular appointment was very, very popular in the feedback that I got from around the profession, the judiciary, and members of the public at large. And I think that that is - the attendance here this morning bears testimony to what I've just said.

Leaders of both the business community, the legal profession, the judiciary have all come this morning to celebrate your Honour's appointment to this Court, and everyone who knows you knows that you'll make a wonderful judge of this Court. So it's on behalf of the Government of Western Australia, and the people of Western Australia that I congratulate your Honour on your appointment, and wish you all the very, very best in your judicial career.

Thank you.

WAGER CJDC: Thank you, Mr Attorney.

Mr Mack.

MACK, MR: May it please the Court.

It is my privilege to appear this morning on behalf of the Law Society of Western Australia in welcoming your Honour Judge Cormann to the Bench of this Honourable Court. I also welcome and congratulate members of your Honour's family, and acknowledge friends and colleagues, distinguished guests, and members of the judiciary present here today.

The Law Society also joins in acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation. And on the Society's behalf, I pay my respects to their elders, past, present and emerging.

As we heard today from the Honourable Attorney General, your Honour is highly regarded and well respected in the legal profession. From when her career commenced in 2007 until your Honour went to the Bar in 2019 at Quayside Chambers. We've also heard that your Honour broadened your skills by graduating from the Australian Institute of Company Directions in 2012.

But importantly for the Law Society, your Honour's membership commenced in 2012 and, as the Honourable Attorney General alluded to, your Honour was elected a member of the Law Society Council, and you served as Treasurer, Senior Vice President and President.

And also you've served the Law Society and the legal profession by being on the Ethics, Finance, CBD and Young Lawyers Committee, as well as the Society's Professional Indemnity Insurance Management Committee, and a Director of Law Access. The Law Society is extremely grateful for your considerable contribution to our organisation.

One former colleague recalled asking your Honour before you took on the role of Law Society President what's your agenda for your year as President. Your Honour replied to the effect that, "I've got a busy practice and a family. My goal is not to mess anything up, and my main agenda is to show it's possible to be a President, a litigator and a mum". And you achieved this in what was a busy year for the President in that year, in terms of advocacy and reform agenda, but I'll come back to this theme later.

Her Honour Judge Charlotte Wallace described your Honour as like no other, impressed by your Honour's ability to run a full-time practice as a member of the WA Bar while effectively working what in Western Australian parlance would be described as FIFO, that is, not between Perth and the Pilbara but between Perth and Paris.

When in Paris, your Honour worked at times long hours on Perth time to ensure you're always contactable and available, ensuring your clients received the excellence in service that the legal profession in West Australia is renowned for.

According to Judge Wallace, your Honour is often described as superhuman. Your ability to land in Perth at 8am,

having travelled for more than 24 hours, to appear in court at 10am, performing to an exceptionally high standard. You were then, as the Attorney alluded to, known to rush off to present a community legal education session in the evening.

The Honourable Dr Andrew Lu AM, President of the Mental Health Tribunal, also shared some fond memories of your Honour, many of which were formed in the Qantas Chairman's Lounge while waiting to board long flights to Europe. Dr Lu added to Judge Wallace's observations that time zones do not phase your Honour, and Dr Lu briefed your Honour as counsel in many cases as soon as you joined Quayside Chambers.

Dr Lu advised that you delivered sensible advice no matter what time, day or night, and could step off the plane and go straight to court and, like Judge Wallace said, perform to an extremely high standard.

In addition to a successful professional career, your Honour is a wife, mother of two children and friend to many. Your Honour has balanced working life with interests, friendships and community service. Some of these include netball, played often competitively, '80s-style karaoke and, I'm also advised, champagne, though this is fully understandable given that much of your Honour's recent working life has been based in Paris. Your Honour has also found time to serve the community by being on the board of Perth Children's Hospital Foundation.

As was widely reported at the time in the media, your Honour sought pre-selection to be a candidate to represent and serve the State electorate of South Perth. Regrettably for the South Perth community you were not able to achieve this goal, falling victim, as some might speculate, to party political powerbroking; however, I'm not sure what happened. But that is the nature of party political powerbroking. It's opaque.

Leaving the speculation aside, the loss to the South Perth community is the State's gain with your appointment to the Bench of this Honourable Court. As many know, achieving career success while being a parent and family person is extremely challenging. American journalist and New York Times best-selling author Brigid Schulte in her book 'Overwhelmed: Work, Love and Play When No One Has The Time' explores the immense pressures families and, in particular, working mothers face in balancing career and

family life in the modern workplace culture and environment.

Ms Schulte argues there are many reasons for this but in part, the fragmented nature of the mother's time in dealing with simultaneous issues involving work and family, including emotional issues, gender and equality, lack of workplace flexibility, inadequate parent leave, unreasonable expectations, access to affordable childcare at the right times, and what she describes as structural support systems and includes supportive policy.

Other authors echo these reasons and difficulties, such as Mia Freedman, the former youngest editor of the Australian edition of Cosmopolitan, and also co-founder of Mamma Mia in her book 'Work Strife Balance'. Your Honour has demonstrated with your Honour's appointment to this Bench is that undoubtedly with energy, determination, and meticulous organising and planning, a successful career can be achieved whilst being a mother, wife, friend and community member.

Achieving this balance, as the authors I have mentioned alluded to, would have involved, at times, many challenges and difficulties. Your Honour has overcome these challenges and difficulties and, in doing so, is an exemplar to other young women and men, as to one way - as to how this balance may be achieved.

In closing, and on behalf of the Law Society and the wider legal profession of Western Australia, we warmly welcome your Honour on her appointment, and wish you all the best in your new role serving the community of Western Australia.

May it please the Court.

WAGER CJDC: Thank you, Mr Mack.

Yes, Ms Taylor.

TAYLOR, MS: Your Honours, I join in acknowledging on behalf of the WA Bar Association the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation, and I also pay my respects to their elders past and present.

It's an honour to speak today on behalf of the WA Bar Association at this ceremony to welcome Judge Cormann as a judge of this Honourable Court. Your Honour grew up in

Dongara and went to St Brigid's in the Perth Hills. Your Honour then went to Notre Dame University, and took a job at Clayton Utz where you worked for Dom Bourke, who I'm told is here this morning.

Your Honour has been a member of the WA Bar since 2019 and since that time, you have built a highly successful practice specialising in common law claims of negligence in health and medicolegal sectors, as well as in commercial litigation. It's a testament to your Honour's skill, commitment and respect within the profession that your Honour has been able to maintain that practice remotely while living in a different hemisphere.

Your Honour must surely be the first barrister in this State to have conducted a practice while commuting from France, but it has been one of the most successful practices in your area of specialisation. That has been done in an area of specialisation where senior women are relatively scarce. And indeed, by the time of your recent appointment, your Honour would have been one of the most experienced women at the Bar, practising principally in common law.

Your Honour has long been dedicated to public service. The best example is your service within the Law Society for five years, including the year as President. And I remember being told some time ago that you found that to have been such an honour and a privilege, which you greatly enjoyed, and you were very grateful to the support of Clayton Utz in particular for making that possible.

The WA Bar Association is particularly grateful for your time and commitment within our Bar Council between 2022 and 2024. Your calm, considered and wise contributions were greatly appreciated. And your service on Bar Council was also given willingly while maintaining a practice in Paris and adjusting to family life there. Your Honour was also one of the first women to join to Quayside Chambers. Your Honour was an extremely popular member of Chambers and you will be very sorely missed.

Many of our colleagues from Quayside are here to support your move to this next phase of your career today. Members of Quayside describe you as being kind and inclusive, quick-witted and having a fantastic sense of humour. They say that people delight in your Honour's company, you are fair-minded and a good listener.

Your colleagues at Quayside also say that you get on with absolutely everyone in a genuine way, and that you always

know just what to say. Another former colleagues who has worked closely with you describes you as smart, measured, meticulous and consistent, genuinely caring, compassionate and a thoroughly decent human being.

The listing of your Honour's qualities, achievements and commitment to career in public service makes it sound like your Honour would have little time for fun, but that is not so. Your Honour has a great energy and loves netball, running and travel. Your Honour is generous with your friends and several of us feel very fortunate to have been welcomed by you and Mathias in your home in Australia or overseas.

Your Honour is always the first to a party, believing that it will put the host at ease to have a friend arrive early and on time. And although this isn't the place to share secrets, your Honour has been known to love a cheeky margarita, and it's said that Lalla Rookh will make them for your Honour, even though they aren't on the menu and aren't available to anyone else.

It's widely known, however, that your true passion is your family. You are a wonderful mother to Isabelle and Charlotte. They are all-round beautiful, happy and resilient children, and they are a great credit to you. And you and Mathias plainly find great support and strength in one another's successes.

This brings me to the thing we admire most about your Honour, which is the way that you've managed to build a successful career in the face of some unusual challenges while being devoted 200 per cent to family, supportive of friends and other members of the profession, all while managing to make it look almost effortless and maintaining a positive attitude to life. It is truly remarkable.

This strength and spirit will surely serve you well in this next phase of what has already been a stellar career. On behalf of the WA Bar, we wish you all the best and we look forward to working with you in the future.

WAGER CJDC: Thank you, Ms Taylor.

Yes, Ms Sojan.

SOJAN, MS: May it please the Court. May I join in recognising the many distinguished guests and family members that are here today to welcome Judge Cormann. I also pay my respects to the Traditional Owners of the land

on which we meet, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation, and I pay my respects to those elders past and present. It is my great honour and privilege today to welcome Judge Cormann to the District Court on behalf of the Criminal Lawyers' Association.

As many of you know, my predecessor, Mr Elliott, usually gives these speeches, and whilst Mr Elliott and I usually agree on most matters involving the Criminal Lawyers' Association, we often differ on the length of time it takes to talk on any one topic.

Therefore, your Honour, we've just heard this morning about all of your amazing achievements and I'll try not to repeat those in my speech today. I've had the great pleasure of knowing your Honour for most of my career, having been on the Law Society during your tenure as a member, and ultimately, President.

In preparing for this speech, I spoke to a number of people about their experiences with your Honour in your different roles. In speaking to people about your Honour, there was an overwhelming number of comments, not only about your professional career but also your fun, caring and vibrant personality, which I can personally attest to.

Your Honour has always been an active member of the legal community and given years of service to the profession beyond your time at private practice and the Bar. You've been involved in the Young Lawyers' Committee, the Law Society and the Bar Association, just to name some, all of which were testaments to your career, as well as being a mentor to junior lawyers, both in a professional capacity, including assisting with the Bar Readers' Course, as well as your roles in the various organisations, always making sure that everyone's voice was heard.

Whilst your Honour's practice has not been in the area of criminal law, you are no stranger to the issues that are faced by the profession in this area. You have always been a strong supporter of access to justice and have in the past been called to speak on about issues affecting the criminal law profession. You have always sought guidance from others when necessary and clearly advocated positions for change. Ultimately, you have always demonstrated yourself as a leader in the profession.

As a judge in the District Court, I'm quite sure you're about to get a crash course in the life of crime, and I have no doubt that you will continue to be a strong supporter of access to justice and mentoring in your role

as a judge. Notwithstanding the fact that you've not practised in criminal law, it is a testament to your involvement in the profession that every criminal lawyer I've spoken to in preparation of this speech has had a very clear knowledge of your involvement in the profession and your positive impact.

I have no doubt that as you get to know the members of the Criminal Bar as they appear before you, that you will become an integral part of the criminal process and enjoy being in court with the dedicated lawyers dealing with the most vulnerable members of our community.

In speaking to people about you as a practitioner, you were described to me as a standout in your field, very pragmatic and have always used common sense to approach a situation. I have no doubt that these qualities will provide an excellent foundation as you move forward in your new role.

The consistent view of all of the members of the profession is that you have spent your career in service of our profession, and I have no doubt that that will continue. Unfortunately, you will no doubt be swapping trips to Paris for trips to regional WA and chateaus to motels. Now, I can only speak from my own personal experience, but the champagne does still taste the same. On behalf of the Criminal Lawyers' Association, it is my honour to offer these welcoming remarks and to wish you the very best in your judicial career. May it please the Court.

WAGER CJDC: Thank you, Ms Sojan.

Yes, your Honour.

CORMANN DCJ: Thank you. Thank you, Chief Judge, Chief Justice, my new brothers and sisters, other members of the judiciary here today, special guests, colleagues, all my friends, and of course, my family. Thank you all for making the time to come here this morning for this occasion.

So far, we have heard a lot this morning about my journey to this point, but of course, no one's journey is ever taken alone, and it is the people who help us along the way who ultimately do make it all possible. My old firm, Clayton Utz, was like a family. I loved the people, the culture, the work and the opportunities that it gave me over the many years that I practised there.

As we heard, Dominic Bourke, to whom I was articled in 2006, he quickly became a mentor and a friend. He was an excellent teacher, supervisor, and of course, lawyer. I am grateful for the training and support I received under Dom's supervision in the firm, and I'm delighted to acknowledge his presence here today for this ceremony and to say that Dom and his wife, Jenny, remain great friends of Mathias and I to this day.

Being a lawyer at Clayton Utz enabled me to work with some incredible lawyers, both within the firm, but also in briefing members of the Bar. They also became friends and mentors, with many now on the Bench, including our Chief Justice, Justice Gail Archer, and in this Court, Judges Quail and Prior.

Not only was my firm an incredible place to work from a professional perspective, it also supported me to stay in practice following the birth of our beautiful daughters, Isabelle and Charlotte. By that time, I was working with Nick Cooper, the firm's now National Deputy Chief Executive Partner, and I will be forever grateful for Nick's support during that period.

I acknowledge Nick's presence here today also on behalf of the firm, along with the Perth office managing partner, David Benson, who has also been with the firm through all of that time and has remained a great friend to me. I learned so much and I made so many friends at Clayton Utz along the way, and looking back, I have some of the best memories of those years in my practice.

As we heard, in March 2019, I did move to the Bar, and I joined Quayside Chambers. Thank you to Aaron McDonald and Nick Malone and their team at Pragma for sending me my very first brief on my very first day when I joined the Bar and getting me well underway in my new practice.

I then thoroughly enjoyed my time working alongside the many excellent members of those Chambers, including Mr Brahma Dharmananda SC, Mr Kanaga Dharmananda SC, as well as now Justice Marcus Solomon, Justice Michael Feutrill and Justice Terry Palmer, the Hon. Rene Le Miere, who joined us after his retirement from the Bench in 2022 and all of the Chambers' continuing members, which includes a very large and impressive contingent of silks and a diverse and talented range of juniors.

I am so happy that so many of them are here today, and I feel extremely lucky to be able to call each member of

those Chambers a friend without exception. 2020 of course brought us COVID, but it also brought my family an incredible new opportunity when, towards the latter half of 2020, Mathias retired as Finance Minister and Senator for Western Australia, and subsequently nominated to become - or for the position, rather - of Secretary General of the OECD, based in Paris.

As a relative new and junior arrival to the Bar, this did present some challenges for us and somewhat of a conundrum for me. In a nutshell, I simply could not walk away from my practice, the blood, sweat and tears invested on joining the Bar and the many, many professional commitments I had made in that first 12 months. So we made the impossible possible and I continued my practice. This meant I did take on the role of a FIFO spouse and parent and I split my time between Perth and Paris.

The time away from my family and the regular commute, each were brutal, as were the hours I kept when away in Paris to be available and to work on the Perth business day. But I'm very proud to say that my practice continued, and clients and solicitors continued to put their faith and their trust in me to represent them and I thank the many, many firms who continued to brief me over those years and who never lost faith nor questioned my capacity to deliver on their behalf. And now I do find myself in this Court.

In the short time I have been here, I have felt very warmly welcomed by the Chief Judge, all of our colleagues, the judicial support staff and the broader staff within the Court as well. In the time that I have been here, I have also very much loved getting to know my own new staff, my associate, Siobhain Ialacci and my usher, Mariah Hill, who together work very hard to ensure Team Cormann remains composed, well-prepared and above all, decisive.

Some may have wondered about this pathway for me and what contribution I might be able to make in this place and it's at this moment that I pause to borrow a line from a speech given in this Court just a few weeks ago by my colleague Judge Renton at his own welcome. These words were a part of his story, but when I heard them, they resonated very strongly in me.

Judge Renton said that when he looked back on his journey, even if everything had not gone the way he thought or hoped it would at the time, that looking back now, everything worked out just the way it was meant to work out. Ladies and gentlemen, those words ring true to me. I am here in

this place and as I sit before all of you today, I see that everything is exactly as it should be.

That I am here to do this work was, of course, made possible by the Government of the day and the Attorney General, putting their faith and confidence in me on behalf of the people of this great State to serve as a judge. Mr Attorney, thank you for your words today. Thank you for your encouragement and perhaps if I might say, above all, your persistence in recognising my capacity to positively contribute in Western Australia to the work of the judiciary.

You will be very much missed from your post as the Attorney here in Western Australia and it a special kind of privilege for me that your very last address for a judge, at least in this Court, is on the occasion of my welcome.

Mr Gary Mack, thank you for your words today on behalf of the profession. My time in service in the work of the Young Lawyers Committee and subsequently, the Society's Council, enabled me to participate in our profession and in the community in a very meaningful way and outside the bounds of my own firm. I also thank your now former CEO, Mr David Price and his PA, Sue Langmair and their team for the support, the friendship and the guidance including, in particular, while I was on the Executive and in my time as President of the Society in 2018.

To Julie Taylor SC, who I am delighted to call a good friend; thank you for your words today. I loved being a member of the Bar in Western Australia and it was an honour to serve on its council. The work in our courts by your members is essential. It is very much welcomed and we truly appreciate the talent combined with the independence and objectivity of counsel here in Western Australia.

To Ms Sojan, we have crossed paths a number of times in the profession in various different capacities over the years. Thank you very much for your words today and congratulations on your first ceremonial speech in this Court. I know the criminal lawyers are nervous to see what a former civil lawyer like me will do when I step into crime and jury trials, but I have a very, very long time in this Court to learn and I am very much looking forward to the expertise of your members to assist me to reach just, fair and accurate rulings and decisions.

To my mother, Yvonne and my stepfather, Nino. Me sitting here today would not have been possible without both of you and the opportunities that you gave me. By the time my mum

met Nino, I was 11 or 12 years old and she had been on her own, raising my brother, Andrew and I, for the better part of a decade. During those years and since, my mother worked extremely hard for my brother and I to ensure we were both looked after and that ultimately, we had every opportunity in life to succeed.

I am extremely grateful to her for never giving up on us kids, no matter how hard things may have been in those early years of our childhood. In the years after my mum met Nino, my brother and I gained a loving and generous stepfather as well as two older stepsiblings in Anna and Paul, both of whom are here today with their respective spouses, Tim and Katie and their adult children. Thank you all for being here today as well.

And to my own brother, Andrew, and his wife, Nikki, we have become excellent friends over the last two decades and you have both been a great support to me and Mathias and to our daughters.

To my very many friends outside the profession and judiciary, thank you to each and every one of you for being and for remaining an important and supportive part of our journey. And to my many friends and mentors within the profession, in my old Chambers in the Bar, I am so grateful for the friendship, the camaraderie, the advice and the assistance extended to me over many, many years in practice. I miss it and you all very, very much.

Mathias, thank you for proofreading my speech only up until this point, now it's all on me. We have been the constant in each other's lives for nearly 19 years now, through the ups and downs, we each have tried to remain a reliable and unwavering presence providing a sense of stability and support and while things have not always been easy, we have always backed each other in and always supported each other.

We have faced some big challenges together, but moreover, we've enjoyed so many opportunities and achievements and today I have no hesitation whatsoever in speaking on behalf of us both that above all, our daughters are our greatest achievement. Isabelle and Charlotte, you are the most incredibly talented, clever, kind and loving children that parents could ever, ever hope for. You both inspire me every day and your Dad and I are so proud to see how you have mastered an incredibly challenging few years for our family.

We have watched you grow and develop into two independent, loving and connected siblings. You are the constant in each other's lives and we love you so much and I thank you both for your faith and your pride in me. I cannot wait until the day that I can again come home to you every night and resume a permanent domestic residence, all together. For now, I know you'll continue to work and play hard in Paris.

There are so many incredible opportunities for you both there in that place and here, in this Court, I promise that I will continue to make my best contribution to service that I can and I will count down the days until we are all together again.

Ladies and gentlemen, obviously I'm newly appointed to this place and I know I have a lot to learn, but I am younger than I look. It means I have a very, very long time to do it and I hope you all rest assured that not only are we just at the start of this marathon, the starter's gun has not even gone yet. We all are still just warming up. Thank you.

WAGER CJDC: Thank you, your Honour.

And that now completes the special sitting to mark her Honour's welcome to this Court and Court will now adjourn.

AT 9.57 AM THE MATTER WAS ADJOURNED ACCORDINGLY