



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

8 DECEMBER 1986

The Government will tomorrow be recommending to the Governor-General in Council the appointment of the new Chief Justice of the High Court to succeed Sir Harry Gibbs and two other appointments as Justices of the High Court.

The new Chief Justice is to be Sir Anthony Mason, at present a Justice of the High Court. The other appointees are Mr Justice John Toohey of the Federal Court of Australia, Perth, and Ms Mary Gaudron QC, Solicitor-General for New South Wales, who will be the first woman appointed to the High Court.

Sir Anthony Mason was appointed to the High Court in 1972 after serving as Judge of the NSW Court of Appeal from 1969 to 1972. Prior to that he was Solicitor-General for the Commonwealth from 1964 to 1969. Sir Anthony Mason is the senior Justice on the High Court after Sir Harry Gibbs.

Mr Justice Toohey was appointed to the Federal Court in Perth in 1977. He is also a Judge of the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory. He was an Aboriginal Land Commissioner in the Northern Territory from 1977 to 1982, and before his appointment to the bench he served in the Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia.

Ms Mary Gaudron has been Solicitor-General for New South Wales since 1981. She was the first woman appointed to that position. She was a Deputy President of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission from 1974 to 1979, and Chair of the NSW Legal Services Commission from 1979 to 1980. Her practice as Solicitor-General has included a number of appearances before the High Court of Australia in major constitutional and other cases.

The appointments are to take effect on Friday, 6 February next, the day immediately following on the retirement of the present Chief Justice, Sir Harry Gibbs.