

Montreal Conference 1983

In June 1983 the First World Conference on the Independence of Justice was held in Montreal at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel under the leadership of Chief Justice Jules Deschenes, as he then was.

Chief Justice Deschenes, succeeded in the difficult task of gathering under one roof about 130 distinguished jurists representing some 20 international organisations, in order to approve a Universal Declaration on the Independence of Justice.

Long before the conference in Montreal, a steering committee developed a Draft of the Declaration, which was put before the participants of the Montreal Conference.

The debates in Montreal were conducted in five Commissions, which discussed each of the Five Chapters of the Declaration: I) The International Judges (led by Judge Oxner and Batonnier Pettiti); II) The National Judges (led by Justice Gonthier and this author); III) The Lawyers (led by Batonnier Louis Phillippe de Grandpr, and Debo Akande); IV) The Jury (led by Chief Justice William Sinclair and Mr. James Parkison; V) The Assessors (led by Judge Guerin and Judge Poirier).

The chapters of the Declaration were finally approved by a plenary session of the Conference. Among the organisations which were represented in Montreal were the International Bar Association, International Commission of Jurists, International Court of Justice at The Hague, LAWASIA, European Court of Human Rights, Amnesty International, and numerous international lawyers' organizations.