



Penelope Ridings

**NEW ZEALAND
CANDIDATE**

**International
Law Commission
2023-2027**



NEW ZEALAND



“ Integrity, responsibility, and fairness are fundamental values that underpin and inform my extensive practical experience in developing, implementing and adjudicating international law. ”

Photo credit: SASP/ICC-CPI

Penelope Ridings

Dr Penelope Ridings, MNZM, is one of New Zealand’s most distinguished international lawyers. In her long career with New Zealand’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, she has been both Chief International Legal Adviser and an Ambassador, and has developed a deep understanding of the academic and diplomatic aspects of international law.

Penelope has advocated for fair and enduring legal solutions to difficult problems, and has advised on the full range of international law issues from human rights and the environment to trade and security. This has allowed her to develop extensive experience representing States and finding common ground and solutions to complex legal issues.

In the International Law Commission (ILC), she will deploy her experience as a leader, legal practitioner and diplomat to clarify and develop international law in the interests of our global community.

New Zealand and the International Law Commission

New Zealand places great importance on upholding the role and rule of international law and this candidature reflects that.

New Zealand is a long-standing champion of the International Law Commission. Our priority is ensuring a strong, representative and inclusive ILC, with a contemporary and relevant work programme that responds to the issues critical to States. Penelope Ridings is the right candidate to deliver that.

This is the first time in 20 years New Zealand has put forward an ILC candidate – our approach is only to do so when we have a candidate of the highest standing, like Dr Ridings.

Penelope Ridings is co-nominated by the Governments of Australia, Canada and Sierra Leone.

Penelope Ridings' vision in her own words

The ILC has much to be proud of: for more than 70 years, it has played a central role in resolving some of the world's most difficult international legal problems. I am committed to ensuring its ongoing relevance. My priorities will be to:

- **Ensure a relevant, contemporary work programme**

We live in an age where new technologies are advancing at pace. Successful modern international organisations must be adaptable. They need to quickly identify and respond to emerging issues. They should find practical and enduring legal solutions to contemporary challenges whether posed by the impact of fast-paced global pandemics, or the inter-generational impacts of rising seas on small island communities.

I will bring my diverse experience working across a range of inter-disciplinary and emerging legal issues to ensure that the work of the ILC focuses on contemporary problems and needs.

- **Revitalise the relationship between the ILC and States**

The ILC's impact relies on ensuring its work reflects the interests and perspectives of States.

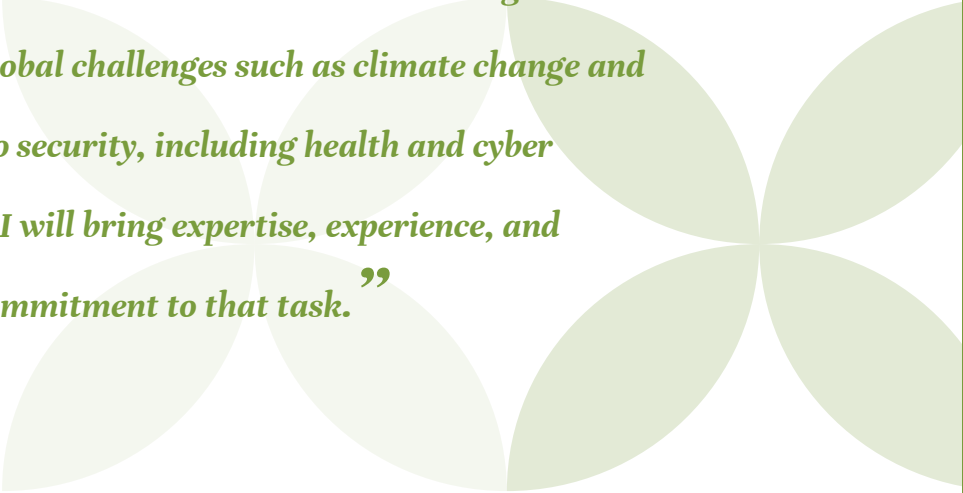
I offer the ability to understand and reconcile a diverse range of State perspectives. I will prioritise the relationship between the ILC and States to ensure the ILC's work incorporates and leverages these diverse viewpoints.

- **Promote wider understanding and engagement**

The ILC's work is too important to be the sole preserve of academics and experts. Its contributions to international law must be accessible to States, to civil society, and to the people it ultimately serves.

As a member of the ILC, I would bring my skills as a leader and communicator to promote greater understanding of and engagement with the ILC's work. I would advocate for making it more widely accessible and user-friendly, to achieve broad understanding of the significance of the ILC's work and the value of international law.

**“
International law is central to addressing contemporary global challenges such as climate change and threats to security, including health and cyber security. I will bring expertise, experience, and strong commitment to that task.
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Significant achievements

- Honorary Professor, University of Auckland, New Zealand: 2021 – present
- Appointed to the World Trade Organisation “Multi-Party Interim Appeal Arbitration Arrangement”: 2020 – present
- Barrister and International Lawyer: 2015 – present
- Legal Adviser to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission: 2015 – present
- Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for Services to the State (MNZM): 2015
- Chief International Legal Adviser, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade: 2011 – 2015
- Ambassador of New Zealand to Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania: 2008 – 2011
- International Trade Law Adviser and Head of Trade Law, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade: 2004 – 2007
- High Commissioner of New Zealand to Samoa: 2001 – 2004
- Diplomat and Legal Adviser, including postings in Samoa and Germany, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade: 1988 – 2001
- Legal Adviser, Attorney-General’s Office, Samoa: 1980
- Lecturer of Law, University of Auckland Law School, New Zealand: 1979
- PhD in Political Science, University of Hawaii at Manoa: 1987
- MJur (with Distinction), University of Auckland, New Zealand: 1979
- BA/LLB (Hons), University of Auckland, New Zealand: 1978



Dr Penelope Ridings appearing for New Zealand before the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea in relation to the Request for an advisory opinion submitted by the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC). Photo credit: ITLOS