

**CEREMONIAL SITTING OF THE FULL COURT
OF THE FEDERAL COURT OF AUSTRALIA
TO FAREWELL THE HON. JUSTICE STEVEN RARES**

Speech by Peter Dunning KC, President of the Australian Bar Association

Justice Rares, Chief Justice Mortimer, Justices of the Federal Court, distinguished Justices of other Courts, distinguished guests all.

It is, Justice Rares, my privilege and pleasure in equal measure to offer the congratulations and gratitude of the Bar nationally for your Honour's nearly two decades of exceptional service to this Court and to the Australian community more generally. It is a remarkable act of public service that we recognise today, and rightly that we do so.

My members are grateful for many things of your Honour's long service on this Court, but if I could single out three of them. Your Honour's energy has already been touched upon, and rightly so, but in Court, I can attest it was matched by the rigour that you imposed upon yourself and your required of those appearing before you, but never at the expense of courtesy. Your Honour was a pleasure to appear before. We were better barristers for it, and there's little more that one could ask in a Judge.

It is also appropriate that I note the important role your Honour plays, as this Court more broadly plays, in bringing peace with our First Nations Community, and your Honour has a significant legacy in that regard, touched upon by her Honour the Chief Justice a little earlier.

Your Honour has, as has been mentioned, maintained a close association with the Bar and were, ultimately, one of its champions. It's also appropriate that I note your Honour significantly contributed to the welfare of judges, a cohort of people who have plenty of natural critics but not too many natural supporters, and the important role that your Honour has played there ought be acknowledged outside the judiciary.

Finally, Justice Rares, nobody achieves the success your Honour has or makes the contribution your Honour has without the love and support of their family and friends. Your family and friends should feel justifiable pride in the achievement that is being recognised today.

However, your Honour is ultimately the product of the Sydney Bar, and it's appropriate that the bulk of the expression of the Bar's enthusiasm should come from my friend Dr Higgins. So, Justice Rares, on behalf of the Bar nationally, we salute your service and have great affection for your time in the Court.

May it please the Court.

14 November 2023