

IAIN T. BENSON, *Short-form Biography* (December, 2015)

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Prof. Benson, PhD (Witwatersrand.), JD (Windsor), MA (Cambridge), BA (Hons.) (Queen's) born Edinburgh, Scotland, is an academic, lecturer and practicing lawyer in constitutional law and human rights with particular focus on freedoms of association, conscience and religion, the nature of pluralism, multi-culturalism and relationships between law, religion and human rights. He is also a published poet.

His PhD thesis (Wits, 2013) was entitled: *"An Associational Framework for the Reconciliation of Competing Rights Claims Involving the Freedom of Religion."* He works in English and French and divides his time between France, Canada and South Africa when he is not traveling elsewhere. He is the father of seven children.

Recent lectures include: September, 2015, European Commission, Brussels, Belgium "Refugees and Civic Virtues"; November 2014, Pretoria, South Africa, to the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities and the Council for the Promotion of the South African Charter of Religious Rights and Freedoms, "Religious Education and the Constitution"; June 2014 and June 2015, Summer Institute, Oxford Journal of Law and Religion, Oxford University, "Secularism: Its Meanings and Obfuscations" and "The Secular and Civic Virtues"; May 2014, Central European University, Budapest, Hungary; "Conceptions of the Secular"; Conference on Law and Religion in Africa, University of Stellenbosch South Africa, "Some Contours of Pluralism and the Common Good"; September 2013, "Civil Charters" at the House of Lords, UK; August 2013, Virginia USA to the International Consortium of Law and Religion Scholars; September 2012, the Canadian High Commission in Mozambique, "Civil Society and Government". In 2012 he was invited to be a "special expert" to the group advising the Ontario Human Rights Commission on its reworking of its policy on "creed".

He was retained by the Fed. Gov't of Canada as one of two background writers for that government's Policy Research Initiative on "Religion and Public Policy" as an aspect of multi-culturalism and his *"Taking a Fresh Look at Religion and Public Policy: The Need for a Paradigm Shift"* was submitted to the PRI in January 2008. He was one of the drafters of the *South African Charter of Religious Rights and Freedoms* (signed by all major religions in that country in September 2010) and remains closely involved in advancing the *Charter* in that country and similar projects elsewhere. Special Rapporteur on Law and Religion in Canada and South Africa to the Pontifical Academy of the Social Sciences, Vatican City (May, 2011, pub'd in Acad. Proceedings, 2012). He has pub'd over 40 academic articles and book chapters and a short book, *Living Together with Disagreement: Pluralism, the Secular and the Fair Treatment of Beliefs by Law* was published by Connor Court Publishing, Australia in 2012. He was appointed Professor of Law, University of Notre Dame, Sydney, Australia (2016, ongoing).

He was Sen. Res./Visiting Scholar, Massey College, Univ. of Toronto (2014-2015); Visiting Prof. of Law, Univ. of Western Ontario (comparative constitutional law, 2014); Sen. Associate Counsel for Miller Thomson LLP (2009-13). Called to the Bars of B.C. and Ontario; Prof. Extraordinary, Univ. of the Free State, South Africa (2009, ongoing); Sen. Assoc. Fellow, International Institute for Hermeneutics, Albert-Ludwigs-Univ., Freiburg, Germany (2015, ongoing); Res. Fellow, S. A. Institute for Adv'd. Const., Human Rts., Pub. and Int'l. Law (2008, ongoing); Sen. Res. Fellow, Chester Ronning Cnt. for the Study of Religion and Public Life, Univ. of Alberta (2010, ongoing); Res. Fellow, Relig. Freedom and Bus. Found., Maryland, USA (2014, ongoing); Sen. Res. Fellow, Cdn. Centre. for The Resp. to Protect (R2P), Munk Centre, Trinity College, Univ. of Toronto (2014, ongoing); Member of Founding Board and Exec. Comm., Global Centre for Pluralism, Ottawa, Canada, alongside its Chairman, HH the Aga Khan, Kofi Annan, the Rt. Hon. Adrienne Clarkson and 9 others (2010, ongoing);

He has been involved in many of the leading cases on rights of association, conscience and religion in Canada and abroad for two decades and acted for a wide variety of individuals and groups as legal counsel before all levels of court. The Supreme Court of Canada and the Constitutional Court of South Africa have cited his work. His scholarly work is referred to in many books and articles and he is listed in Canadian *Who's Who*.