

The Simons Foundation
Award for Distinguished Global Leadership in the Service
of Peace and Disarmament

Dinner in Honour of
The Honourable Madame Louise Arbour, C.C., G.O.C.

Award Presentation

Rosewood Hotel Georgia
Vancouver, BC
March 19th, 2015

Jennifer Allen Simons, C.M., Ph.D., LL.D.
President
The Simons Foundation

Good Evening!

Before we begin the Award Ceremony, we will screen a short film –courtesy of the Fondation Chirac - A Portrait of Louise Arbour.

Now I would like to tell you about the Award.

The Award
The Shaper

The Simons Foundation chose the First Nations symbol of The Shaper as its Award. The artist is Susan Point, renowned Salish sculptor, who works primarily with glass. She created a Special Edition of The Shaper for The Simons Foundation.

And to quote her: “the design of this piece represents a human figure in the centre with two thunderbirds on either side.” Human Beings are the shapers of their environment. They mold and make.... The Thunderbird is their protector, the most powerful of all spirits in our Salish legacy.

Many legends tell of how the Thunderbird has saved “the people” from natural disaster.”

We chose the symbols of *The Shaper* as our Award because our definition of a Distinguished Global Leader is a person who **shapes and creates** the environment; a person whose leadership skills involve foresight and imagination; a leader who creates the blueprint, the guidelines; who develops and advances the path to a safer, more just, humane world.

I can think of no better recipient for this Award than Madame Louise Arbour who has been described as “one of the most influential legal minds in both Canada and abroad.”¹ This pre-eminent Canadian and internationally acclaimed Jurist, embodies the noblest of ideals for humankind. Not only this, she is not merely content to hold these ideals, but rather she actively engages in order to ground them in reality.

She has shaped the institutions which have had the benefit of her leadership.

It seems that whatever Louise Arbour undertakes, she enlarges the dimensions, expands the scope; and thus opens new possibilities for the betterment of human life, for human rights, for justice and for a peaceful world.

As Chief Prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda she developed procedures and practices – in her words: “*building a law enforcement agency’ for human rights*” – innovatively utilizing novel resources - highly secret sealed indictments, NATO troops, and the media - in order to achieve her objectives, and allowed her to make many arrests of perpetrators of crimes against humanity.

¹ www.canadaswalkoffame.com/inductees/2014/louise-arbour

Louise Arbour, as U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights and as Chief Prosecutor of The Hague Tribunals, has strengthened international criminal law and furthered the mission of these institutions in the interests of human rights, prevention of genocide and peace.

Our deep gratitude to you for your contributions to a better future, for your forward-looking approach to a better world.

Louise, *I invite you to come forward!*