



Valerie Hughes

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Ottawa

BAR ADMISSIONS

Ontario, 1981

Clients benefit from Valerie Hughes' unrivalled experience in international trade and WTO law.

She has served as counsel for the Government of Canada before WTO panels and the organization's Appellate Body, as an adjudicator in WTO disputes, and as the only person to have served as both Director of the WTO's Legal Affairs Division (2010-16) and Director of its Appellate Body Secretariat (2001-05).

Valerie has been involved in more than 70 WTO disputes. These include challenges in the Canadian auto industry, softwood lumber and seafood exports. She brings a unique perspective to WTO dispute settlement—having served as counsel, judge, or advisor to WTO judges.

Valerie is one of Canada's leading lawyers in international treaty law. She argued Canada's first investor-state dispute under the NAFTA. She represented Canada before the International Court of Justice in a dispute with the United States over the fishing grounds off Canada's east coast, and before an international tribunal that determined the international maritime boundary off Newfoundland and the French islands of Saint-Pierre and Miquelon.

Valerie is a member of the pool of arbitrators for the WTO Multi-Party Interim Appeal Arrangement, has been named to the Roster of Panel Chairs for the CPTPP and is also a member of the Roster of Panelists under Article 31 of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA) as well as the binational panel roster under Chapter 10 of the CUSMA.

Valerie served in senior counsel and leadership positions in her 22 years with the Government of Canada. She was most recently Assistant Deputy Minister and Counsel to the Department of Finance. She also served in the Departments of Justice and Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

In 2019, Valerie won the OBA Award of Excellence in International Law. The award recognizes outstanding achievements and contributions in the practice of international law in Ontario through leadership, expertise, professionalism, enhancing the practice in Ontario and contributions to legal education.

In 2016, Valerie was awarded the John E. Read medal by the Canadian Council on International Law for her distinguished contribution to international law and organizations. She is currently a Senior Fellow at the Centre for International Governance Innovation.

Valerie has written numerous articles on the WTO dispute settlement and on international maritime boundary arbitration.