**Ms. Navanethem Pillay, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

Ms. Pillay has been appointed UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in September 2008. A South African national, she was the first woman to start a law practice in her home province of Natal in 1967. Over the next few years, she acted as a defense attorney for anti-apartheid activists, exposing torture, and helping establish key rights for prisoners on Robben Island. She also worked as a lecturer at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and later was appointed Vice-President of the University of Durban Westville. In 1995, after the end of apartheid, Ms. Pillay was appointed a judge on the South African High Court, and in the same year was chosen to be a judge on the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, where she served a total of eight years, the last four (1999-2003) as President. In 2003, she was appointed as a judge on the International Criminal Court in the Hague, where she remained until August 2008. She co-founded Equality Now, an international women's rights organization, and has been involved with other organizations working on issues relating to children, detainees, victims of torture and of domestic violence, and a range of economic, social and cultural rights.

Ms. Pillay received a BA and a LLB from Natal University South Africa. She also holds a Master of Law and a Doctorate of Juridical Science from Harvard University.