

**Introductory Remarks for Presentation of DIVA Award to Maureen McTeer**

**Remarks of the Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin, P.C.  
Chief Justice of Canada**

**Ottawa, Ontario  
May 29, 2008**

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It gives me great pleasure to introduce Maureen McTeer this evening as she receives the inaugural DIVA Foundation Award for Outstanding Contributions to Women's Health and Well-Being. C'est un grand plaisir pour moi ce soir de présenter Maureen McTeer, qui recevra le prix inaugural DIVA pour contribution exceptionnelle à l'essor de la santé et du bien-être des femmes. As the name of the award suggests, the award recognizes and celebrates exceptional achievements in furthering women's health and well-being.

Like many of you in the audience, I have known Maureen for many years. And like all of us, I count myself fortunate to have done so. She is a friend, a mentor, and an example to us all of how one woman can made

a difference. Maureen is a powerful force in the Ottawa community and beyond that, on the larger national scene.

Depuis des décennies, elle consacre inlassablement ses énergies à un grand nombre de bonnes causes. Elles sont trop nombreuses pour que je les énumère toutes, mais j'aimerais parler brièvement de deux d'entre elles. For decades, she has unstintingly given of her energies to many valuable causes, too numerous to mention. Let me focus briefly two.

The first is Maureen's work in bio-ethics. Maureen, a graduate of the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Common Law, where she is now an adjunct professor of medical law, was the first Canadian to earn a Masters degree in biotechnological law and ethics at the University of Sheffield, which she completed in 2004. She will be awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Laws from the University of Sheffield this July, for her work in the fields of law and bioethics. Maureen is the author of four books, including

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her best-selling autobiography, *In My Own Name*, and *Tough Choices: Living & Dying in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, which deals with issues of medical ethics and law. She writes and lectures extensively on issues of women's health and the law, science and public policy, including reproductive and genetic technologies. Maureen has written about the need for "public debate" on medical and scientific technologies:

"It is up to all of us to ensure that, in the tough choices that lie ahead, we achieve the benefits science and medicine promise and still protect our societal interests and human rights."<sup>1</sup>

Through her work in bio-ethics, Maureen McTeer has made a lasting contribution to making not only Canada, but the world beyond, a more moral and more just place. She has strengthened the public debate. She

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<sup>1</sup> *Tough Choices: Living and Dying in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (1999: Irwin Law) at 131-32.

has tackled difficult and controversial issues with intelligence, humanity and courage. We are all indebted to her for doing so.

La deuxième contribution majeure de Maureen McTeer que je tiens à souligner, c'est le travail qu'elle accomplit en faveur de l'égalité des femmes, notamment du point de vue de l'accès aux soins de santé. Là encore, Maureen ne se contente pas de jouer un rôle passif. Elle est une femme d'action, et son action revêt de nombreuses formes : bénévolat, enseignement, rédaction d'articles et de livres, conférences, pour ne donner que quelques exemples.

As a volunteer, Maureen's appetite for work knows no bounds. Maureen is Chair of the Advisory Board of the Shirley E. Greenberg Women's Health Centre at the Riverside Hospital in Ottawa, and was a founding board member of the Ottawa Women's Health Council. She is the National Patron of Osteoporosis Canada, and a member of the International

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Women Leaders' Panel on osteoporosis. Maureen is currently a lay member of the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists National Council, and on their Foundation for Women's Health. She is also a member of the Clinical Ethics Committee at the Ottawa Heart Institute, a member of the McMaster University Sex/Gender and Cardiovascular Disease Research Advisory Board, and a member of PEN Canada.

Maureen's contributions to our understanding of bio-ethical issues and to women's equality and women's health, make her a most deserving recipient of the DIVA Foundation's inaugural Award for Outstanding Contributions to Women's Health and Well-Being. Please join me in congratulating Maureen McTeer and in celebrating her work on behalf of women and women's health. Je vous invite à vous joindre à moi pour féliciter Maureen McTeer et célébrer le travail qu'elle a accompli pour les femmes et pour la santé des femmes.

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