

Robert Tibbo
Barrister-at-law

Robert Tibbo is a Canadian national, born and raised in Montreal, Quebec Canada known for his work as a lawyer in Human Rights. He was educated at McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada receiving his undergraduate degree in Chemical Engineering. He subsequently worked for Monsanto Chemicals Australia (later known as Hunstman Chemicals Australia) as a chemical process engineer for both batch and continuous polymerization processes. He subsequently worked as a management consultant in Hong Kong and mainland China in the 1990s.



He later received his law degree (LL.B) from the University of Auckland, New Zealand focusing on administrative and constitutional law having studied under the late Professor Mike Taggart, a towering figure in the academic world of administrative law. He also studied constitutional law under former professor and current justice of the Ontario Court of Appeal, Grant Huscroft.

Innsbruck, Austria - 18 October 2018

Mr. Tibbo completed post-graduate work at the University of Melbourne, Australia, focusing on Asian Law and conflicts of law. He was a visiting student at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand focused on international law. He was also a visiting student at the University of Hong Kong focused on constitutional and criminal law in Hong Kong and mainland China and rendition extradition. Mr. Tibbo has provided expert opinion in asylum and refugee cases on the criminal justice system in the Peoples Republic of China.

Mr. Tibbo qualified to practice law as a barrister in Hong Kong after obtaining his Post-Graduate Certificate in Laws (P.C.LL) from the University of Hong Kong. He completed pupillage under Clive Grossman QC, formerly the Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions in Hong Kong. He also received advanced training in asylum and refugee law under Dr. Manfred Nowak, the former United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture from 2004 to 2010 (Currently Professor for International Law and Human Rights, University of Vienna, Austria).

With his law practice based in Hong Kong, he currently practices as a barrister-at-law. Mr. Tibbo has appeared at all levels of the courts in Hong Kong from the Magistrates Courts, District Court, High Court, Court of Appeal and to the Court of Final Appeal.

He is known for his work in the areas of administrative and constitutional law focused on human rights and asylum and refugee law. He has successfully conducted appeals for the transgender community in the Municipal Services Appeal Board. He has also acted for over 60 (sixty) asylum and refugee clients in unified screening system and the Torture Claims Appeal Board and Non-refoulement Claims Petition Office. He has successfully argued asylum and

Robert Tibbo
Barrister-at-law

refugee judicial review cases in the High Court under a system that has less than a 0.5% acceptance rate since 1992. Mr. Tibbo conducts the defense in high profile extradition cases.

Tibbo's practice also includes criminal trial and appellate work. He has successfully defended clients in criminal trials and succeeded in criminal appeals at all levels of the court from the Magistrates court up to and including the Court of Appeal.

Mr. Tibbo also handles significant cases in the areas of commercial, contract and employment law including bankruptcy, insolvency and injunctions.

Mr. Tibbo has acted for many notable clients and cases involving refugee claims and extradition including American Whistleblower "Edward Snowden" (now in Moscow), the Snowden Refugees (still in Hong Kong), and Xiao Hui (now in Australia), in Australia's largest ever case of insider trading. Mr. Tibbo successfully secured Mr. Snowden's safety and security through the UNHCR in Hong Kong, facilitating his going underground in Hong Kong to avoid extraordinary rendition by the United States government and safe passage for Snowden out of Hong Kong in June 2013.

Mr. Tibbo has also been litigating in the Snowden Refugees asylum claims in Hong Kong, now at the Appeal Board stage. He has also been responsible for engaging and working with a group of Montreal based lawyers to act and file refugee applications for the Snowden Refugee in Canada. A decision by the Canadian government is still pending. The Montreal, Quebec based legal team has established a sponsoring NGO which also raises badly needed donations for the Snowden Refugees. That NGO is called "*For the Refugees*".

He has handled many criminal cases in the area of trafficking in dangerous drugs, in particular successfully acting for innocent accused one of whom was a mentally disabled victim of unscrupulous human traffickers. In 2018 Mr. Tibbo successfully brought the first legal challenge to the constitutionality of the rigid and draconian criminal sentencing regime for drug trafficking in Hong Kong.

In the area of corporate and commercial law, Mr. Tibbo has typically acted for individuals litigating against large corporations, including major global banks and insurers. His most recent litigation was against Latin America's largest stand-alone investment bank Banco BTG Pactual S.A. He previously successfully litigated against QBE Insurance Group Limited, Australia's largest global insurer.

Mr. Tibbo has been active in wider social advocacy having previously served as a director of Vision First (2013-2017) a NGO that provides human rights advocacy and humanitarian assistance to asylum seekers in Hong Kong. Mr. Tibbo was instrumental in bringing about change and improvements in housing and food security issues for asylum seekers in Hong Kong.

As a legal advisor to the Hong Kong Helpers Campaign, Tibbo commented and brought to the wider public's attention the globally reported horrifying incident in Hong Kong of the Indonesian foreign domestic helper Erwiana Sulistyaningsih, concerning her ill-treatment and torture in Hong Kong and violation of her constitutional rights by her employers.

Robert Tibbo
Barrister-at-law

In 2012 and 2015, Mr. Tibbo led *pro bono* legal grass roots efforts systematically challenging and securing the release of dozens of asylum seekers and refugee claimants unlawfully detained in Hong Kong's notorious CIC (Castle Peak Bay Immigration Center) immigration detention facility known as Hong Kong's gulag.

Mr. Tibbo has taught at the Management Institute Center (MCI), Innsbruck Austria, where he has taught as a faculty member, the subjects of business and legal ethics and human rights. The scope of his teaching includes legal liabilities of corporations for human rights and environment rights violations.

Mr. Tibbo has spoken annually at the Computer Chaos Congress in Germany since 2016. He has also spoken at numerous universities in Asia Pacific, Europe and North America. Mr. Tibbo has given talks along with Mr. Snowden on a number of occasions over the years. He is regularly interviewed and quoted in the international media, including televised investigative reports on human rights issues, ranging from refugee and migration issues to whistleblowing.

Mr. Tibbo has appeared in a number of documentary films including Oscar winning film "Citizen Four", and "Terminal F/Chasing Snowden". Mr. Tibbo was also portrayed in the Hollywood film "Snowden" for his role in representing Edward Snowden in Hong Kong during the World's largest manhunt. Snowden was directed by academy award winner Oliver Stone.

On 30 November 2017, Mr. Tibbo went into exile from Hong Kong, having had assistance to leave the jurisdiction from "Lawyers Without Borders Canada" and the Officers from the Canadian Consulate in Hong Kong.

At present, Mr. Tibbo continues to act for Mr. Snowden (in Moscow) and the Snowden Refugees (in Hong Kong). He also works with the Montreal based legal team acting for the Snowden Refugees in their application for refugee status in Canada, through the province of Quebec. Mr. Tibbo also continues to act for another forty-plus asylum seekers in Hong Kong.

Most recently Tibbo, along with the Montreal based lawyers, secured refugee status for Snowden Refugees Vanessa Rodel and her daughter Keana, who landed in Canada on 25 March 2019, and whom now reside in Montreal.