

LAXMI PONNAMPALAM REILLY

Laxmi, a Malaysian, was born on 10th July 1950. She qualified as a Barrister-At-Law from Middle Temple in 1972. She speaks English, French, some Spanish, Tamil, Malay and is able to order a good meal in Cantonese.

She has worked in the UK Government Legal Service and in the European Union Commission (European Commission) for the last 22 years. She has been legal adviser as respects the UK's government responsibility in matters affecting health and social security of the nation. In particular, from 1986 she has specialised in EU and international law and relations. Her work involved advising Government Ministers and senior civil servants on international matters in the field, drafting legislation and papers in connection with legal matters and representing the client's interests in various fora. She has negotiated at inter-governmental level in the EU. She has represented the UK in matters before the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg and the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

She was head hunted by the EU Commission and worked as a Principal Administrator in the EU Brussels headquarters from January 1992 – June 1995. In the EU, her responsibilities included the management and development of policy concerning the free movement of persons, of the internal market of the EU. Operational duties included the supervision and direction of a multinational, multi-disciplinary team of Commission officials, as well as the smooth functioning of 72 member committees of representatives from the EU Member States and their working groups. She also had to present the work of the EU Commission and explain policy aims in that area, at Conferences and Seminars throughout Europe.

