



Bengt Broms

* 16.10.1929 † 4.4.2023

Born in Sortavala on 16 October 1929, Professor Bengt Henry Gabriel Arne Broms died on 4 April 2023. He passed his matriculation examination at the Joensuu upper secondary school in 1947. After obtaining master's degrees in law and political science, he earned a Doctor of Laws at the University of Helsinki in 1959. He also studied at the universities of Uppsala, Michigan (LL.M.) and Cambridge (Diploma in International Law).

Broms was Professor of Constitutional and International Law at the University of Turku since 1962 and one of the founding members of the Law Students' Association Lex Turku and a curator and inspector of the Savo-Karelian Nation of the University of Turku. Broms was appointed Professor of International and Constitutional Law at the University of Helsinki in 1970 and held this chair until 1994. He also served as Dean of the Faculty of Law in Turku and Vice-Dean in Helsinki.

As a scholar, Broms was especially well versed in questions concerning international organisations, beginning with his doctoral thesis, *The Doctrine of Equality of States as Applied in International Organizations* (1959). In 1976, he published the work *Yhdistyneet Kansakunnat*, which was

widely used as a textbook and was later also published in English (*The United Nations*, 1990). His other works also dealt with questions concerning the UN law as well as the peaceful settlement of international disputes. His magnum opus was *Kansainvälinen oikeus* (1978).

Broms' research on constitutional law focused on the parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee and the neutrality of Finland. These topics were also supported by his work as a member of the Åland Delegation and the Åland Committee.

Broms was involved in the operations of the UN in many ways as a member of the Delegation of Finland from 1967 to 1988. He was named Vice-Chair of the Legal Committee of the General Assembly of the UN.

At the same time, he played a key role as Chair of the Special Committee on the Definition of Aggression under the General Assembly, when the Committee fulfilled its mandate. Broms served multiple times as Chair of the UN Charter Review Committee. It was for this role that he was known especially in New York. Every autumn, when he stepped inside the conference hall for the first session of the Committee, a wide group of friends would immediately gather around him.

Broms was a member of several international arbitration bodies, including the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), the International Court of Arbitration in Paris and the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, established in 1899. He was appointed by Finland as a judge ad hoc at the International Court of Justice 1991–1992 in the case concerning passage through the Great Belt (Finland v. Denmark). His most prestigious role was serving as one of three impartial judges at the Iran United States Claims Tribunal located in The Hague.

Broms was appointed Associate Member of the Institute of International Law (Institut de droit international) in 1973, Member in 1979 and Vice-President in 1997. During his term (1996–1998) as President of the International Law Association (ILA), he brought the Conference of the Association to Helsinki in 1996. He was President of the Finnish Branch of ILA for twenty years. Broms was also actively involved in the activities of PUGWASH.

Broms was a member of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters since 1980

and was made a Commander of the Finnish Order of the Lion in the same year.

Broms was an outstanding speaker both in Finland and, due to his excellent language skills, also abroad. He would fill lecture halls both in universities and The Hague Academy of International Law. Listeners were especially interested in the cases he described to show how international law had been applied in practice. He used his own experience to encourage students to pursue post-graduate studies, especially abroad. In this respect, he was able to rely on his wide international network of scholars.

Among his hobbies, Broms' favourite was tennis, a sport he had taken up as a schoolboy under his father's guidance in Vyborg. He was later appointed President of the Finnish Tennis Association and Member of the Board of the International Tennis Federation. Broms was a cosmopolite who was interested not only in sports, but also art and different areas of life in general. After the long winters, he would relax with his wife Airi and their three children at the Lamminniemi manor in Liperi.

Erkki Kourula