



PRESS Release

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European history made by Kenya-born British woman of Goan ancestry



Dr. Rose D'Sa has become the longest serving female UK member of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), the EU advisory body in Brussels that represents civil society. Her 5th consecutive term of office has just been made by the UK Government and confirmed by the Council of the European Union for 2015-2020.

Dr. D'Sa has contributed to the drafting of numerous EESC opinions, especially those of key constitutional significance such as the reform of the European Treaties, as well as many issues connected with the single market. She is especially valued for her ability to explain and clarify complex legal problems and to persuade people to reach consensus on controversial subjects.

The EESC, composed of representatives of civil society who are nominated by the 28 member states, advises the three major EU institutions, the Council, the Commission and the European Parliament, in the legislative process. Its unique role is fostering the concept of participatory democracy by facilitating a structured dialogue between civil society and EU institutions.

Dr D'Sa, a British national living at Newport in Wales, was born in Kenya. Her ancestry is from Goa in India. She was educated at Loreto Convent in Nairobi and at Millfield School in Somerset, England, before graduating with a first class honours degree from the University of Birmingham and then gaining a PhD in public international law. After qualifying as a barrister, she became Visiting Lecturer at the Kenya School of Law and held lectureships in law at Cardiff and Bristol Universities. Later she worked at the Commonwealth Secretariat in London, where she assisted Commonwealth governments on compliance with international human rights law.

Dr. D'Sa subsequently became the first Professor of European Law at the University of Glamorgan in Wales and was awarded a Jean Monnet chair in European Community law by the European Commission. Her many publications include *European Community Law on State Aid* (Sweet and Maxwell, 1998) which has a forward by Lord Neil Kinnock, the former European Commission Vice-President. She also worked as a specialist consultant to the Cardiff law firms of Geldards and Morgan Blake.

Dr D'Sa won the "Welsh Woman into Europe" prize in 1995 and a decade later was honoured by an invitation from Queen Elizabeth to a State banquet at Buckingham Palace, together with her husband, John Matthews an Emeritus Professor of Physical Geography at Swansea University.

She is an only child and attributes her career success to the encouragement of her father, Alex D'Sa from Vagathor, Anjuna, Goa, before his sudden death whilst she was still young and the support of her mother, Annie D'Sa née Mendonca of Nairobi, Kenya and Soranto, Anjuna, Goa, who continues to live in Nairobi. She has other close relatives there as well as in Germany, Canada and India.

EESC Press Unit – Silvia Aumair
E-mail: press@eesc.europa.eu
Tel: + 32 2 546 8141 / +32 473 520 774

The European Economic and Social Committee represents the various economic and social components of organised civil society. It is an institutional consultative body established by the 1957 Treaty of Rome. Its consultative role enables its members, and hence the organisations they represent, to participate in the EU decision-making process. The Committee has 353 members from across Europe, who are appointed by the Council of the European Union.

Rue Belliard/Belliardstraat 99 – 1040 Bruxelles/Brussel – BELGIQUE/BELGIË
Tel. +32 2 546 9779 – Fax +32 25469764
E-mail: press@eesc.europa.eu – Internet: www.eesc.europa.eu

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