



CARIBBEAN COURT OF JUSTICE

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MEDIA RELEASE

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CCJ President welcomes Saint Lucia to its Appellate Jurisdiction

Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. The Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) notes that the Constitution of Saint Lucia (Amendment) Act has been assented to by the Governor General of Saint Lucia and that state has now officially acceded to the CCJ's Appellate Jurisdiction. On behalf of the CCJ, I extend my sincerest congratulations to the people of Saint Lucia on this momentous occasion.

Saint Lucia now becomes the fifth CARICOM nation to take this defining step and the CCJ welcomes the opportunity to serve the citizens of that country. Statistics collated by the Court in 2022 reveal that in each Caribbean state that has acceded to the CCJ's appellate jurisdiction, the volume of cases being heard by that country's final court annually has at least doubled, thereby contributing to the dynamism of the country's jurisprudence and considerably expanding access to justice for its citizenry. We have no doubt that Saint Lucia too will have a similar experience.

The Honourable Chief Justice of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, Dame Janice Pereira, and the President of the Saint Lucia Bar Association, Ms Diana Thomas Hunte, have been written to advising of the readiness of the CCJ's Registry staff to assist Saint Lucian court officials, litigants and counsel alike in the use of the CCJ's electronic filing and case management portals in order to facilitate access to the Court.

The CCJ looks forward to serving the people of Saint Lucia as we do all the states and people of the Caribbean Community and in particular, those of Guyana, Barbados, Belize and the Commonwealth of Dominica, whose final appeals we hear.

The CCJ looks forward to more CARICOM states accessing the CCJ's Appellate Jurisdiction in the future.

The Honourable Mr Justice Adrian Saunders
President
Caribbean Court of Justice

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About the Caribbean Court of Justice

The Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) was inaugurated in Port of Spain, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on 16 April 2005 and presently has a Bench of seven judges presided over by CCJ President, the Honourable Mr Justice Adrian Saunders. The CCJ has an Original and an Appellate Jurisdiction and is effectively, therefore, two courts in one. In its Original Jurisdiction, it is an international court with exclusive jurisdiction to interpret and apply the rules set out in the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (RTC) and to decide disputes arising under it. The RTC established the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). In its Original Jurisdiction, the CCJ is critical to the CSME and all 12 Member States which belong to the CSME (including their citizens, businesses, and governments) can access the Court's Original Jurisdiction to protect their rights under the RTC. In its Appellate Jurisdiction, the CCJ is the final court of appeal for criminal and civil matters for those countries in the Caribbean that alter their national Constitutions to enable the CCJ to perform that role. At present, four states access the Court in its Appellate Jurisdiction, these being Barbados, Belize, Dominica and Guyana. However, by signing and ratifying the Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Court of Justice, Member States of the Community have demonstrated a commitment to making the CCJ their final court of appeal. The Court is the realisation of a vision of our ancestors, an expression of independence and a signal of the region's coming of age.

For more information please contact:
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