



## CARIBBEAN COURT OF JUSTICE

**134 HENRY STREET  
PORT OF SPAIN  
REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**  
Telephone: (868) 612-5CCJ Fax: (868) 624-4710  
Website: [www.ccj.org](http://www.ccj.org)

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **BREAKING BARRIERS: CCJ INTEGRATES SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION INTO JUDGMENT DELIVERY**

**Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.** For the first time, the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) will integrate a sign language interpreter into its judgment delivery process in the *Maurice Arjoon v The New Building Society Ltd. and Others* matter on Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 2:00 p.m. (AST). The live stream link may be accessed [here](#).

The mission of the Caribbean Court of Justice is to provide accessible, fair, and efficient justice to the people and states of the Caribbean Community. Access to justice is a fundamental principle of the rule of law. In the context of persons with disabilities, access to justice requires that judiciaries, inclusive of judicial officers and court staff, take all necessary steps to provide fair, transparent, inclusive, effective, non-discriminatory, and accountable services for court users and employees alike. It is against this backdrop that, in 2022, the CCJ President, the Hon. Mr Justice Adrian Saunders, established the CCJ Committee for Improving Access to Justice for Persons with Disabilities to develop policies and guidelines to create an accessible and inclusive court. The Committee, led by the Hon. Mme Justice Maureen Rajnauth-Lee, has spearheaded this new initiative. This initiative is part of a broader commitment and the Court's continued efforts to enhance its accessibility and inclusivity.

The CCJ remains dedicated in its resolve to foster an accessible and inclusive court and workplace.

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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 six 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, five states access the Court in its Appellate Jurisdiction, these being Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Saint Lucia, 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:

The Public Education & Protocol Unit

Tel: (868) 612-5225 ext. 2260

Email: [ccjcomm@ccj.org](mailto:ccjcomm@ccj.org)