



## CARIBBEAN COURT OF JUSTICE

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**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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### **Statement by the CCJ President (Ag) on the passing of former Chief Justice of Belize, Dr the Honourable Abdulai Conteh**

**Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.** It is with profound sorrow that we learned of the passing of Dr the Honourable Abdulai Conteh the esteemed former Chief Justice of Belize. Dr Conteh's tenure from 2000 to 2010 marked a period of significant transformation and progress within the Belizean judicial system. His fearless defence of individual rights and his commitment to upholding the law set a benchmark for excellence that continues to inspire. The introduction of new Judges' Rules, Supreme Court Rules, and a Code of Ethics under his leadership significantly enhanced the practice and administration of law in Belize.

Former Chief Justice Conteh's influence extended beyond Belize, impacting the wider Caribbean and Commonwealth legal practices. His work garnered respect and admiration from his peers. As we mourn his loss, we celebrate the rich legacy he leaves behind, a legacy of justice, dedication, and profound respect for the rule of law.

On behalf of the substantive President, Honourable Mr Justice Adrian Saunders, Judges and staff of the Caribbean Court of Justice, I extend our deepest condolences to his family, friends, and colleagues. May his soul rest in peace, and may his contributions continue to guide and inspire future generations.

The Honourable Mr Justice Anderson  
President, CCJ (Ag)

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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 Saint Lucia, 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.

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