



## CARIBBEAN COURT OF JUSTICE

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**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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### **STATEMENT FROM THE CCJ PRESIDENT ON THE PASSING OF SIR HENRY FORDE**

**Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.** It is with deep sadness that the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) notes the passing of Sir Henry Forde KC, LL.D (h.c), a towering figure in the Caribbean legal landscape and a distinguished jurist of Barbados.

Sir Henry had the distinction of being one of the attorneys to appear before the CCJ, as lead counsel in the first case to be heard by the CCJ - *Barbados Rediffusion Service Ltd v Asha Mirchandani et al* in 2005. His advocacy in this case was a testament to his legal acumen and set a high standard for those who would follow. This was certainly a fitting start for the Court as Sir Henry was a champion of the CCJ long before 2005, lending his voice and influence to the establishment and promotion of the Court across the region.

In his capacity as Attorney General of Barbados, Sir Henry oversaw the enactment of almost 300 laws, a feat that solidified his legacy as one of the most impactful lawmakers in the region. His commitment to public service and the rule of law transformed the legal framework of Barbados and advanced the country's development in profound ways. Sir Henry was also a tireless advocate for the advancement of women's rights. He established the National Commission on the Status of Women, which conducted research on issues relating to women and employment. The Commission's work led to 212 recommendations, nearly all of which were passed into law, ensuring greater equality and opportunity for women in Barbados.

President of the CCJ, Justice Adrian Saunders states that, "on a personal note, Sir Henry was a mentor to me during my years as a junior lawyer in private practice. We tried a few cases together in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and I witnessed firsthand his brilliance and unwavering commitment to justice. He was a phenomenal lawyer and an inspiration to all who had the privilege of working with him."

The Caribbean has lost one of its most venerable sons. His long life exemplified a legacy of service, advocacy, and leadership, will continue to inspire generations to come. The CCJ extends its deepest condolences to Sir Henry's family, friends, and the people of Barbados during this time of mourning.



*Sir Henry Forde KC LL.D (h.c)*

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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, Guyana, and Saint Lucia. 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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