



CARIBBEAN COURT OF JUSTICE

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CCJ CONTINUES ITS REFERRAL WORKSHOPS IN SURINAME

Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. On Tuesday, 7th May 2024, the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ), continued its Referral Workshop Series and sensitisation sessions on the CCJ's Original Jurisdiction (OJ) with the Court of Justice of Suriname and Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Suriname. Throughout the day, some of Suriname's key stakeholders were part of the CCJ's continued regional awareness strategy to deepen their understanding of the referral obligations of local courts and the Court's Original Jurisdiction. This initiative is co-funded by the European Union.

The sessions were facilitated by Mr Justice Peter Jamadar, CCJ Judge; Dr Chantal Ononaiwu, Director, External Trade, CARICOM Secretariat; Suraj Sakal, CCJ Judicial Counsel; Ria Mohammed-Pollard, CCJ Communications and Information Manager; and John Furlonge, Project Coordinator, 11th EDF Support to the CCJ. Dr Jacintha Asarfi, guest lecturer at the Anton de Kom University of Suriname was also a pertinent contributor to this series. Her doctoral dissertation centred on the contrast between the Caribbean Court of Justice and the Court of Justice of the European Union, especially regarding their respective reference procedures.

Through simulation exercises, step-by-step guides, and group exercises, referral workshop participants were able to identify when a question concerning the interpretation and application of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas arises in domestic proceedings, assess whether a referral should be made to the CCJ, formulate the question(s) to be referred together with the ancillary information to be supplied to the CCJ, oversee/supervise the process of making the referral utilising the office of the Registrar, and apply the ruling of the CCJ to resolve the dispute. They were also able to understand the process for accessing the Court's OJ and its value to the local and regional business communities regarding CARICOM's fundamental rights and freedoms such as the freedom of movement of people, goods, services, capital, labour/skills, and the right of establishment.

On the occasion of the 155th anniversary of the administration of justice in Suriname, hosted in collaboration with the Centre for Democracy and Justice, CCJ President, the Hon. Mr Justice Adrian Saunders stated, "Ongoing judicial education allows judges to grapple better with these issues and become better able to factor them in our work." Mr Justice Adrian Saunders spoke on the topic "The Value Of The Judiciary within Society And The Conditions For Building A

Constitutional State” and Mr Justice Peter Jamadar presented remarks entitled “Judiciary in Motion - Judiciary Here, Now and in the Future”.

Throughout this year, the referral workshop series will continue in other CARICOM Member States.



A cross-section of the facilitators at the Referral Workshop Series in Suriname



CCJ President, the Hon. Mr Justice Adrian Saunders presents the latest publication from the CCJ Academy for Law to President of the Court of Justice of Suriname the Hon. Mr Justice Iwan H.M.H. Rasoelbaks

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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, four 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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