



## CARIBBEAN COURT OF JUSTICE

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**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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### **CCJ BIDS FAREWELL TO RETIRING JUDGE, MR JUSTICE BURGESS WITH SPECIAL SITTING**

**Port of Spain, Trinidad.** On Tuesday, 18 March 2025, representatives and dignitaries from around the region gathered at the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) for a Special Sitting, a ceremonial sitting to mark a special event within a court or judiciary, to commemorate the retirement of CCJ Judge, the Honourable Mr Justice Andrew Burgess. Mr Justice Burgess, an expert in corporate and commercial law, was appointed to the Court in 2019, making him the first Barbadian to be appointed to the Bench of the regional court.

Speaking of Mr Justice Burgess, CCJ President, the Honourable Mr Justice Adrian Saunders hailed the Judge ‘as a proud product of our region’s commitment to train its own lawyers; to develop a cadre of legal professionals who would have, in the words of Dr Nicholas Liverpool, “a searching awareness of the realities of conditions in the region, a deep sense of service to the law, their community and their clients, yet retain the vision and zeal of law reformers”. Mr Justice Burgess... is perhaps the finest exemplar of the vision and goals of those who established a Faculty of Law of the University of the West Indies. His entire adult life has been spent serving the region with distinction.’

Described by CCJ President-Designate, the Honourable Mr Justice Winston Anderson as an ‘excellent scholar and jurist’ and ‘deeply admired and respected professor’, he noted that Mr Justice Burgess was the first graduate of The University of the West Indies (The UWI) to be appointed a Professor and serve as Dean. Furthermore, as noted by several speakers, Mr Justice Burgess has the distinction of being the longest-serving Dean in the history of the Law Faculty.

In their remarks at the event, several speakers commended Mr Justice Burgess for the enduring legacy he has created. The Honourable Mr Justice Sherman Moore, CHB, former Justice of Appeal of Barbados noted that he “leaves behind him an impressive record of service to the

1

legal profession, both academic and judicial.” Similarly, the Honourable Mr Justice Leslie Haynes, Chief Justice of Barbados remarked that ‘as an academic, his impact is felt by the countless students of the law...who continue to utilise his many academic works. In the practice of law, his decisions are quoted on an almost daily basis...’ As a former student of Mr Justice Burgess, Ms Lisa Shoman, Caribbean Community (CARICOM) General Counsel also echoed these sentiments as she stated “As a judge, to write decisions is to speak, to create jurisprudence, to expand judicial boundaries – but to teach lawyers – that, well that is to be a planetary guide in our judicial universe, and Justice Burgess is a Jupiter among our guides.”

The Honourable Mr Justice Ivor Archie, ORTT, Chief Justice of Trinidad and Tobago in his remarks opined that Mr Justice Burgess’ ‘judicial opinions and legal reasonings display a depth of thought and wisdom that has left a lasting impact on both our regional jurisprudence and the broader regional and international community.’

In his response, speaking of his experience at the Court, Mr Justice Burgess remarked that ‘...the CCJ is an amalgam of fundamental aspirations of us Caribbean people. Aspirations aimed at bending the arc of the history of the common law towards the development of a truly Caribbean system of law that is respected regionally and internationally.’ He also lauded the organisation stating although the Court had only been established 20 years ago, it had ‘promptly established itself as a Court of excellence’ and ‘that it was a thought leader worthy of regional and international respect’.

Additional remarks were given by CCJ Judges, the Honourable Justices Rajnauth-Lee, Barrow, and Ononaiwu; Professor David Berry, Professor of International Law and Regional Integration Law at The UWI, Cave Hill; Mr Zakir Hafez, Executive Secretary of the Word Bank Administrative Tribunal; Mr John Jeremie S.C.; and Mrs Candace Simmons-Peters, Administrative Officer (Judicial) to Mr Justice Burgess.

Mr Justice Burgess will officially retire from the Court in April. The recording of the proceedings is available on the Court’s YouTube channel at

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1XvD9WoX3bY&ab\\_channel=CaribbeanCourtofJustice](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1XvD9WoX3bY&ab_channel=CaribbeanCourtofJustice)



*The full Bench of the CCJ along with the Honourable Mr Justice Ivor Archie, Chief Justice of Trinidad and Tobago (to the extreme left) and the Honourable Mr Justice Leslie Haynes, Chief Justice of Barbados (on the extreme right) preside over the day's proceedings.*

**-End-**

### 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, 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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