



CARIBBEAN COURT OF JUSTICE

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CCJ CONCLUDES REFERRAL SENSITISATION CAMPAIGN

Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. From 2-5 November 2025, a delegation from the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ), visited the Republic of Suriname to conduct a sensitisation session on the Court's Original Jurisdiction and its referral process for members of the Bar Association of Suriname. During the visit, the Honourable Mr Justice Winston Anderson, President of the CCJ, also paid courtesy calls on several officials, including the Honourable Mr Harish Monorath, Minister of Justice and Police; the Honourable Mr Justice Iwan Rasoeibaks, President of the Court of Justice; and Mrs Rinnette Djokarto, Dean of the Faculty of Law at the Anton de Kom University of Suriname.

The workshop was led by President Anderson; Dr Jacintha Asarfi, Community Law Expert; and Jasmyn Sargeant, Judicial Counsel, CCJ. The sessions covered various topics, including key aspects of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) Regime, domestic incorporation of the CCJ's Original Jurisdiction dispute settlement regime, the CCJ's Referral Mechanism, and practising in the Original Jurisdiction.

The session marked the conclusion of a two-year public education campaign executed with financial support from the European Union's (EU) 11th European Development Fund (EDF) support to the Caribbean Court of Justice, focused on enhancing awareness among members of the legal and business community regarding the duty of national courts to refer questions concerning the interpretation and application of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (RTC) to the CCJ for determination in its Original Jurisdiction.

In its Original Jurisdiction, the CCJ has exclusive and compulsory authority to interpret and apply the RTC, the foundational treaty of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). Therefore, any matters arising out of the functioning of the CSME including rights related to the free movement of goods, services, capital, labour, and the right of establishment must be determined by the CCJ. As such, the Court embarked on a regional public education campaign to raise awareness of its

Original Jurisdiction and the process through which national courts must refer such matters to the CCJ.

Sessions were previously conducted in Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago. As part of the engagements in Suriname, President Anderson also presented a Dutch translation of the CCJ's Original Jurisdiction Rules 2024 to the Minister of Justice, and the Judiciary of Suriname symbolising the Court's commitment to deepening collaboration with Suriname and facilitating greater access to justice in the Original Jurisdiction of the Court. The translated Rules, funded by the EDF, were also used during the sensitisation sessions to enhance understanding and support effective application by members of the Bar.



Caption: The Honourable Mr Harish Monorath, Minister of Justice and Police of Suriname, receives the CCJ's Original Jurisdiction Rules in Dutch from the Honourable Mr Justice Winston Anderson, CCJ President.



Caption: *The Honourable Mr Harish Monorath, Minister of Justice and Police of Suriname, receives a copy of the CCJ Referral Manual, which outlines the process of referring a matter from a national court to the CCJ, from Mr John Furlonge, Project Coordinator, 11th EDF Support to the Caribbean Court of Justice.*

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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 Winston Anderson. 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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