



CARIBBEAN COURT OF JUSTICE

**134 HENRY STREET
PORT OF SPAIN
REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**
Telephone: (868) 612-5CCJ Fax: (868) 624-4710
Website: www.ccj.org

MEDIA RELEASE
(For immediate release)

No. 17:2026
8 April 2026

CCJ RECEIVES ITS FIRST ORIGINAL JURISDICTION REFERRAL

Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. On 7 April 2026, the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) held a case management conference for its first-ever referral from a national court. The High Court of Belize submitted a question for referral in the case of *G. Anwar Barrow and others v Financial Services Commission and the Attorney General of Belize* on 3 March 2026. The referred question concerns the interpretation of certain statutory requirements in the Companies Act of Belize and the prohibition against anti-competitive business conduct in the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (RTC).

In its Original Jurisdiction, the CCJ has compulsory and exclusive jurisdiction to hear and determine disputes concerning the interpretation and application of the RTC. Where such a dispute arises before national courts or tribunals, the RTC requires the local court or tribunal to refer the issue to the CCJ for authoritative interpretation. Once the CCJ has given its interpretation, the proceedings are resumed by the referring court or tribunal which will then apply the ruling to the facts of the dispute pending before it and deliver judgment.

However, before 2026, no such referrals had been made to the CCJ. It was against this backdrop that the CCJ embarked on a public education campaign to sensitise courts and practising attorneys in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) about the referral process. With funding support from the 11th European Development Fund, the Court carried out a series of outreach and training activities for judges, lawyers, and private-sector groups.

Launched in Belize in 2022, sessions were held in Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. The CCJ also worked with business communities to raise awareness about the rights and freedoms available under the CARICOM Single Market and Economy.

The English and Dutch versions of the referral video and the manual are available on the Court's website here: [CCJ's Referral Process](#). View a recording of the launch of the referral sessions here: [CCJ Referral Sensitisation Launch](#).

At the case management conference, the Court issued directions for the further management of the proceedings. The hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, 19 May 2026, at 11:00 a.m. AST and will be conducted by video conference.

-End-



Caption: The CCJ and the CCJ Academy for Law, along with the Judiciary of Belize, launched the Inaugural Referral Workshop Series and sensitisation sessions in Belize in 2022.

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.

For more information, please contact:

Public Education & Protocol Unit

Tel: (868) 612-5225 ext. 2260, 2246

Email: ccjcomm@ccj.org