

PRESIDENT'S CHAMBERS



The President of the Court, the Rt. Hon. Sir Dennis Byron (left) welcomed the High Commissioner of Jamaica to Trinidad and Tobago, His Excellency Mr David Pendergast (2nd left) to the CCJ. Also participating in the meeting were a number of the judges of the CCJ with the High Commissioner were (from left to right) Messrs Justice Hayton, Anderson, Wit and Saunders.

During the Judicial Year 2014-2015, the President's Chambers continued to engage in various activities aimed at building awareness of Caribbean Court of Justice and a number of judicial reform activities.

These included a number of speaking engagements, meetings with stakeholders and courtesy calls. While these are too numerous to mention in totality, a number have been selected to give some insight into the work of the President's Chambers.

During the period under review, the Rt. Hon. Sir Dennis Byron attended the Opening Session of the Permanent Council Meeting of the International Union of Judicial Officers (UIHJ). This meeting witnessed the signing of a Cooperation Agreement between the Caribbean Court of Justice and UIHJ. The Agreement signals the collaboration between the parties for the improvement of the management of the enforcement of court orders in the region. These initiatives include the development of a regional association of bailiffs which will represent, and act on behalf of, the countries represented.

Sir Dennis attended the 9th ILO Caribbean Labour Ministers' Meeting in the Bahamas in March 2015. Various



The President of the Caribbean Court of Justice, the Rt. Hon. Sir Dennis Byron (centre) and Lady Norma Byron (right) share a light moment with the President of Guyana, His Excellency Brigadier David Granger. President Granger was the guest speaker at the opening ceremony of the University of the West Indies (UWI) South Campus in Trinidad and Tobago.

discussions were held with the International Labour Organization to provide support for the establishment of the Caribbean Community Administrative Tribunal (CCAT). The establishment of the CCAT is intended to provide an avenue for the resolution of employment related disputes involving the staff of eligible CARICOM institutions. It is intended that the Tribunal will begin to be operationalized by 2017.

Of significant importance was also the delivery of the Magna Carta Lecture, in celebration of its 800th Anniversary, by the CCJ President at the University of the West Indies Open Campus in Basseterre, St. Kitts. Sir Dennis' presentation recognized the impact and influence of the Magna Carta on the Commonwealth Caribbean and called upon colonial powers to put an end to the last vestiges of colonialism.

Several significant stakeholder engagements were held throughout the region in furtherance of the projects being considered and undertaken for the JURIST Project. The project, a five-year regional judicial reform initiative funded under an arrangement with the Government of Canada, is aimed at improving regional court administration and strengthening the ability of the courts and judiciaries to resolve cases efficiently and fairly. In 2015, a number of pilot projects commenced in Barbados, Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica and St. Lucia.

The President continued his public outreach with courtesy calls and visits from regional and international officials and members of the diplomatic corps. These visits help to broaden the relationships between the CCJ and regional and international institutions.

The President also furthered his aim to introduce technology and to reduce the use of paper within the Court. In addition, the development of a bespoke case management system is being actively pursued as one of the ways to assist with this drive.



The President of the Court, the Rt. Hon. Sir Dennis Byron, welcomed the Hon. Sir Manuel Sosa, President of the Court of Appeal in Belize to the CCJ.



The Hon. Sir Manuel Sosa, President of the Court of Appeal in Belize, included a speech to students at the UWI St Augustine Faculty of Law while on his visit to Trinidad in 2015.

10th Anniversary Memories

“ My wish for the Caribbean Court of Justice in the years to come, is for all the member states to join, so the Caribbean can fully enjoy the benefits and be guided and protected by the Caribbean Court of Justice. ”



Alec Baptiste
Security Officer

THE CCJ WELCOMES DOMINICA TO ITS APPELLATE JURISDICTION

On 6 March, 2015, the Commonwealth of Dominica became the fourth country to accede to the CCJ's appellate jurisdiction.

The Court President, Judges and the Registrar travelled to Dominica to attend the event, which was hosted at the State House Conference Centre. The ceremony was attended by His Excellency Charles A Savarin, President of the Commonwealth of Dominica, the Honourable Roosevelt Skerrit, Prime Minister of Dominica, Her Worship the Honourable Mme. Justice Janice Pereira, Chief Justice of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, His Excellency Irwin LaRocque, Secretary General of CARICOM, Dr. Francis Alexis, Head of the Constitution Reform Committee of Grenada, among others.

During his remarks, the Court President highlighted a quote from the illustrious Dominican jurist, the Right Honourable Telford Georges, who regarded it as: "a compromise of sovereignty" for Caribbean nations to remain wedded "to a court which is part of the former colonial hierarchy." President Byron continued his address by stating that, "In this context I extend my congratulations to the people of Dominica; to the Hon. Roosevelt Skerrit, Prime Minister, and to the entire government and establishment on this definitive step towards completing the circle of independence."

The Court President described the CCJ as an accessible final court: "The CCJ offers increased access to justice for the people of the Caribbean. This is very evident in the countries in which the CCJ is already the final court. Unlike the Privy Council, ordinary folk have been bringing their cases before the CCJ. It is not only governments and big business who are litigants before our court. We have a much less expensive and simpler procedure for lodging an appeal. Many more cases from Barbados, Guyana and Belize come to the CCJ and we can proudly assure you that the court is accessible to anyone who has a legitimate dispute worthy of adjudication."

Dominica is also the first Eastern Caribbean country to accede to the CCJ's Appellate Jurisdiction, which is currently also accessed by Barbados, Guyana and Belize.

While in Dominica, the President, Judges and Registrar conducted training sessions for local court staff and the Dominica Bar Association. The training sessions were geared towards sensitizing participants to the procedural rules and techniques for accessing the CCJ's appellate jurisdiction. These sessions were well attended and facilitated good discourse between the Bar and the Court.



Picture courtesy of CARICOM

President of the CCJ, the Rt. Hon. Sir Dennis Byron; Prime Minister of Dominica, the Hon. Roosevelt Skerrit; Constitutional Law expert and Featured Speaker, Dr Francis Alexis were among those who participated in the ceremony to mark the accession of Dominica to the CCJ.



VII ANNUAL CCJ INTERNATIONAL LAW MOOT

The Caribbean Court of Justice held its VII Annual International Law Moot on Friday, 13 March 2015.

Eight teams registered to participate, two more than in 2014. They were the:

- Eugene Dupuch Law School (The Bahamas);
- FHR-Lim A Po School of Social Studies (Suriname);
- Hugh Wooding Law School (Trinidad and Tobago)
- Norman Manley Law School (Jamaica);
- Department of Law of the University of Guyana;
- Faculty of Law of the University of Technology (Jamaica);
- Faculty of Law of the University of the West Indies (Cave Hill) and
- Faculty of Law of the University of the West Indies (St Augustine).

The Caribbean Court of Justice International Law Moot Challenge Shield was won by the Eugene Dupuch Law School of The Bahamas, for the fourth time. The winning team also won gold medals.

In second place was the Norman Manley Law School of Jamaica, winner of the silver medals.

The CCJ plaque for the best academic team (i.e., not from a professional institution) was won by the Faculty of Law of the University of the West Indies (St Augustine).

Each participant, inclusive of the Moot Registry, was awarded a certificate of participation.

Volunteer students of the Faculty of Law of the University of the West Indies (St Augustine) manned the Moot Registry, filling the roles of: Registrar, court support officer, marshal, timekeeper and usher.

The Moot Rules were amended in 2014 to allow for e-filing. Thus, the Moot Registry volunteers located mooters' case authorities in the Court library and uploaded them to memory sticks for the Moot Judges, rather than produce voluminous binders of printed documents.



The members of the winning team: Ms. Crystal Jaunette Newman, Ms. Lowrell Lore'n Asha Edgecombe and Mr. Krisspin Romero Sands proudly display their trophy. The Eugene Dupuch Law School first won the competition in 2010, again in 2011 and 2014.