

# Caribbean Association of Judicial Officers (CAJO)

Following its very successful biennial conference in September 2017, CAJO has continued with its programmes to assist in the improvement of the quality of judicial officers and judging across the region.

## Gender Protocol

In collaboration with UN Women, the Justice Reform and Institutional Strengthening (JURIST) Project, and the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Women Judges (TTAWJ), CAJO completed a draft Gender Protocol during the year under review. The document was disseminated to those judiciaries in the region that expressed an interest in this area of CAJO's work. It was expected that each judiciary receiving the document would consider it with a view, hopefully, to moulding it to suit their unique circumstances and then ultimately adopting it as a Gender Protocol that would govern the work of all their judicial officers.

**The dissemination of the Draft Protocol was complemented by a period of intense training activity funded by JURIST and supported by UN Women.**

A three-part train-the-trainer programme of gender sensitivity has been ongoing with the judicial officers from Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. The aim of these programmes is to ensure that participating judicial officers are equipped



with sufficient knowledge of the content of the protocols and with the techniques and best practices to train their colleagues to be more gender sensitive in their adjudication. The training programmes examined a variety of gender sensitive issues such as custody, gender-based domestic violence, child support, the various ways in which international law can be utilised to assist the process of adjudication and judicial education techniques for planning and implementing programmes.

**Based on the feedback received, the gender protocol and the exposure to the sensitisation training have already made a positive difference in the approach of many judicial officers to their adjudicatory responsibilities. Judges and magistrates exposed to**



The Hon. Mr. Justice Adrian Saunders, Chairman of CAJO, brought opening remarks for the 5th Biennial CAJO Conference. Hosted by the Judiciary of the Joint Court of Justice of Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten and Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba.

# Caribbean Association of Judicial Officers (CAJO) Continued

**the training have reported that they now readily introspect their own instinctive views and in doing so discover areas where stereotypical thinking is prevalent. This allows them to adopt a more objective and empathetic approach to judging and to better assess evidence presented to them.**

## CAJO Gala Dinner Party

The Special Projects/Fundraising/CAJO 2019 Committee hosted a fund-raising Gala Dinner Party on 13 July 2018 in honour of the CAJO Chairman, the Honourable Mr. Justice Adrian Saunders. The event was held to celebrate his elevation to the office of

President of the Caribbean Court of Justice on 4 July 2018. The event attracted well-wishers from across the region, North America and Europe.

## CAJO 2019 Biennial Conference

The CAJO Executive Committee continues to meet monthly as it prepares for the 2019 Biennial Conference which will be hosted by the Belize Judiciary during the period 31 October - 2 November 2019 at the Radisson Fort George Hotel and Marina in Belize City. Our hosts, the Belizean judiciary, have already put in place several local organising committees who have begun working to ensure another outstanding Conference.



Once the core activities of the Conference were over, it was time to experience the culture and hospitality of Curaçao..



The Rt. Hon. Sir Dennis Byron, former President of the Caribbean Court of Justice, and Mr. Justice Maarten Feteris, President of the Dutch Supreme Court in The Hague, were both panellists on the topic of "Reflections on the work of Supreme Courts" for the first plenary session of the 2017 CAJO Conference. The Conference attracted over 150 judicial officers from the Anglophone Caribbean, Curaçao, Aruba, Bonaire and the USA.