

Registrar's Report

from Ms. Jacqueline Graham



“It is a cardinal principle of architectural and engineering design that the design of the infrastructure and superstructure should be coordinated so as to ensure that the foundations are adequate to sustain the edifice above”.

The Honourable Dr. Lloyd Barnett O.J.,
July 4, 2016

For those of you who follow our Annual Report closely, you will note that the themes have, in some way, alluded to various growth processes and activities. For many start-up institutions, this is a necessary journey that takes time as the organisation works towards a strong and stable foundation that is adequate to sustain the edifice above.

Now that the formative period has passed, the CCJ is on a growth path that will seek to substantially bolster its foundational 13-year history. This Annual Report's theme 'building' acknowledges the transition through an illustration of judicial goals, work and activities that emanate from a commitment to the Court's established underpinnings: that is, its judicial leadership, its people, its processes and its stakeholders.

During the period under review, the CCJ bid farewell to its second President, the Right Honourable Sir Dennis Byron, who retired from office after a tenure of

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seven years. The leadership of Sir Dennis is marked by various forms of technological advancement, innovation and transformation in the Court's day-to-day operations. Sir Dennis has passed the baton on to the Honourable Mr. Justice Adrian Saunders, who assumed office on 4 July 2018, having been a sitting judge of the CCJ for 13 years.

To his tenure of leadership, Mr. Justice Saunders brings the benefit of his experience, the attendant institutional knowledge and his own aspirations for a fortuitous future for the Court.

The 'handover' activities led us to itinerant Court sittings in Antigua and Barbuda and St. Vincent and the Grenadines; a ceremonial sitting in Trinidad and Tobago; and a swearing-in ceremony before the CARICOM Heads of Government meeting in Jamaica. These occasions afforded the Court direct interaction with governments, judiciaries, regional institutions, bar associations, the media and the public, who all received the Court warmly and openly. These experiences solidified the charge upon us, judges and staff, to personify professionalism in all our interactions with the Caribbean people and to continue to deliver excellence in justice to our region.

The dynamism inherent in the leadership transition fostered an atmosphere that propelled the Court in the direction of exploring and taking advantage of opportunities to strengthen an already sturdy foundation. One such opportunity was presented by way of the Strategic Planning process. The CCJ Strategic Plan 2019 - 2024, under the theme 'Unlocking Potential - Strengthening Caribbean Jurisprudence', allowed us to take stock of where we are as an institution versus the expectations and requirements of our internal and external court users and stakeholders. This reflection took place through a highly participative and inclusive process and resulted in open and honest dialogue.

This measure has allowed the Court to uncover the skills, competencies and professional acumen of our employees. We open our arms, as we must, to this new and exciting period of unlocking potential.

Looking forward, the Court is determined to be more nimble, considering the dynamism of its setting. To bolster that agility from within, the Court will continue its effort to create a 'learning environment' in which internal members are enabled, empowered and positioned to meet and exceed the expectations of all our stakeholders.

Every year I include a note of gratitude to our judges and staff for their contributions to the growth and development of the CCJ and this year is no different. Throughout this period, they have continued to work steadily beyond the lines of their responsibilities, especially when faced with a fair share of challenges. I am truly proud to stand beside them as we continue to build the Court's future, through sterling contributions.

There is a quiet underpinning in the Court's foundation; those associated with the Facilities Unit who maintain the physical environment of the Court, and they, by dint of their cheerfulness and professionalism, allow the functioning of the Court to run smoothly. They have my warmest gratitude.

I exhort you, the reader, to discover more of what the CCJ has undertaken in the last year as revealed in these pages. You can find out more about the Court from its website, ccj.org. Should you prefer the personal interface, you are always welcome to visit the Seat of the Court in Port of Spain.

Ms. Jacqueline Graham
Registrar and Chief Marshal