



CARIBBEAN ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN JUDGES (CAWJ)

Registered Office: No. 101 Roberts Street, Woodbrook, Trinidad and Tobago.

Email Address: info@cawj.org

STATEMENT BY THE CARIBBEAN ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN JUDGES IN COMMEMORATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF WOMEN JUDGES

On April 28, 2021 the United Nations General Assembly adopted a Resolution declaring that March 10th would be declared as the International Day of Women Judges. At the Second High Level Meeting of the Global Judicial Integrity Network of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) the idea of an International Day of Women Judges was launched by a joint initiative of the Chief Justice of Qatar and the then President of the International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ), Judge Vanessa Ruiz.

The Draft Resolution was sponsored in the United Nations General Assembly by the Permanent Mission of Qatar to the United Nations and it was co-sponsored by 72 members of the General Assembly. We wish to recognise the efforts of Her Excellency Alya bint Ahmed Al Thani, the Permanent Representative for Qatar, in promoting this Resolution.

The Resolution

The Resolution reaffirmed that the active participation of women, on equal terms with men, at all levels of decision-making is essential to the achievement of equality, sustainable development, peace and democracy. (Resolution A/RES/75/274)

Why an International Day of Women Judges?

"This Day is a recognition by the highest authority representing all countries of the World that women have a fundamental right to develop their skills and fully participate in positions of responsibility, without gender discrimination or gender bias, including the Judiciary." Judge Vanessa Ruiz, Past President of the IAWJ.

The IAWJ

The International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ) was started nearly thirty years ago by a core group of 50 dynamic and visionary women judges from around the world. The founders began with a vision of increasing the number of women judges and promoting equal justice for women and girls throughout the world. Today, the IAWJ has grown into a highly respected organization with over 6,500 judges in more than 100 countries and territories. (IAWJ Official website)

The IAWJ has individual membership as well as Member Associations. The Caribbean Association of Women Judges (CAWJ) is a Member Association of the IAWJ together with other Member Associations in the Caribbean in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago and the Eastern Caribbean.

The CAWJ

The Caribbean Association of Women Judges (CAWJ) was

formed nearly 10 years ago in October, 2013. Its members are judicial officers holding positions at all levels of the Judiciaries across the Caribbean, and the World, including the International Criminal Court (ICC), Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ), the Supreme Court (Court of Appeal and High Court), District Courts, Parish Courts and Magistrates' Courts.

The Association is organized for the purpose of promoting greater understanding and better resolution of legal issues facing all persons and issues concerning women judges, and in particular has the following objectives (among others):

- to ensure that the justice system promotes and protects the rights and interests of women and other persons and reflects equality before and under the law for women and other persons in our society;
- to co-operate and work with other national and international associations, bodies, organizations, and governments on issues of interest to women judges and women in the Caribbean.

In furtherance of its objectives the CAWJ hosted its Inaugural Conference on "The Law and the Protection of Children" in March 2014. During the Pandemic in 2021 we hosted a virtual conference entitled "Lockdown Stories: Adjudicating during a Pandemic". Our members have been panellists and presented papers at IAWJ

Biennial Conferences and other Conferences and Workshops worldwide. In 2022 we embarked on a project in support of UN Women's Spotlight Initiative to create a Family Support Network.

As we celebrate International Day of Women Judges we recognize the contribution of our patrons, Justice Desiree Bernard, Former Judge of the CCJ (Retired), Chief Justice Zaila Mc Calla, (Retired Chief Justice of Jamaica) and Justice Maureen Rajnauth-Lee, Judge of the CCJ and others who inspire us to support each other and make a contribution to the betterment of our societies not only through our professional duties but also by our activities within the community.

"This International Day of Women judges will ensure, as a powerful symbol and signpost, every year that the contributions that women judges make to the rule of law and the advancement of human rights and access to justice for all are recognized and celebrated on an ongoing basis." Judge Vanessa Ruiz

HAPPY INTERNATIONAL DAY OF WOMEN JUDGES

Caribbean Association of Women Judges
10th March, 2023

President - Joan Charles;

Vice Presidents - Yonette Cummings-Edwards, Roxane George, Jacqueline Cornelius & Paula Blake-Powell;

Treasurer - Nadia Kangaloo; **Secretary** - Carla Brown-Antoine; **Assistant Secretary** Lisa Ramsumair-Hinds