

Intervention from Antonio Emmanuel Judicial Counsel CCJ Academy for Law

Good day Chairman, esteemed delegates and members of the public. I represent the Honourable Justice Winston Anderson, JCCJ and Chairman of the CCJ Academy for Law. The CCJ Academy for Law reaffirms its commitment to support signatory countries and the ratification process of the Escazú Agreement. The Academy's mandate is to provide informative and innovative perspectives on the rules and the roles of law, particularly International Law.

The Academy recognizes the importance of the Escazú Agreement to the Caribbean region. The agreement matters to the Caribbean because it affirms and strengthens the region's commitment to respecting the environmental access rights of its citizens and because it promotes the adherence by the Caribbean to sustainable development. Simultaneously, the Agreement challenges the Caribbean to undertake new paradigms in collaboration and to make the necessary accommodations in its jurisprudence in the service of environmental access rights.

The Caribbean subregion is no stranger to the empowering role of justice in sustainable development. Largely based on the common law system, Caribbean jurisdictions have been instrumental in improving the lives of their peoples and safeguarding their common environment. By upholding fundamental rights and freedoms such as access to information, participation and justice, the judges and courts of the region have endeavoured to contribute to positive change by delivering an accessible, efficient justice that reflects the Caribbean legal framework and, most importantly, the values, aspirations and ideals of its societies.

The Academy recognizes that access to justice is central to sustainable development and that advancing the rule of law at the national, regional and international levels is essential for sustained and inclusive growth, the full realization of human rights and environmental protection.

The Academy has cooperated with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and pledges to continue to do so. In 2018 the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Academy published a book which analyzed selected case law on environmental access rights in the Caribbean entitled *Ensuring environmental access rights in the Caribbean: analysis of selected case law*. In April 2019 the Academy participated in the *Regional Workshop on Progress and Challenges In The Implementation Of The Escazú Agreement In Latin America And The Caribbean: Towards An Early Entry Into Force*. In January of this year the Honourable Justice Winston Anderson JCCJ and Chairman of the Academy held a public lecture at the University of the West Indies discussing *Why The Escazú Agreement Matters and Environmental rights, justice and public participation in the Caribbean*.

The Academy pledges to continue to develop, coordinate and facilitate seminars, workshops, exchanges, and special lectures, related to the Escazú Agreement and provide a forum for discussing legal concepts related to the Escazú Agreement in order to encourage further ratification of the agreement and in order to strengthen the ability of countries to meet their commitments.

The Academy for law shall continue to cooperate with regional and international partners and looks forward to continued progress in the implementation of environmental access rights for the benefit of our societies, our environment and for the protection of defenders of our environment.

Thank you.