

SPEAKING NOTES

By JOHN FURLONGE, REGIONAL PROJECT COORDINATOR

FOR

HANDING OVER CEREMONY – GENDER PROTOCOLS

BARBADOS

WEDNESDAY 12 APRIL, 2017

- The Honourable Chief Justice of Barbados, Sir Marston Gibson
- High Commissioner of Canada to Barbados, Her Excellency Marie Legault
- **His Lordship**, the Honourable **Justice Adrian Saunders**, of the Caribbean Court of Justice and Chairman of CAJO
- Justices of the High Court of Barbados:
 - The Hon. Madam Justice Jacqueline Cornelius
 - The Hon. Madam Justice Michelle Weekes
 - The Hon. Mr. Justice William J. Chandler
- UN Women Multi-Country Office – Caribbean, Head of Office a.i. Ms. Tonni Brodber Hemans
- Master of the Supreme Court of Barbados – Ms. Deborah Holder
- Magistrates and officers of the Supreme Court of Barbados,
- Dr Gail Miller and Ms Michelle Gibson from Global Affairs Canada and Other representatives of the High Commission of Canada
- President of the Barbados Bar Association, Ms. Liesel Weekes and other members of the legal fraternity of Barbados
- Project Officer - Mr. Carlitos Beckles and Members of the Local Implementation Committee
- Magistrate Lisa Ramsumair-Hinds, representing CAJO and the T&T Association of Women Judges
- Members of the Media
- UN Women MCO Caribbean Members of Staff
- Ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon

It is a pleasure to be here this afternoon representing the JURIST Project and to be part of this momentous occasion.

I would also like firstly to commend the judiciary for their continued progress toward addressing gender related issues here in Barbados.

Her Excellency the High Commissioner has spoken about the aims of the JURIST Project and the source of funds. I would like to highlight some of our recent accomplishments and plans.

In the past few months we have been engaged in:

Negotiating Memoranda of Understanding between participating Countries, in fact, in October of last year, the JURIST Project signed an MoU with the judiciary of Barbados.

More recently:

The JURIST Team has been attending Planning Meetings around the region hosted by their respective Chief Justices and including key stakeholders in the development of detailed work plans for the next 2-plus years of the Project

This means that the JURIST Project will support and respond to priorities identified by the judiciary and stakeholders; all activities funded by JURIST must be closely linked to a reform, and have built-in indicators to measure success and achievements.

The sustainability of judicial reforms throughout the region will continue to be a key aspect in our decision making. Our mandate is regional in scope, and while we may undertake an activity in one country, our intent is to measure its success, identify best practices, and encourage other

countries to implement those reforms. We recognize that one size doesn't fit all, and any initiative will be tailored to meet the unique circumstances in each judiciary.

We believe that much of the success of the JURIST Project as a regional judicial reform project hinges on the success of a few initiatives:

One is an operational review of court administration and registry processes and procedures that will identify gaps and issues, and collaborate on identifying improvements. The review will inform and have implications on training and development needs, technology requirements, public education, engagement and disaster recovery planning.

The second is the regular meetings and collaboration with Chief Justices and key stakeholders that will allow each party to

identify challenges and obstacles, and work together to find solutions quickly.

The Third area is the development of model guidelines for sexual offence cases and survivors of sexual offences. These model guidelines will be the product of regional consultations held over the last 4 – 5 months.

And the fourth area of work that we are focusing on is that of gender equality – which is a cross-cutting theme for the JURIST Project. Specifically, this means that all project initiatives must contribute towards the reduction of gender inequalities as perceived and experienced in the judicial system.

Today's handing over ceremony falls within this cross cutting theme of gender equality and

marks a milestone event but it also represents the trigger for a series of equally important activities.

These draft Gender Equality Protocols will now be reviewed, circulated and ultimately finalised by or before the end of September 2017. This is the undertaking of the Local Implementation Committee that has been established in Barbados and works closely with the JURIST Project. I would like to recognise the Honourable Chief Justice Sir Marston as the chair of the LIC and for being instrumental in giving life to this document.

Additionally, the Committee is central to the organisation and participation of gender sensitisation training within the Judiciary and Magistracy of Barbados.

As you can see there is sufficient work to go around and the JURIST Project will continue to partner and support where possible.

The JURIST Project has entered an agreement with UN Women to ensure the integration of key gender equality principles in the implementation of the JURIST Project.

The JURIST Project has also partnered with the Caribbean Association of Judicial Officers which has its 5th Biennial Conference later this year in September in Curacao where JURIST will also be represented.

I want to close by thanking UN WOMEN for hosting this event and once again the Judiciary for Barbados being the first CARICOM Country to

have gender protocols developed for its judiciary.

I would also like to thank the honourable judges, and specialists from the justice systems here in Barbados for supporting this important initiative and without doubt the Government of Canada for their continued investment in Judicial Reform and other developmental works in the Caribbean.

I think I speak for the entire JURIST Team when I say we look forward to the coming months with eager anticipation

Thank you.