

# **M E D I A   R E L E A S E**

---

## **STATEMENT ON THE PASSING OF MR JUSTICE CECIL ARTHUR KELSICK T.C. CHIEF JUSTICE (RETIRED) OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO 1983-1985**

The Judiciary of Trinidad and Tobago joins the legal fraternity and national community in mourning the passing of Chief Justice (Retired) Mr. Justice Cecil Arthur Kelsick TC who was Chief Justice of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago from 1983-1985.

The Honourable the Chief Justice on behalf of the Judiciary of Trinidad and Tobago extends his sincerest condolences to the children and other relatives of the deceased.

Mr. Justice Kelsick is remembered for his unwavering championing of an independent Judiciary as enshrined in the Constitution.

In his 1983 address at the Opening of the Law Term, then Chief Justice Kelsick remarked that,

*“Judges should not be overtly or covertly dependent on the arbitrary or discretionary granting or withholding of favours by the Executive. Certain attributes, appurtenances, privileges and honours should attach as of right to the holders of the offices of the President, the Prime Minister and the Chief Justice as well as to the Members of Parliament and Judges respectively who constitute the Executive, Legislative and Judicial arms of the State. With a view to ensuring the Judges’ independence, the Constitution has provided for Judges security of tenure. They are appointed by an independent commission and are removable solely by an independent tribunal. It is the duty of the Executive and Parliament to provide for the Judges ...conditions of service which under the Constitution may not hereafter be altered to a Judge’s detriment.”*

Mr. Justice Kelsick therefore further called for the provision of private Chambers for Judges and suitable office accommodation for Judiciary staff, adequate buildings for the housing of Court facilities along with technical aids in support of the work of the Court. Chief Justice Kelsick, as he then was, became the first Chief Justice to occupy the newly constructed Hall of Justice upon its commissioning in 1985, the first modern purpose built court of its kind in the Region.

Known for his elegance of language indicative of his legal acumen and mastery, Chief Justice (ret) Kelsick during his tenure as Chair of the Council of Legal Education oversaw the establishment of the Hugh Wooding Law School as an administratively autonomous institution with its own Principal. He also obtained regional consensus to amend the Agreement Governing the Council of Legal Education in a manner that allowed the fusion of the legal profession in Trinidad and Tobago. Speaking of the work of then Chief Justice Kelsick during a special sitting of the Supreme

Court upon his retirement, Mr. Carlton Alert, Minister in the Ministry of Legal Affairs in 1985 said

*“I can attest to the esteem and affection with which he [Chief Justice Kelsick] is held by the legal fraternity within the Caribbean and to their respect for the contribution he has made to the work of the Council.”*

Mr Justice Cecil Kelsick began his illustrious legal career after graduating from King’s College London where he obtained his LLB in 1941. In Trinidad and Tobago his wide-ranging public service began with him serving as a legal draftsman, later as Director of Public Prosecutions, Solicitor General and on occasion, he acted as Attorney General.

A family and community man, Mr. Justice Kelsick was honoured as Father of the Year in 1979. He was an avid West Indies cricket fan and also served the Scout Association as Vice President and the Harvard Sports Club as President. He was also a member of the Board of Management of the Holy Name Convent in Port of Spain.

Chief Justice (Ret.) Cecil Arthur Kelsick was awarded the Trinity Cross, Trinidad and Tobago’s highest national honour in 1985.

Members of the Judiciary, legal fraternity and public are invited to sign the condolence books located at the Supreme Court in Port of Spain, San Fernando and Tobago from Monday 2nd October 2017 between the hours of 10:30am and 3:30 pm.

---

For further information, kindly contact:

Alicia Carter-Fisher  
Court Protocol & Information Manager  
Court Protocol and Information Unit  
Telephone (Mobile) 297-1074 (Office) 224-5182  
Email: [ACarter-Fisher@ttlawcourts.org](mailto:ACarter-Fisher@ttlawcourts.org)

Alicia Carter-Fisher September 28, 2017