

CBA President's Address for the opening of the Grand Court 16 January 2013

1. Introduction

My Lord Chief Justice, Judges of the Grand Court, Magistrates, distinguished guests, colleagues at the Bar, Ladies and Gentlemen, I rise on behalf of the Caymanian Bar Association to second the motion of the Honourable Attorney General to open the Grand Court for the year 2013.

I too wish to extend a warm welcome to all legal and judicial appointments referenced earlier by the Honourable Attorney General in his remarks. On behalf of the Association, I wish you all much success.

And with your Lordships' indulgence, I am honoured to highlight some of the work undertaken by the Association over the past year.

2. The CBA in 2013

The Association now represents the interests of more than 140 Caymanian attorneys, an overwhelming majority of all Caymanians in the profession, and remains committed to its mandate to serve the legal profession generally and specifically to protect, promote and enhance the interests of Caymanian attorneys within it, including promoting their training and advancement. We now also have over 75 honorary student members comprised of Caymanian law students studying both locally and abroad, and articulated clerks, with whom we regularly consult on matters affecting them.

The current Council was elected at an Annual General Meeting held in February of last year and comprises of myself as President, Abraham Thoppil as Vice President, Winston Connolly as Secretary, Brett Basdeo as Treasurer and Neil Timms QC, Anna Goubault, Nick Joseph, Nick Rogers and Rosie Whittaker-Myles as Council members. We have had a very busy and challenging year, and I wish to publicly express my gratitude to all of the Council members for their service and dedication. Indeed, all of the

Council members are busy practitioners who willing dedicate their time to the Association on a purely voluntary basis.

3. Education and Training

The Association maintains a good relationship with the Truman Bodden Law School of the Cayman Islands and have discussed with the Law School mutual areas of interest with regards to education and training of Caymanians. The Association also once again delivered presentations to both Professional Practice Course and first year law students providing those students with information to enable them be competitive both in the local environment and abroad. We will continue to provide our support to the Law School and the development of our student members over this year and look forward to enhancing our relationship with each.

The Association also continued development of both its training programme for Articled Clerks and its comprehensive training programme for newly qualified Caymanian lawyers, and it is hoped that these can be finalised within the upcoming year. In this regard, we are working with the Cayman Islands Law Society to not only ensure there are consistent training practices across all firms, but also to leverage their member firms' resources in terms of personnel, material and physical space to enable all newly qualified Caymanian lawyers access to quality training, irrespective of their employment.

4. Legislative Initiatives

In keeping with its mandate, the Association has reviewed and provided commentary on a myriad of legislative initiatives during the course of last year, too numerous to reference individually by name, often times stretching our resources to capacity. Nevertheless, on behalf of the Association I reconfirm our commitment to encourage the constant review of the law and desired law reform and to work with the Honourable Attorney General and the Law Reform Commission in this regard.

5. Legal Practitioners Bill

Much of the Association's efforts and resources last year and the early part of this year were again dedicated towards seeking the implementation of a modernised Legal Practitioners Law in line with international standards. Indeed hundreds of man-hours were spent by Council, the Association's Legal Practitioners Law Sub-Committee and other members of the Association reviewing, discussing and commenting on the numerous versions of the draft Bill produced throughout last year. The Association has always strived to achieve a balanced Law which enables local firms to compete successfully on a global basis but which provides for the proper regulation and discipline of the profession within and outside of the Cayman Islands, and affords suitable protection for the recruitment, training, development and progression of Caymanians within it. While much work remains, we look forward to working with the new Government, the Law Reform Commission and other stakeholders to achieve this objective and ensure that a balanced Bill is passed into law this year.

9. Court facilities

Finally, it would be remiss of me if I did not once again mention the pressing need to modernise and expand our Courts facilities. The current facilities are, and have been for quite some time, inadequate to service ever increasing case loads and the complex and lengthy civil litigation that is now brought before the Courts on an increasingly frequent basis. I encourage the new Government to engage with the Chief Justice in an effort to resolve this long standing issue.

10. Conclusion

Now it only remains for me formally to second the Honourable Attorney General's motion to open the Grand Court for 2013 and on behalf of the Caymanian Bar Association I would like to take this opportunity to wish all Judges of the Grand Court, all Summary Court Magistrates, all the Court Staff and fellow members of the legal profession a very happy, healthy and prosperous 2013.

Dale Crowley

President

Caymanian Bar Association

16 January 2013