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# Constitution News

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

JUNE 2007

## Celebrate Constitution Day - July 2

The Cayman Islands will be celebrating “Constitution Day” as a public holiday on **July 2, 2007**.

To many of us, celebrating Constitution Day holiday is just another public holiday whereby the day is spent resting at home, frolicking at the beach or taking that long awaited shopping trip overseas.

Perhaps, this year, along with the years to come, things can be a little bit different. We can pay homage to this almost forgotten event by learning about our colourful constitutional past and discover how our existing Constitution impacts our daily lives.

To start, we can begin by finding out when the Cayman Islands obtained its first constitution and the reasons behind it.

To provide you with a few clues, the current 1972 constitution is NOT our first constitution. The Cayman Islands received its first Constitution when we were still a “colony” of Jamaica.

To learn more about our rich constitutional history as well as Constitutional issues of today, look for our Constitutional Supplement articles in the local newspapers.

**To learn more about the Constitutional history, look out for the next issue of “Constitution News”!**

## Launch of Constitutional Website to Coincide with Constitution Day

The Constitutional Review Secretariat will launch its website in conjunction with the celebration of the Constitutional Day holiday in the Cayman Islands.

The website will feature exciting components including a resource page which will contain information on past constitutional reviews, academic articles, current constitutional issues and public input information. Members

of the public are welcomed to submit their views to [Constitutional\\_Review@gov.ky](mailto:Constitutional_Review@gov.ky) for publication on the website. Other features will include a calendar of events, news updates and a photo gallery of various upcoming events.

**Visit our website on July 2, 2007!**

[www.constitution.gov.ky](http://www.constitution.gov.ky)

## Free Constitution Booklet & Companion Guide Available in July

FREE copies of the informal consolidated constitution and Companion Guide to the Constitution will be available to members of the public in booklet form throughout The Cayman Islands.

During July, copies will be available at all major supermarkets, all public libraries, post offices and major government buildings. The distribution of the Constitution and its Companion Guide is the first step taken by the Constitutional Review Secretariat to promote the national education programme it intends to embark on.

The aim of this initiative is to embark on a comprehensive public education programme to empower members of the public to speak confidently on issues that relate to constitutional reform.

The Constitution booklet will contain greetings from the Director, Mrs. Suzanne Bothwell, and remarks from His Excellency the Governor Stuart Jack, The Leader of Government Business, the Honourable Kurt Tibbetts and the Leader of the Opposition, the Honourable McKeever Bush.

The Companion Guide to the Constitution will be an easy to read booklet which aims to breakdown the sections of the constitutions. The purpose of the guide is to act as a explanatory guide to the Constitution.

The Companion Guide to the Constitution is expected to be made available to the public during the month of July, after the Constitution Day public holiday.

## The Constitutional Modernization Initiative Logo and Slogan

The logo of the Constitutional Modernization Initiative was inspired by national symbols that reflect our rich heritage.

The colours red and blue symbolize the ongoing relationship between the Cayman Islands and the United Kingdom.

The sail with the three stars represents the unity of the three islands and the fact that the entire Cayman Islands must be involved in this national exercise.

The catboat over the high seas represents the brave choices all of us

in the Cayman Islands have made and will continue to make in our pursuit of national advancement.

The slogan, “Shaping Our Future Together”, is an apt expression of what it will take for the people of the Cayman Islands to ensure that we can identify achievable and lasting constitutional reforms that are suitable to the Cayman Islands as a whole.



# FACT

**Did you know that  
the Cayman Islands  
received its first  
Constitution on  
July 4, 1959?**

*Get Your Copy Of  
The Constitution  
Booklet &  
Companion  
Guide In July!*

**Do You  
Have  
A  
Copy  
Of The  
Constitution?**

## The Constitutional Modernization Programme

The Constitutional Modernization Initiative 2007 will comprise of a four part programme. The programme is now in its first phase.

Phase one of the programme, will consist of a review of constitutional options that are viable within the Caymanian context. Much of this work will include a review of the recommendations of the 2001 Constitutional Review and identifying new areas where reform would be beneficial to the islands. The conclusion of this work will result in

the presentation of a Public Discussion Paper to the people of the islands for public discussion and consultation.

Phase two will comprise of a comprehensive public consultation period that is expected to last a number of months. The issues to be raised by the Secretariat in this phase will originate from the issues presented in the Public Discussion Paper. Other issues raised by members of the public will be welcomed and due consideration will be given to all views presented.

Phases three and four will comprise of a national referendum on constitutional issues and subsequent negotiations between the Foreign and Commonwealth Office with a view to the Cayman Islands receiving a modern constitution.

It is hoped that phases one to three will be near conclusion within a 24 month period commencing March 1, 2007, although there is no fixed end date for the Constitutional programme.

## Private Groups Join Constitutional Talks

Private groups, such as the People for Referendum, wasted no time to host its own public discussions on constitutional reform. These meetings took place on April 25 & 26 respectively, at West Bay Primary School and the Mary Miller Hall.

Constitutional Expert and former member of the UN C24 Committee, Dr. Carlyle Corbin, was invited to speak about issues of constitutional reform. The Secretariat Director, Mrs. Suzanne Bothwell, also an invited guest, spoke on the constitutional programme and openly answered questions from the floor.

Members of the audience raised many issues concerning the checks and balances in the Constitution, the powers of the Legislative Assembly and Cabinet and the protection of rights.

At the meetings, Dr Corbin also spoke about the purpose of the UN C24 Committee on the Decolonization of Non Self Governing Territories and the various options of independence, free association and integration.

The meeting at the Mary Miller

Hall was aired by Territories Talk hosts, Elio Solomon and Austin Harris of Rooster 101.9. The moderator for that evening was Mr. Denny Warren of People for Referendum. Mrs. Sophia Harris, member of the Chamber of Commerce working group, also spoke

about the past work of the chamber on raising awareness on the decolonization options. The Secretariat Director hopes that stakeholder groups would take similar initiatives during the Public Consultation period in the near future.



**Photo: From left to right Elio Solomon, Austin Harris, Denny Warren, Sophia Harris, Dr. Carlyle Corbin and Secretariat Director, Mrs. Suzanne Bothwell at People For Referendum Meeting held in George Town at the Mary Miller Hall.**

## Secretariat Partners with Public Libraries

Members of the public, who visit the Islands' libraries, are now able to pick up a free copy of the Constitution. Constitutional research sections have also been created in all of Cayman's public libraries. They will also find a wide array of reference material on the subject of Constitutional Reform including the People's Progressive Movement and United Democratic Party Position Papers on the 2002 Constitutional Reform. Other articles, including the 2002 Constitution Commissioners' Report, the Hansard Report and a compilation of articles on the constitutional review, which are published by the Cayman Islands Bar Association, are also available at various libraries. The stock of reference material will continue to grow as the Constitutional Review progresses, and regular visits to the constitutional section are encouraged.

"The research sections, which are a joint initiative of the Constitutional Review Secretariat and the Cayman Islands' Public Libraries, will provide a wealth of information about the current review process", explained CRS Director, Mrs. Suzanne Bothwell.

"Libraries are an important link between society and information,

standing at the heart of communities, libraries are perfect for promoting this national exercise." said Mrs. Bothwell.

Commenting on the joint venture, Director of Public Libraries, Mrs. Benedicta Connolly, said "Libraries are about spread knowledge, and we are glad to be partnering with the Constitutional Review Secretariat in facilitating the sharing of information

with the public."

Mrs. Connolly also reminded people that they could stop on their way home to pick up a copy of the Constitution. As it this was extracted from a GIS Press Release, Mrs Connolly stated that, "Our libraries are open after 5:00 p.m., on weekdays, and we invite everyone to drop by as often as possible."



**Photo: (From left to right) Bodden Town Library Assistant, Ms. Andrea Taffe, Director of Public Libraries, Mrs. Benedicta Connolly and Director of The Constitutional Review Secretariat, Mrs. Suzanne Bothwell at the Bodden Town Library's Constitutional Section.**

## Join the Constitution News Mailing List!

To keep informed about what is happening with the Constitutional Modernisation Initiative, the Constitutional Review Secretariat is inviting members of the public, stakeholder groups and non governmental organisations to join our

electronic mailing list by e-mailing us at [ConstitutionalReview@gov.ky](mailto:ConstitutionalReview@gov.ky) to receive a copy of our "Constitution News" newsletters.

The newsletters will be produced and distributed monthly and

will provide updated information on the work of the Secretariat and its related activities throughout all three islands.

They will also become available on the soon-to-be-launched Constitution website.



## Children Rights in the Bill of Rights?

As a country, embarking on constitutional reform is always a daunting task. Some have even said that very little is likely to change. It is perhaps timely that we are now celebrating the International Month of the Child in the Cayman Islands so that we may as a country discuss how we can take bold steps to make a real difference and ensure that the rights of our children are protected in our constitution.

The international community has accepted that to have a modernized constitution, a Bill of Human Rights must be contained therein. Many developing countries have as a foundation to their Bill of Rights, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as adopted and proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 10, 1948.

Whilst these fundamental rights have stood the test of time these rights are first generation Civil and Political rights which were established over fifty years ago.

Is it now time that we include rights that affect more than our civil and political rights such as rights of our children and future generations to come?

Some developing countries have already taken this bold step and have included in their constitutions what is termed second generation rights which are those rights that are connected to the social and economic features of life.

South Africa is one of the very few countries in the world that has incorporated into its Bill of Rights a section specifically dedicated to "Children".

The philosophy behind this move is that children need special protection because they are among the most vulnerable members of society. They are dependent on their parents and families or the state for care and protection when all else fails. Therefore,



the best interest of a child must be the overriding concern when it comes to matters affecting him or her.

Section 28 of the South Africa Bill of Rights enshrines child rights to basic nutrition, shelter, health care, social services, parental or family care. The child's individual right to legal representation in civil proceedings is also an enshrined right in recognition of the fact that the voice of the child must be represented in matters that will affect their daily life.

Whilst the Cayman Islands have in place measures to protect children are we doing enough? Have we, over time, been operating at a standard as envisioned by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and if not, what recourse is there for children and parents to ensure that children's rights are protected in our islands for generations to come?

In November 2006, the Government of Ireland announced its intention to hold a constitutional referendum with a view to putting second generation children rights in a central place in its Constitution.

We the people of the Cayman Islands now have an opportunity to advocate for a modernized constitution. Making a constitution that fits the values of these islands would give us the opportunity to adopt rights for our children, and other rights that reflect our identity and aspirations.

Interested in  
joining our  
mailing list?

E-mail us at:

[ConstitutionalReview@gov.ky](mailto:ConstitutionalReview@gov.ky)

## The Cayman Islands Constitution and YOU

The Constitution is like a rule book or guide that the Cayman Islands must follow. The purpose of the Constitutional Modernization Initiative is to improve the Constitution of the Cayman Islands, thus making our islands better. This will include discussions on various issues. The issues will then be presented to the public and voted on. It is important for voters like your Moms, Dads, Aunts, Uncles, and Grandparents to participate in this review process.



Try to encourage your entire family to participate in the Constitutional Review Initiative and to also get YOU involved as well. You might also enjoy learning more about the rules that govern our islands.

It's **YOUR** life, **YOUR** country, **YOUR** future!

## Did You Know...?

### First Constitution of the Cayman Islands

The Cayman Islands received its first Constitution on July 4, 1959.

### Branches of Government

- Legislative
- Judicial
- Executive



## Who are the Members of the Legislative Assembly for Each District of the Cayman Islands

**1** GT \_\_\_\_\_  
 GT \_\_\_\_\_  
 GT \_\_\_\_\_  
 GT \_\_\_\_\_

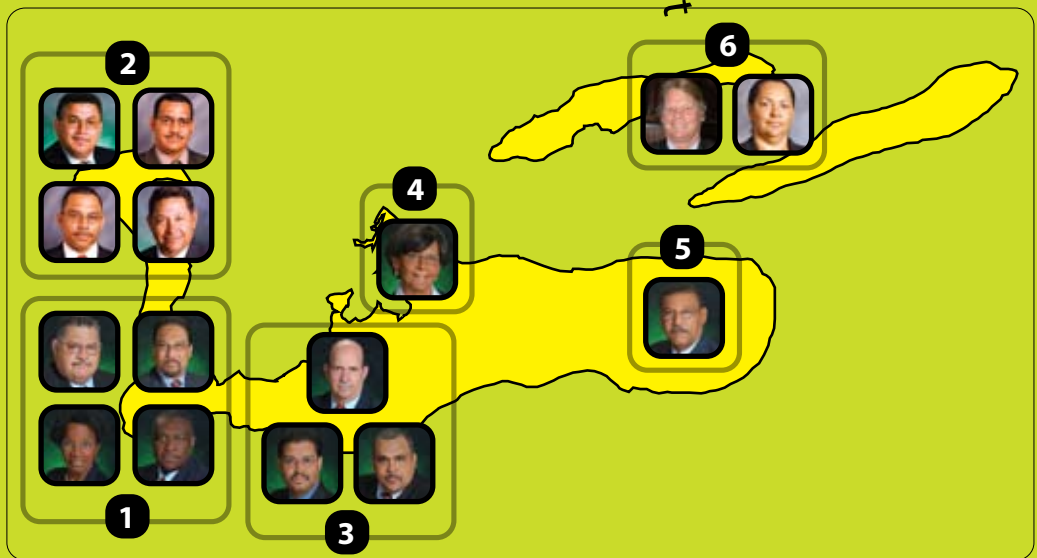
**2** WB \_\_\_\_\_  
 WB \_\_\_\_\_  
 WB \_\_\_\_\_  
 WB \_\_\_\_\_

**3** BT \_\_\_\_\_  
 BT \_\_\_\_\_  
 BT \_\_\_\_\_

**4** NS \_\_\_\_\_

**5** EE \_\_\_\_\_

**6** CB & LC \_\_\_\_\_  
 CB & LC \_\_\_\_\_



## Constitution Word Search

- CABINET
- COUNCIL
- VOTING
- LAWS
- COURTS
- ASSEMBLY
- QUORUM
- JUDGES
- GOVERNOR
- SPEAKER
- ELECTIONS
- BILLS



The following words are found in the Cayman Islands Constitution which is included on our website. Find the words in the letter grid.

To Contact Secretariat:

**Constitutional Review Secretariat**

Elizabethan Square  
 2nd Floor, Phase 3  
 George Town  
 Grand Cayman

Tel: 244-3603 • Fax: 946-4023  
 E-mail: [ConstitutionalReview@gov.ky](mailto:ConstitutionalReview@gov.ky)  
 Website: [www.constitution.gov.ky](http://www.constitution.gov.ky)

## Our Next Issue

Look out for the next issue in July 2007!

- Constitutional Day Event Celebrations
- Official Messages
- An Inside Look into the Constitutional Modernization Initiative Website
- The Constitutional Supplement - Our Constitutional History
- And Much More!

## Secretariat Profile



The first time around was not enough for Mrs. Doralyn Stewart as she has worked for the Cayman Islands Government before. So she is taking a second go at it. Mrs. Stewart has come out of retirement and is cur-

rently the Office Administrator of the Constitutional Review Secretariat.

Mrs. Stewart is the first point of contact with the Secretariat's office. Mrs. Stewart is responsible for managing the daily administrative affairs of the office. She has worked with the Cayman Islands Government for 31 years. She is originally from the district of East End but has lived in George Town for some time.

When Mrs. Stewart was asked why she worked for the Public Service for 31 years her response was, "I enjoy working for our government and our country."

The Secretariat welcomes Mrs. Stewart to the family and we appreciate her being on board with us.

## Message from the Director

Dear Reader,

This is the first volume of the first issue of our "Constitution News" Newsletter. I hope you enjoyed reading it as much as we enjoyed creating it for you.

Happy Reading!



Constitutional Review Secretariat  
Elizabethan Square  
2nd Floor, Phase 3  
George Town, Grand Cayman  
Ph: 244-3603 Fax: 946-4023  
E-Mail: [ConstitutionalReview@gov.ky](mailto:ConstitutionalReview@gov.ky)  
Website: [www.constitution@gov.ky](http://www.constitution@gov.ky)