

International Day of Women Judges 2024



International Day of Women Judges is celebrated every year on 10th March. It is a day to reflect on and recognise the contributions of women judges all over the world. Today, I salute and pay tribute to the Women Judges of the ECSC past and present who have helped to shape our Court.

The importance of the participation of women at all levels of decision-making is critical to the achievement of equality and true democracy. Women's participation in the administration of justice and the judiciary ensures that our courts reflect the citizens we serve. It empowers young women and girls to aspire to become judges and women of change in the administration of justice. By their mere presence, women judges enhance the legitimacy of courts, sending a powerful signal that they are open and accessible to those who seek recourse to justice.

In the ECSC we can boast of having almost equal numbers of male and female judges on the bench. This is a significant milestone coming from the era of there being no female judges on the court at its inception. The trailblazers like Dame Monica Joseph, Justice Sylvia Bertrand, Justice Suzie d'Auvergne and Dame Janice Pereira DBE, LLD charted the course for women judges in the ECSC and today we stand proud of our achievements. We must however not take our progress for granted for there remain many courts where discrimination and inequality reign.

The International Association of Women Judges has chosen the theme "Empathy & Action: Women and Girls in Carceral settings" for this year's International Women Judges' Day. We must continue to inspire those whom we encounter. We must bring the qualities that are uniquely ours to the table to create a more equitable society. Who says a judge cannot be empathetic, gentle, warm, compassionate, respectful but firm? We have a unique opportunity to combine our God-given gifts as nurturers to impact our young girls and women in vulnerable positions and whom we encounter daily in our Courts.

The United Nations has said that "Only through the active participation of women, on equal terms with men, at all levels of decision-making will we be able to achieve sustainable development, peace and democracy."

Today, we pause to say thank you to all our women judges for your contribution to the ECSC. May God continue to bless you and guide you as you serve the Member States and territories of the ECSC with dignity, passion and grace. Continue to inspire and build each other.

