



OECS BAR ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT BY THE OECS BAR ASSOCIATION STRONGLY CONDEMNING ATTACKS ON THE JUDICIARY IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA

President
JEAN M. DYER

1ST Vice President
YVETTE WALLACE

2ND Vice President
DELANO BART, QC

Secretary
DAHLIA JOSEPH ROWE

Treasurer
DUANE DANIEL

Immediate Past President
THADDEUS M. ANTOINE

13 FAIRPLAY COMMERCIAL
COMPLEX; PO BOX 390,
THE VALLEY, AI-2640,
ANGUILLA;
BRITISH WEST INDIES
Tel: 1-264-497-8111

Email: president@oecsbar.org
Website: www.oecsbar.org

The OECS Bar Association Inc (“the OECS Bar”) joins with the Dominica Bar Association in strongly condemning the recent vicious attacks on His Lordship, the Honourable Justice Raulston Glasgow following his 14 October 2020 decision striking out certain election petitions which were filed in the Commonwealth of Dominica following the December 2019 Elections.

We have seen social media postings, memes and heard in particular the recording of a statement which we understand was delivered by the Leader of the Opposition on Q95 Radio which openly assert that Justice Glasgow’s decision was somehow politically influenced. The OECS Bar Association is deeply troubled by these statements and particularly that of the Leader of the Opposition who on his own admission was yet to read the decision but nonetheless formed and expressed the reckless view that it “... *is not the work of a judge in the meaning and purpose of our system of justice. Rather, it is the work of an axe grinding political activist under the influence, for whatever reason of forces opposed to truth, righteousness and justice in the democratic governance of Dominica. That is my opinion ...*”

Personal attacks on judges by any elected official are simply reprehensible. Such comments challenge the reputation of the third, co-equal branch of Government and are clearly calculated to shake public faith in the same; are a grave threat to the independence of the Judiciary; and the personal safety of judicial officers. They are never acceptable and will not be condoned by the OECS Bar. All such statements must be deplored. The OECS Bar accordingly urges the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw the statement, cease and desist

his irresponsible and reprehensible comments concerning Justice Glasgow and indeed the Justice System, and calls upon all political leaders in the Commonwealth of Dominica and indeed the OECS, the people, the churches and the business community to vehemently denounce such attacks on the judiciary.

The OECS Bar recognizes that members of the public have the right to comment on decisions. That is necessary in any healthy democracy. However, the criticisms should be informed by a knowledge of all the relevant facts. Moreover, the appellate process affords redress to dissatisfied litigants. What is unacceptable is abuse and threats being issued against judges who are doing their duties by upholding our Constitutions and the Rule of Law.

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OECS Bar Association Inc

Contact: **Jean M Dyer – President**

1 264 497 8111