


A criminal complaint filed against Grenada attorney and CCJ president

 Sir Dennis Byron, President of the CCJ (L) and Dr Francis Alexis QC
PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad – A criminal complaint has been filed with the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service against Grenadian attorney-at-law Dr Francis Alexis QC and president of the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ), Sir Dennis Byron.

The complaint, which alleges that Alexis accepted a bribe from Byron to support the publication of the second edition of his book *Changing Caribbean Constitutions*, was filed by Dominican attorney Cabral Douglas.

Alexis has been accused of accepting money from the Canadian Department of Foreign affairs and Trade, which was earmarked for the Caribbean Judicial Reform and Institutional Strengthening Project, better known as the JURIST project, to finance the publication of the book.

The complaint states that, in 2015, when Byron was director of the JURIST project, he made the funds available to Alexis although publication of the book was not a part of the project.

Byron was subsequently removed as director of the JURIST project and a Canadian was appointed to the post.

In 2016, Alexis was appointed to the Regional Judicial and Legal Services Commission (RJLSC), the body established to appoint judges to the CCJ, and also to discipline and begin the process to remove judges if there is a reason to believe they have misbehaved in their positions or cannot perform.

Byron is chairman of the RJLSC, and Douglas claims that his payment of money to Alexis, who was subsequently appointed to that body, is contrary to the CCJ Agreement of 2001 and is in breach of Trinidad and Tobago’s Prevention of Corruption Act, 1987.

Alexis has been the leading proponent of constitutional reform in Grenada and St Vincent and the Grenadines, where de-linking from the UK Privy Council and adopting the CCJ as the final court of appeal was the subject of a failed referendum in both countries.

Douglas in filing the criminal complaint against Alexis and Byron said he stands ready to assist the police with a criminal prosecution in an effort to “root out the cesspool of corruption that has engulfed the highest judicial institution in the Caribbean”.