

**Remarks by Hon. Attorney General on the Swearing in of
Chief Justice Margaret Ramsay-Hale**

at Grand Court 1

Tuesday, 25th October 2022

Madam Chief Justice; Outgoing Chief Justice Sir Anthony Smellie KC; Other Honourable Judges of the Grand Court; Hon Chief Magistrate; and Hon. Magistrates; His Excellency the Governor; Hon. Premier; Hon. Deputy Premier; Hon Deputy Governor; Ministers of Cabinet; Madam Solicitor General; Director of Public Prosecutions; Mr. Richard Barton on behalf of the President of the Cayman Islands Legal Practitioners Association; colleagues of the Public and Private Bar; and other distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

It gives me immense pleasure to offer remarks at this momentous occasion, the swearing-in of the Honourable Justice Ramsay-Hale as the Cayman Islands' new Chief Justice. As one with a close collegial relationship with your late father, the legendary Jurist Mr Ian Ramsay QC, I have had

the distinct privilege of witnessing your Ladyship's incredible accomplishments, experiences, and ascension in judgeship.

With a career trajectory spanning nearly 25 years of experience in diverse courts across the region, it is without question that you are now a seasoned judiciary professional. Your legal and judicial career has its genesis at 53 Church Street in Kingston (that famous set of Chambers!) and carefully made its way to Montego Bay Family Court (a Judge), then with a stop at the Resident Magistrate Court and eventually to the Cayman Islands as Magistrate, Chief Magistrate, and Acting Grand Court Judge, followed by Chief Justice in the Turks and Caicos, before ultimately returning to Cayman and now at the pinnacle of the judiciary.

Indeed, Your Ladyship's scholarship on the bench is quite impressive as demonstrated by the many excellent judgments you have written in just about every area of the law – including commercial, criminal, family, immigration, and employment, among others. All judgments of superlative quality – including your seminal ruling of 4th June 2018 in the Turks and Caicos Islands in the matter **Integrity Commission v Kikivarakis** in

which you authoritatively clarified that the Integrity Commission did not enjoy a plenary power to issue summons to a third party to produce documents but rather can only do so in connection with a formal inquiry. A ruling with which the Privy Council in concurring, had this to say –

“it follows that I agree with the conclusion of both the Chief Justice and the Court of Appeal that the Commissioner’s power to issue summons to a third party to produce documents can be exercised only in connection with a formal inquiry under S.46 of the Ordinances.”

There lies ample reaffirmation of your Ladyship’s eternal vigilance in matters concerning civil liberties.

But Your Ladyship’s versatility transcends the delivery of fluent and clear judgments. Indeed, we are all aware of your involvement and your interests in areas such as judicial and legal education, your thoughtfulness, sensitivity and untiring advocacy on behalf of children and vulnerable persons within our society, including those afflicted by mental health and drug addiction challenges.

Like your judgeship, your other accomplishments are noteworthy: The first female to be appointed a Puisne Judge of the Supreme Court of the Turks and Caicos Islands; and the first female to be appointed as that Islands' Chief Justice. Today, you have accomplished another first, becoming the Cayman Islands' first female Chief Justice, to the absolute delight of us all. I say delight because I need no corroboration in proclaiming that you are universally liked and admired by colleagues and friends alike.

As successor to another distinguished, well-loved, and admired legal luminary, Sir Anthony Smellie KC, there is no one better positioned to continue and improve on his legacy, which includes over 30 years of excellent and transformational stewardship, as both judge and chief justice, of the law and justice in the Cayman Islands and in the wider Caribbean, to quote His Excellency the Governor.

My Lady, I pledge the full weight of the Chambers of the Attorney General, in partnership with you as you take on the mantle of Chief Justice. You also have the good fortune of

having first-class judicial colleagues at the Grand and Summary Court – as well as excellent support staff.

As we say a fond farewell to the esteemed and visionary Chief Justice Sir Anthony Smellie, we are heartened and delighted that you are an old friend of the judiciary, with the right blend of calibre and gravitas to perform this very important national role. We are confident of the profound impact you will continue to make on the Cayman Islands justice system and the benefits that will inure to the jurisdiction as a whole because of your leadership.

You are a living embodiment of how to successfully combine a busy and illustrious career while raising a family—something to which your children, Matthew, Sarah and Lauren Amor, can happily attest as they revel in this proud moment.

We warmly welcome you as our new Head of the Judiciary

I thank you!

Samuel Bulgin KC

Hon. Attorney General