



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Update on the Report of the Chancellor's Commission on Governance

The UWI Regional Headquarters, Jamaica. Monday, 17 August 2020 — The Commission on Governance established in December 2018 by Chancellor of The University of the West Indies (The UWI) Mr Robert Bermudez, to review the University's operations, has completed its report. The Report will be reviewed by stakeholders of The UWI in the coming weeks and subsequently shared publicly.

Chaired by Sir Dennis Byron, former President of the Caribbean Court of Justice, the Chancellor's Commission on Governance engaged in wide ranging consultations with internal and external university stakeholders in the discharge of its mandate: *to examine the performance of The UWI, including its management practices, issues of transparency and accountability.* The Report contains recommendations to improve the operations of the University. It comes at a time when the higher education sector globally is being impacted by challenges of financing, increased diversity and changes in modes of delivery and programming. In the Caribbean, with economies already stagnating and bearing the unexpected brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic, issues of transparency and accountability to the many stakeholders of The UWI are paramount. Recommendations will be shared following requisite stakeholder consultations.

Each member of the Chancellor's Commission brought unique perspectives and expertise to the review process. In addition to Sir Dennis, the Commission members include Sir Elliott Mottley, retired jurist; Mr. Darrion Narine, former President of the Guild of Students at the St. Augustine campus; Professor E. Nigel Harris, Vice-Chancellor Emeritus of The UWI; Mrs. Angela Hamel-Smith, Justice of the Industrial Court in Trinidad and Tobago; Ambassador Didacus Jules, Director-General of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States and former Registrar of the Caribbean Examinations Council; Mrs. Jacqueline Sharp, former President of the Alumni Association of The UWI; Dr. Beverly Pereira, former University Counsel; and Mr. Richard Byles, Governor of the Bank of Jamaica. The Commissioners have graciously agreed to continue to be available to Chancellor Bermudez until December 31, 2020 while the Report is considered.

Chancellor Bermudez has conveyed his thanks to the Commissioners for their dedication and commitment to the charge delivered to them as well as his appreciation for their willingness to continue to engage until December 31, 2020.

There have been two previous Chancellor's Commissions that reported in 1996 and 2006. The first convened by former Chancellor, Sir Shridath Ramphal resulted in the creation of several institution-wide boards including the Board for Undergraduate Studies and the Board for Graduate Studies and Research, to develop and oversee policy, as well as the restructuring of some faculties to improve overall efficiency in decision-making and to reduce costs. In 2006, the Commission convened by former Chancellor, Sir George Alleyne built upon the work of the earlier Commission, with recommendations aimed at continuing to improve the composition and functioning of the major organs of governance of the University at Centre and campus levels. The underpinning philosophy was to ensure that The UWI remained a relevant and respected regional institution, essential to the development of the Caribbean. The 2006 Report also examined the possible mechanisms to preserve and strengthen the image and presence of the University in what were then called the "non-Campus" countries. The UWI Open Campus, established in 2008 through

the amalgamation of several existing entities including The UWI Distance Education Centre, to better serve those countries, is one of the manifestations of that Report.

The global higher education landscape has changed significantly since 2006. Trends such as technological advances, declining funding from traditional sources, internationalisation strategies, increased student diversity, and increased demands for performance and accountability by stakeholders, are impacting on how universities operate. The UWI faces all of these challenges and in 2020, the still-unfolding COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the financial challenges as UWI contributing Governments deal with contracting economies and increasing domestic demands. This infers increased accountability to our Governments and all stakeholders, and we thank them for all that they continue to do for the institution. It is anticipated that the recommendations of this 2020 Report will help to improve institutional accountability and efficiency at The UWI.

End.

Related News:

[*UWI Chancellor appoints Commission to examine the University's Governance*](#)

[*Regional public forum to hear governance issues related to The UWI takes place on April 24*](#)

About The UWI

For over 70 years The University of the West Indies (The UWI) has provided service and leadership to the Caribbean region and wider world. The UWI has evolved from a university college of London in Jamaica with 33 medical students in 1948 to an internationally respected, regional university with near 50,000 students and five campuses: [Mona](#) in Jamaica, [St. Augustine](#) in Trinidad and Tobago, [Cave Hill](#) in Barbados, [Five Islands](#) in Antigua and Barbuda and an [Open Campus](#). As part of its robust globalization agenda, The UWI has established partnering centres with universities in North America, Latin America, Asia, Africa and Europe including the [State University of New York \(SUNY\)-UWI Center for Leadership and Sustainable Development](#); the Canada-Caribbean Institute with Brock University; the Strategic Alliance for Hemispheric Development with Universidad de los Andes (UNIANDES); The UWI-China Institute of Information Technology, the University of Lagos (UNILAG)-UWI Institute of African and Diaspora Studies; the Institute for Global African Affairs with the University of Johannesburg (UJ); The UWI-University of Havana Centre for Sustainable Development; The UWI-Coventry Institute for Industry-Academic Partnership with the University of Coventry and the Glasgow-Caribbean Centre for Development Research with the University of Glasgow.

The UWI offers over 800 certificate, diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate degree options in Food & Agriculture, Engineering, Humanities & Education, Law, Medical Sciences, Science & Technology, Social Sciences and Sport.

As the region's premier research academy, The UWI's foremost objective is driving the growth and development of the regional economy. The world's most reputable ranking agency, Times Higher Education, has ranked The UWI among the top 600 universities in the world for 2019 and 2020, and the 40 best universities in Latin America and the Caribbean for 2018, 2019 and 2020. The UWI has been the only Caribbean-based university to make the prestigious lists. For more, visit www.uwi.edu.

(Please note that the proper name of the university is The University of the West Indies, inclusive of the "The", hence The UWI.)