



December 21, 2017

Press Release

Complaint on the eligibility of the Premier to be elected Member of the House of Assembly: Commission's investigation and outcome

The TCI Integrity Commission (the Commission) hereby informs the public that on 12 November, 2017, the Commission received a formal complaint alleging, that the Premier, the Hon Sharlene Cartwright-Robinson, was not eligible to be elected a Member of the House of Assembly and so not qualified to hold the position of the Premier of the Turks and Caicos Islands. The main ground of this allegation is that she was born in the Bahamas, holds and travels with a Bahamian Passport and thus holds dual citizenship contrary to Sections 49 and 50 of the TCI Constitution. The complaint further alleged that she does not hold a valid current TCI passport and this has been the case for some time.

In accordance with its constitutional and statutory duty to inquire into complaints of this nature, the Commission investigated these allegations and can confirm that they are false. Prior to the 2012 General Elections and in compliance with the law as it was then interpreted, the Premier did renounce her Bahamian citizenship along with some other members of the House of Assembly affected. She is also in possession of current and previous TCI Passports, some dating back to more than ten years ago. She was thus eligible and was duly elected into the TCI House of Assembly in 2012. Since then, and notwithstanding the current position of the law, she had neither applied for nor possessed any Bahamian Passport. Thus, she remained eligible for and was duly elected into the House Assembly at the 2016 General Elections, contrary to the complaint. Most, if not all, of these facts are easily verifiable from the public and official records of the relevant authorities in TCI and the Bahamas.

The Commission is aware that this complaint, unfortunately has also been relayed and made subject of public commentary in social media. As stated in a previous press statement, the Commission recognizes that social media provides a platform through which persons freely interact and communicate various information on any matter, using their names, pseudonyms or plainly anonymous. The Commission is once again emphasizing that persons who use the liberty of social media as a cloak to make or give false and malicious information or complaints against other persons, agencies or institutions, especially where the truth of such information or complaint can easily be confirmed, must be prepared to face the severe consequences under the law for doing so. In such cases, the Commission has a duty to also investigate whether the complaint is falsely and maliciously made, and will be doing so in relation to the complaint in this matter.


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Deputy Director, TCI Integrity Commission.