

**ANNEX 1  
NOMINATION FORM  
MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AND  
COMPLIANCE OF THE ESCAZÚ AGREEMENT**

**ALL FORMS RECEIVED WILL BE PUBLISHED**

**PLEASE SEND TO [secretaria.escazu@cepal.org](mailto:secretaria.escazu@cepal.org) by 15 December 2022  
(11:59 pm Santiago, Chile time)**

**A. Personal details**

(1) Full name: Rita Joseph- Olivetti

(2) Date of birth (day/month/year): 29/06/1957



(3) Nationality: indicate if you have more than one and whether you have initiated legal procedures to acquire new nationalities. If you have multiple nationalities of the countries listed in annex 1 of the Escazú Agreement, indicate which is to be considered the main nationality for the purposes of your nomination.

Grenada/ Italy (by marriage)

(4) Country of residence: Grenada

(5) Email address for communications with the Secretariat:

**B. Languages: please indicate whether you are fluent in at least one of the working languages of the Escazú Agreement, English or Spanish, both oral and written. Knowledge of other languages of the region would be an asset.**

Level of Spanish:

Oral:	Basic: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Intermediate: <input type="checkbox"/>	Advanced: <input type="checkbox"/>	First language: <input type="checkbox"/>
Written:	Basic: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Intermediate: <input type="checkbox"/>	Advanced: <input type="checkbox"/>	First language: <input type="checkbox"/>

Level of English:

Oral:	Basic: <input type="checkbox"/>	Intermediate: <input type="checkbox"/>	Advanced: <input type="checkbox"/>	First language: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Written:	Basic: <input type="checkbox"/>	Intermediate: <input type="checkbox"/>	Advanced: <input type="checkbox"/>	First language: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Other language: please indicate here \_\_\_\_\_ French \_\_\_\_\_

Oral:	Basic: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Intermediate: <input type="checkbox"/>	Advanced: <input type="checkbox"/>	First language: <input type="checkbox"/>
Written:	Basic: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Intermediate: <input type="checkbox"/>	Advanced: <input type="checkbox"/>	First language: <input type="checkbox"/>

Other language: please indicate here \_\_\_\_\_ Italian \_\_\_\_\_

Oral:	Basic: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Intermediate: <input type="checkbox"/>	Advanced: <input type="checkbox"/>	First language: <input type="checkbox"/>
Written:	Basic: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Intermediate: <input type="checkbox"/>	Advanced: <input type="checkbox"/>	First language: <input type="checkbox"/>

Other language: please indicate here \_\_\_\_\_

Oral:	Basic: <input type="checkbox"/>	Intermediate: <input type="checkbox"/>	Advanced: <input type="checkbox"/>	First language: <input type="checkbox"/>
Written:	Basic: <input type="checkbox"/>	Intermediate: <input type="checkbox"/>	Advanced: <input type="checkbox"/>	First language: <input type="checkbox"/>

### C. Statement of motivation for applying (600–1,000 words maximum)

I live on a small island and I have always loved nature but the ocean in particular wields a major force in my life and very early for a girl at that time in these parts I learnt to relish the underwater world and the joys of the ocean. As I have grown older, I have learnt to care more about our natural world and its inhabitants- in short, earth, as we are all part of that world: one world. I have seen the disdain with which so many of my countrypeople treat our natural resources, as if there is a never-ending supply. We despoil the coast of its vegetation and sand dunes, we pollute the oceans and the waterways, we cut down mangroves and use what remains as rubbish dumps, we destroy inland forests - all this ostensibly to make room for us humans and our needs. We plant lawns instead of food and pour concrete in our yards- back and front - because we dislike mud. Agriculture is looked on as a poor means of livelihood and our government has neglected investment in agriculture and has focused on tourism instead. We do all this without realizing that everything is connected and has its place and its responsibility and that we as humans have a duty to care for the earth not only for ourselves but for our children's children.

I am currently involved as a lawyer in public interest litigation. This is aimed at enforcing compliance with the planning laws of Grenada by both the planning authority and three major developers who are engaged in construction of luxury hotels and condominiums in environmentally sensitive coastal areas. Apparently little or no thought has been given to the destruction of wetlands and the habitats of our endangered species or to our historical and cultural heritage. The court process drags on. We are still at the initial stages even after one year. Access to justice is in issue. The group's standing or legal right to bring the case was challenged by the planning authority and the three developers. The Court of Appeal heard appeals by the opposing parties in late September and has reserved its decision.

Although I am a retired judge, I was drawn in by the enthusiasm and dedication of my client group of which my son is a member. Oftentimes we think that because Government is involved it is a fait accompli and we do nothing because it seems like we are helpless. However, faced with what appears to be tremendous losses to my homeland if these projects are allowed to continue unchecked and the determination of the group to try to make a difference and to use their voices, I became a member as together I believe that we can make a difference. Subsequently, I agreed to act as the lawyer for the group when the need to go to court was seen as imperative after the group's efforts to engage the relevant authorities and the developers fell on deaf ears. This was because the group, a newly formed organization of civic minded individuals, found it extremely difficult to retain the services of a competent lawyer. The group had to depend on donations

to fund its legal costs and some lawyers were simply not interested, or too busy or their fees were unattainable. The group's main platform is advocating for sustainable and equitable land development not only on paper but in reality. This struck me as important for our country's survival. I also became aware that some members were reluctant to be publicly associated with the group as they feared some form of political victimization.

In Grenada I have seen first-hand the manner and extent to which our government is willing to go to attract foreign investment. Compliance with the country's laws for the protection of the environment and the cultural and historical heritage of our people is often neglected and enforcement of these laws also inadequate. The views of civil society are easily and too often ignored. And oftentimes, those who are the most affected have little or no voice and remain unheard to their detriment. The need for education on environmental issues at all levels is paramount.

My involvement with this matter has shown me that it is difficult if not impossible to obtain information from governmental authorities on environmental matters and how slow and costly it is to attempt to seek redress from the courts. Furthermore, even getting in on first base with the court is fraught with challenges due to our laws concerning judicial review which is the usual process for challenging administrative decisions.

The Escazu agreement signals hope for all who live in and care about the welfare of the peoples of these regions and Planet Earth. Simply put, I feel that I can contribute in a meaningful way because I have the time and because of my past experience as a judicial officer in the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court and my first-hand knowledge of seeking access to justice on behalf of a non-governmental organization. I should deem it an honour and a heavy responsibility if I am chosen to be involved in this process.

**D. Time availability:** please explain your time availability and commitment to perform the functions of the Committee, i.e., at least three months (90 days) per year (100 words maximum).

I retired from my last substantive post as a High Court judge in 2013. I spent some years travelling around the Caribbean, sightseeing and writing. I am the self-published author of a novel, 'The Red Door' under my pen name Rita Leone. Since my return home I have not engaged in any form of full-time employment. However, I do get involved in legal work from time to time on mostly a pro bono basis if the matters strike me as needful of my help. Apart from my involvement with the present litigation I have the time and can readily devote the necessary hours to the work of the Committee if I am elected as a member.

**E. Recognized competence in access rights or other matters covered by the Agreement:** Please explain how you meet this requirement (600 words maximum).

In my more than ten years as a High Court judge of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court and my short stint as a High Court judge of the Supreme Court of Belize I have been exposed to and have adjudicated upon several matters touching and concerning access to justice in environmental matters and access to justice in general.

I am conversant with the basic principles of access to justice, information and public participation and the protection of the law. All of these underpin the Escazu agreement and are fundamental rights which the courts recognized before the Escazu Agreement gave them paramount importance in environmental matters. I recall that I was the initial judge on one of the first environmental challenges in the Virgin Islands (British). I have also adjudicated upon matters concerning a small development in one of Belize's protected areas. Prior to that as Crown Counsel in the Virgin Islands (British) one of my responsibilities was to advise the planning authority and I recall at least one matter in which the planning authority unsuccessfully litigated against a developer who had allegedly breached planning regulations. I also dealt with a tragic criminal matter indirectly related to sand mining in Barbuda.

In addition, I received judicial training on adjudication in environmental matters from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) at a workshop in Nairobi Kenya in 2007.

**F. Legal experience and knowledge:** Please explain if you have legal experience and knowledge (300 words maximum).

I am a trained lawyer having completed my academic and practical courses in 1981 in England and Trinidad. Over the ensuing years I have worked in Government practice, in private practice and as a High Court judge during the last eleven years of my active legal career. I have been exposed to law and the practice of law on many levels including serving an acting stint on the Court of Appeal of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court. I also served as the Chairperson of the General Legal Council, the body responsible for regulating the legal profession in Grenada and for upholding professional standards. In addition, I am a trained mediator and an arbitrator. In summary, I would say that I have a wealth of knowledge and experience accumulated in over forty years in the legal profession which should prove of immense value to the work of the enforcement committee if I were to become a member thereof.

### G. Academic background

Degree	Institution	Place	Year
BA (Hons.) Law	Kingston University	Kingston upon Thames, England	1979
CLE Certificate	Hugh Wooding Law School Council of Legal Education	St. Augustine Trinidad and Tobago	1981
Certified Arbitrator	Robert Gordon University (Aberdeen, Scotland)	Online	2009

Certified Mediator	The London School of Mediation Ltd London England	Virgin Islands (British)	2011

<b>H. Relevant employment</b>		
Name of employer, functional title or position, and functions	Years of work	Place
EASTERN CARIBBEAN SUPREME COURT High Court Judge ( acting)	2018 -2019 (3 months)	ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
GOVERNMENT OF GRENADA Chairperson of the General Legal Council (Responsible for regulating and upholding standards of professional conduct in the legal profession)	2016-2019	GRENADA
SUPREME COURT OF BELIZE , CA, HIGH COURT JUDGE all forms of judicial work adjudicating on cases - civil , commercial, family, land	2013	BELIZE , CA
EASTERN CARIBBEAN SUPREME COURT, COURT OF APPEAL JUDGE (Acting)	2012	ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES, ST. LUCIA, ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
EASTERN CARIBBEAN SUPREME COURT, HIGH COURT JUDGE all forms of judicial work adjudicating on cases - civil , criminal, commercial family, land	2002-2012	ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, VIRGIN ISLANDS ( BRITISH), DOMINICA, ST KITTS AND NEVIS
GRANT, JOSEPH & Co. LAW PARTNER I engaged in all forms of private law practice mainly civil and commercial law and litigation before the Magistrate courts, the High Court and the Court of Appeal	1988-2001	GRENADA

GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS (BRITISH) Crown Counsel Advising government on all civil legal matters and representing them in court	1985-1987	VIRGIN ISLANDS (BRITISH)
HENRY HENRY & BRISTOL Lawyer - engaged in all forms of private law practice including civil and criminal litigation before the Magistrate courts, the High Court and the Court of Appeal	1982-1984	GRENADA

**I. Independence from the executive, legislative and judicial powers of the State:** please indicate how you meet the requirement of being independent from the executive, legislative and judicial powers of the annex 1 countries of the Escazú Agreement (100 words maximum).

I am not employed with any of the Governments or any governmental authority. I hold no professional or other contracts with any of those entities.

#### J. Ethics and integrity

(1) Do you have any official, professional, personal, or financial relationships that could limit, weaken, or bias the performance of your duties? If so, please explain.

No, I do not have any such relationships which would impact on the performance of my duties.

(2) Are there any factors that may directly or indirectly influence, pressure, jeopardize or otherwise affect your ability to act independently in exercising your duties? If so, please explain.

No, I am not aware of any such constraints on my ability to act independently in carrying out my duties.

(3) Is there any reason, current or past, that could call into question your moral standing and credibility, or do you hold any views or opinions that might prejudice the way in which you discharge your mandate? If so, please explain.

No. I am not aware of any such constraints on my ability to act independently in carrying out my duties.

**K. Publications:** please mention your participation, and explain what capacity, in any publications on access rights or other matters related to the Escazú Agreement (list the five most relevant).

I have no relevant publications

#### L. Travel and assistance:

(1) Do you have any limitations for travelling during the performance of your mandate? If so, please explain.

My commitments to the public interest litigation that I am engaged in which might require my attendance in court and the preparation of briefs. However, court hearings are conducted online generally so this should not be a hindrance.

(2) Do you require any special assistance to perform the duties of this position? If so, please explain.

I do not require any special assistance.

**M. References:** please provide three references that can attest to your experience and competence in the matters of the Escazú Agreement (these individuals may be contacted during the selection process).

1. Full name: Sir Dennis Byron

Position: Retired- former President of the Caribbean Court of Justice

Contact details:

2. Full name: Ms Sandra Fergusson

Position: Chairperson  
InterAgency Group of Development Organisations (IAGDO)

Contact details:

3. Full name: Justice Sonya Young

Position: High Court Judge Supreme Court of Belize, CA  
Government of Belize

Contact details: