



**NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release**

**TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO HEAD OF STATE TO DELIVER
CIBC FIRSTCARIBBEAN/UWI DISTINGUISHED LECTURE
TO MARK INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2020**

Bridgetown, Barbados, February 25, 2020 -- The President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago will deliver this year's Distinguished Lecture to mark International Women's Day (IWD).

Paula-Mae Weekes, the first female Head of State of the twin island nation will explore issues of gender equality and the advancement of women's rights when she takes the stage at the Walcott Warner Theatre, Errol Barrow Centre for Creative Imagination on Friday March 6, 2020 at 7p.m.

The lecture, is one of the signature activities hosted by the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus to mark International Women's Day and the president will be speaking on the topic: "I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights", which is the United Nation's theme for IWD 2020.

CIBC FirstCaribbean International Bank has again partnered with the Institute for Gender and Development Studies: Nita Barrow Unit (IGDS: NBU) Cave Hill Campus, University of the West Indies to present the public lecture.

The bank's Director of Corporate Communications Mrs. Debra King said the bank was delighted to join with the UWI to host the distinguished lecture for the fourth year. "We are even more excited this year as we have our first Head of State H.E. Paula-Mae Weekes, the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago delivering the lecture," Mrs. King said.

"Her Excellency has had a long and distinguished legal career before her appointment as President and we look forward to her bringing her unique experiences and perspectives to bear on the topic," she added.

Dr. Letnie Rock, the Acting Head of The Institute for Gender and Development Studies: Nita Barrow Unit, The University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus remarked that "The Institute is honoured to host Her Excellency Paul-Mae Weekes, the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago as she delivers the International Women's Day Distinguished Lecture. She stated "CIBC FirstCaribbean is a keen and valuable partner in the hosting of the International Women's Day Lecture series which is opened to the public."

Dr. Rock added that "since the IGDS: NBU began co-hosting the lecture series there have been other distinguished lecturers but this is the first time that a Head of State will be delivering the lecture. The Nita Barrow Unit is truly delighted that Her Excellency has accepted the invitation and looks forward to an inspiring lecture."

Paula-Mae Weekes is a retired Justice of Appeal of the judiciaries of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and The Turks and Caicos Islands. She was educated at the Bishop Anstey High School. In 1977 she entered The University of the West Indies, Faculty of Law, Cave Hill, Barbados graduating in 1980 with a Bachelor of Laws (Hons). She obtained her Legal Education Certificate from the Hugh Wooding Law School in 1982 and was admitted to the practice of law in Trinidad and Tobago later that year.

President Weekes joined the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions as State Counsel in November 1982 where she spent eleven years before going into private practice. In 1996 she was appointed a judge of the Trinidad High Courts and served for nine years, mainly in the criminal jurisdiction.

President Weekes was elevated to the Court of Appeal in January 2005 and presided in that court for eleven years. She retired from the Judiciary of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on August 31, 2016, after two decades of service.

Upon her retirement, President Weekes joined the Appellate Bench of the Judiciary of The Turks and Caicos Islands becoming the first woman to serve in that capacity.

President Weekes received the Order of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, which is the highest national award on 14th September 2018. She is an avid cultivator of orchids and enjoys exploring foreign lands.

Photo Caption: Her Excellency Paula-Mae Weekes O.R.T.T.



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