



## THE NATIONAL TRUST'S STATEMENT ON THE CRUISE PORT REFERENDUM JUDICIAL REVIEW

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**19<sup>th</sup> February 2020** - The National Trust for the Cayman Islands welcomes Mr Justice Owen's ruling that the Referendum Law is incompatible with the constitution, and would like to take this opportunity to thank CPR and Shirley Roulstone for their principled campaign. We await the Judge's further ruling as to whether the law should be quashed, but we welcome the Cayman Islands Government's confirmation that there will be a general referendum law setting out clear and fair rules for referendums. We invite the Cayman Islands Government to engage with all stakeholders - including CPR and the National Trust- when framing the general referendum law so that it is seen to be fit for purpose.

The National Trust also welcomes the Cayman Islands Government's acknowledgement that it is under a duty to have regard to environmental concerns when taking any decisions relating to the cruise port development. This commitment is in keeping with the Constitution Order 2009 which states the Cayman Islands "will be a country that respects, protects and defends its environment and natural resources as the basis of its existence" and "a Country that manages growth and maintains prosperity while protecting its social and natural environment." The National Trust looks forward to reviewing the updated Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) when published by Government and engaging in consultation on it. It is important that all essential environmental assessments are conducted and published, thus providing reliable information to the public in respect of the impact that this project will have on our endangered coral reefs, unique marine environment, and historical shipwrecks. We also ask the Cayman Islands Government to refrain from publishing further contentious "information" on the "Save our Tourism" website.

The National Trust notes with regret the Cayman Islands' Government's stated intention to appeal today's ruling. We also note that any appeal will inevitably proceed to the Privy Council, with resulting cost and delay which are not in the interests of any party, or the Cayman Islands.

The National Trust shares the dismay of all Caymanians that the debate around the cruise port development has been divisive and contentious. The National Trust hopes that all parties can now move forward in a more positive and co-operative way. To that end, we would invite His Excellency the Governor to convene a public, independently chaired enquiry to examine all of the economic, environmental and social issues which the proposal raises.

The National Trust has been safeguarding the Cayman Islands' environment and places of historical significance for over 32 years for present and future generations of the Cayman Islands. We remain dedicated to protecting our precious and endangered coral reefs, fragile



natural environment, our treasured heritage and preserving all that makes the Cayman Islands unique.

Ends.

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**About the National Trust for the Cayman Islands**

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands is a non-governmental organization whose mandate under the National Trust Law (2010 Revision) includes the preservation of the historic, natural and maritime heritage of the Cayman Islands for present and future generations.