

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: Monday 14 March 2022

Privy Council Ruling on Same Sex Marriage

Ben Tonner QC, attorney for the Appellants, issues the following statement on the ruling given by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council on Monday 14 March 2022 in relation to same sex marriage in the Cayman Islands:

Chantelle and Vickie are extremely disappointed with the Privy Council's judgment issued earlier today. Notwithstanding the Chief Justice's 2019 ruling that the Cayman Islands Government can "*no more justify exclusion from the institution of marriage on the ground that a couple are of the same sex, than exclusion could be justified on the ground that a couple are of different races*", the Privy Council has upheld the Court of Appeal's decision that same sex couples in the Cayman Islands have no right to access the institution of marriage.

With the assistance of their legal team, Chantelle and Vickie are actively considering their legal options, including their right of appeal to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. In the interim, however, it should not be forgotten how much progress has been made in the last 5 years since Vickie and Chantelle first lobbied the Governor and the Premier to recognize their fundamental dignity as human beings. Were it not for their courage in standing up for their rights, and the rights of many others, there would still be no legal framework for the recognition of same sex couples in the Cayman Islands. Their strength and bravery throughout these proceedings has been truly inspirational.

As Chantelle and Vickie pause to reflect on their next steps, they would like to take this opportunity to thank their family and friends, their legal team and the members of the local and international community for their continued support.

-END-