



## **CCC launches investigation into CWC's Agreement to Acquire Columbus International Pursuant to Article 175 (6) of the RTC**

The CARICOM Competition Commission ("the Commission") advises the public of the launch of an investigation into the agreement by Cable and Wireless Communications Plc ("CWC") to acquire Columbus International Inc. ("Columbus") pursuant to Article 175 (6) of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (RTC).

This statement from the the Commission provides a further update to our statement on the preliminary examination process published on 01 June 2015 on [www.caricomcompetitioncommission.com](http://www.caricomcompetitioncommission.com) and issued to media organisations.

The Commission arrived at this determination pursuant to Article 176 (4) of the RTC based on:

- (a) the findings of the preliminary examination of the "Agreement" conducted; and
- (b) having received no objection from the Member States regarding the jurisdiction of the Commission to investigate this matter.

The investigation will focus on the impact of the Agreement on competition in the telecommunications sector of members of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) which comprise the Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications Authority (ECTEL).

The Commission has appointed an Investigating Panel in accordance with paragraph 2 of Rule 4 of the CARICOM Competition Commission Rules of Procedure 2011, to coordinate the investigation into this matter. The Rules can be viewed at <http://www.caricomcompetitioncommission.com/images/registry/CCC-Rules-of-Procedure-2011.pdf>

The Commission expects to complete the investigation within 120 working days with the cooperation of all stakeholders as set out under Article 175 (6) (b) or where circumstances warrant extend the time under Article 176 (6) (c) of the RTC.

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Acquisition was announced in November 2014. We have been looking into the matter since January 2015. In Jamaica the acquisition was approved, approved in Trinidad, approved in Barbados, both Trinidad and Barbados those decisions require the company to divest some of its assets.

There are outstanding issues related to some of the OECS member states

Approximately six or seven member states will be affected. There are aspects of those telecommunications sectors that have returned to what they were 10 years ago – one supplier.