# IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BELIZE, A.D. 2012 FIXED DATE CLAIM FORM

**CLAIM NO: 566 of 2012** 

**BETWEEN:** 

WINSTON GRIFFITHS CLAIMANT

**AND** 

SHEILA CRAWFORD

1<sup>st</sup> DEFENDANT

DILLIS AUDREY WESTBROOKS

2<sup>nd</sup> DEFENDANT

OLGA LAWRENCE

3<sup>rd</sup> DEFENDANT

**Keywords:** Application for Judgment; Overriding Objective; Non-compliance with

Court Order; Part 8.5 of CPR 2005; Part 26.7 of CPR 2005.

Judge: ABEL J (Ag)

**Hearing Dates:** 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2012

21st January 2013

24<sup>th</sup> January 2013

4<sup>th</sup> March 2013

22<sup>nd</sup> April 2013

**Representation:** 

For the Applicant/Claimant Ms. Robertha Magnus-Usher.

For the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant: Mr. Hubert Elrington S.C.

## **DECISION**

### Introduction

- On the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2013, upon the application of the Claimant for Judgment and other orders, as a result of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant's failure to comply with a Consent Order dated 28<sup>th</sup> January 2013, I granted the Claimant the following orders:
  - a) That the Claimant is hereby granted possession forthwith of the property situated at Yarborough on the South side of the Town of Belize as more particularly described in the Deed of Conveyance made on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of September 2004 between Hortence Peon and the Claimant, for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant's non compliance with the Consent Order dated the 24<sup>th</sup> January and filed herein on the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2013.
  - b) That the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendants shall pay to the Claimant mesne profits at the rate of BZ\$750.00 per month from 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2012 to the date hereof which mesne profits shall be paid on or before 30<sup>th</sup> April 2013.
  - c) That the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendants shall pay to the Claimant the costs of this application and wasted costs of the proceedings in the sum of BZ\$1,000.00 to be paid on or before 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2013.
- 2. I now give the reasons for my decision.

### The Background

- 3. The Claimant, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2012, started the present proceedings against Sheila Crawford (the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant) alone, by filing a fixed date Claim form and Statement of Claim.
- 4. In the proceedings the Clamant claimed possession of residential premises situated at Yarborough on the Southside of the Town of Belize, otherwise known as lot 53A Neal Pen Road, Belize City, Belize ("the property").

- 5. The Claimant also claimed that title for the property was held by him by virtue of a Deed of Conveyance made on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of September 2004 (a copy of which was attached), as recorded in Deeds Book, Volume 4 of 2005 at Folios 1085 to 1092.
- 6. Further, the Claimant claimed damages for unlawful occupation, possession of the property, mesne profits from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 at \$1,000.00 per month and costs.
- 7. In the Statement of Claim, the Claimant not only alleged that he was the owner and entitled to possession of the property, but alleged that he had allowed one Hortence Peon, before she died on the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2007, to occupy the property without paying rent, but that after such death, the Defendant went into "unlawful occupation" and thereafter leased the property to another person for a rent of \$600.00 monthly. The Claimant also claimed that despite frequent request for vacant possession the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant refused to hand over the property and as a result the Claimant brought this action.
- 8. The 1<sup>st</sup> hearing of the fixed date Claim form was set for 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2012 but as the Defendant failed to appear at this hearing it was adjourned to Monday the 21<sup>st</sup> January 2013, to allow the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant sufficient notice of the hearing and for service of appropriate documents.
- 9. The Court Order of 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2012 was filed on the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2012 and served on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2012 and an Affidavit of Service of this Order was filed on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2013.
- 10. In the mean time, an Acknowledgement of Service of the fixed date Claim form was filed by the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2012. However, a defence was not filed within the 28 days as required by the Civil Procedure Rules.
- 11. On Monday the 21<sup>st</sup> January 2013, at the adjourned hearing of the fixed date Claim form, the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant was present in Chambers along with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant (not yet a party to the proceedings). The court enquired of the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant whether she had a defence to the proceedings, and if so what it was.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant's response was that she was not the owner of the property and did not live on the property. She stated that she is a licensed auctioneer and had been given a job to manage the property under a power of attorney by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant and her sister the 3<sup>rd</sup> Defendant. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant confirmed this arrangement. As a result of the response of the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant the court suggested to the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant that, being the only Defendant, and having not defended the Claim by filing a defence, or claiming to be entitled to possession, she should then not have any problem if an order for possession was made against her.

- 12. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendants then stated that they both wanted to defend the claim, but they went to a number of lawyers and could not get representation.
- 13. The Court enquired as to whether there was any documentary proof of title to the property, showing their entitlement to be in possession, as against the original Deed of Conveyance made on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of September 2004, which the Claimant presented to the parties in Chambers (a copy of which had been exhibited to the Statement of Claim). Neither could produce (nor claimed to have) any document showing any better title than that which the Claimant possessed. However, a document was produced which predated the above Deed of Conveyance showing Hortence Peon as the owner.
- 14. Both the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendants then made allegations against the Claimant that he had taken advantage of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant's elderly mother, Hortence Peon (the person from whom the Claimant obtained title to the Property), who they claimed had obtained a loan from the Claimant. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendants claimed that the loan had been repaid, and under pretence of the loan being unpaid, the Claimant had obtained title to the Property. Neither Defendant could substantiate any such claim of repayment by reference to any written documentation in their possession.
- 15. Both the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendants pleaded with the Court to adjourn the case to allow them to get legal advice and representation. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant said that she was living abroad in the United States of America, had come in especially for this

hearing (after being informed about the proceedings by the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant) and that she was due to return there later that week, and therefore only wanted a short adjournment.

- 16. The court in order to accommodate the 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant and to enable the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendants to take legal advice, further adjourned the 1<sup>st</sup> hearing of the fixed date Claim form to the requested date of Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2013 at 1.30 pm. The 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant was also ordered to pay \$500.00 costs.
- 17. On the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2013, at the adjourned 1<sup>st</sup> Hearing of the fixed date Claim form Mr. Hubert Elrington S.C., appeared as Counsel for the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant and stated that he was taking steps to file a Notice of Acting. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant was present but was not a party to the proceedings.
- 18. No defence had been filed by the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant and no other application had been made by or on behalf of either the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant or the 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendants through Mr. Hubert Elrington S.C., appeared to be holding a common cause and position and the Court understood that his representation was in respect of both Defendants although at this stage only the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant was a party to the proceedings and could formally be represented.
- 19. In response to the court's enquiry as to what defence the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant was alleging to the Claim against her, Mr. Elrington S.C., made the following oral submissions:
  - a) That on the basis of his instructions and having looked at the fixed date Claim and a copy of a conveyance dated 9<sup>th</sup> September 2004 and recorded on 2005, it came to his notice that such a conveyance could not have been validly registered since the law required that deeds executed in Belize be registered within one month unless the Court extends the time.
  - b) That it appeared to him that the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant, when she came to court, put on record her explanation as to what her relation with the property was, and that explanation was that the person in possession of the rents and profits was her

- principal and the name of the Principal was Dills Westbrooks, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant.
- c) The 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant had disclosed to the court and to the Counsel for the Claimant (through correspondence between them) the fact that she was an agent, and that she had disclosed that fact to the Claimant years ago.
- d) That they would need time to put in the proper papers and requested that the claim against the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant be struck out on the ground that it was clear to the Claimant who was in receipt of the rents and profits and the claim ought to have been brought against the proper Defendant.
- e) That the proper approach was for the proper parties to be joined in the proceedings.
- 20. The Court being satisfied that the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant had ample time to put in a defence and to do what was needed to be done by way of application to the Court, was however still unconvinced that she had a defence to the Claim.
- 21. Mr. Elrington however, submitted that the law or learning suggests (without referring to any authority applicable to the present case) that the Claimant must show that the person he chooses to bring before the court is under a legal obligation to attend and is the person that is in possession of some right or interest.
- 22. The Court again expressed the view that as the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant's case was that she is not in possession, she therefore could not object to the court, in the absence of any defence, giving summary judgment for possession against her; and that she would not be prejudiced by any such judgment.
- 23. Despite the Court's intimation about judgment being entered against the 1<sup>st</sup>

  Defendant, the Claimant, the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant (who was present in the capacity as principal and an alleged beneficial owner of the property), along with Counsel for the Claimant and Counsel for the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant (who was at this

stage the only Defendant), mediated through the Court and consented to the Court adjourning the 1<sup>st</sup> Hearing to allow a defence to be filed on the terms of a Consent Order.

- 24. The Court therefore, on the 24<sup>th</sup> day of January 2013, made the following Consent Order:
  - (1) The court shall treat this  $1^{st}$  Hearing as a case management conference.
  - (2) The Defendant is given permission to join Olga Lawrence and Dillis Westbrooks and to file and serve a Defence on or before 31<sup>st</sup> January 2013 failing which the Claimant be a liberty to enter judgment against the Defendant for possession and Damages and Mesne Profits to be assessed.
  - (3) The Claimant is permitted to file and serve on the Defendant(s) Counsel a Reply on or before the 5<sup>th</sup> February 2013.
  - (4) The Parties make standard disclosure on or before the 15<sup>th</sup> day of February 2013.
  - (5) The Claimant be at liberty to call 2 witnesses.
  - (6) The Defendant be at liberty to call 5 witnesses.
  - (7) The parties file and serve witness statements on or before the 7<sup>th</sup> day of March 2013.
  - (8) The witness statements do stand as examination-in-chief. All witnesses are to attend the hearing for cross-examination, unless the other side dispenses with such attendance by notice in writing.
  - (9) The trial of this action be heard on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2013.
  - (10) That the estimated time of the trial is 1 day.
  - (11) The costs of the action herein is agreed at \$5000.00.
  - (12) That this order is made subject to the condition that all rents in the hands of the Defendant (or any person joined in these proceedings) received since  $23^{rd}$  October 2012 shall be deposited with the Registrar of the Supreme Court on or before the  $24^{th}$  February 2013 and all such rents received thereafter shall likewise be so deposited.

- (13) That the Defendant shall pay to the Claimant costs of today in the sum of \$800.00 to be paid by the Claimant on or before 24<sup>th</sup> February 2013.
- 25. A defence was not filed by any of the Defendants by the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2013, pursuant to the Consent Order. On the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2013 a defence was filed by Mr. Elrington S.C., as Legal Practitioner for the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant, but with the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant as a named Defendant, and with the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Defendants added as parties in the short title to the action, to that of the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant.
- 26. In this filed defence, the Defendant, Sheila Crawford, claimed and reiterated much of what Counsel had said in Chambers.
- 27. In addition, on the 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013, , the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant, filed an Affidavit which was sworn to on the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2013. In this Affidavit the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant deposed to the following:
  - a) To having known the Claimant since 2006 and of having acted as the agent to Ms. Hortence Peon who lived in the USA and visited Belize on a regular basis.
  - b) To the history relating to the Property from 2006 to the date of the death of Ms. Peon on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of March 2007, in Chicago at the age of 89.
  - c) Of her relationship with the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Defendants who resided in the USA, as their local agent (and dealings with the Property) following the death of Ms.
     Peon.
  - d) Of the service of a previous proceedings on her on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2012 at 11:40 and her communications with the Claimant's Attorney by letter.
  - e) The subsequent issue and service of the present proceedings on the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2012 (which the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant acknowledged she did not read) and being served with the Order of the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2012.

- f) That the 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant had come to Belize specifically to attend the adjourned 1<sup>st</sup> hearing of the fixed dated claim form, fixed for the 21<sup>st</sup> January 2013.
- 28. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendants are therefore clearly in breach of the Consent Order.
- 29. There was no application under Part 26.7(2) of CPR 2005 for relief from sanctions for non compliance with the consent order made on the 24<sup>th</sup> day of January 2013, to file a defence on or before 31<sup>st</sup> January 2013.
- 30. On the 6<sup>th</sup> day of February 2013 therefore, the Claimant, by Notice of Application under CPR 26.7(1) and 26.7(2), applied for Judgment for possession, mesne profits and costs. This Application was supported by an Affidavit of the Claimant sworn to and filed herein on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of February 2013.
- 31. The grounds of the Claimant's application were that the Defendant failed to comply with the Consent Order made of the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2013 and that as a result of such failure the Claimant is entitled to judgment.
- 32. On the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2013 at the hearing of the application by the Claimant, Mr. Hubert Elrington S.C. made oral submissions in opposition to the Claimant's application. Mr. Hubert Elrington S.C., claimed to hold no brief for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Defendants.
- 33. Mr. Hubert Elrington S.C. submitted that he was not in a position to complete the defence within the 5 days given. But that he completed it by 5<sup>th</sup> February 2013. That he had no intention not to comply with the Order of the Court. That after completing the Defence, the following day he sent the Defence to the Registry and learned that Counsel for the Claimant had filed the application for judgment. So within 10 days he had complied and then moved to prepare applications to serve on the other two Defendants out of the jurisdiction. On that same day he received an application that judgment be entered and was put in a position where he would have to bring to the court's attention that he could not serve the other two Defendants without coming to court for permission to serve out of the jurisdiction.

- 34. Mr. Hubert Elrington S.C., submitted that his client would be seriously prejudiced by the Order which the Claimant was seeking. He acknowledged that both he and his client were present in Court when the Order was made and that it was a Consent Order but on later drafting the appropriate documentation he realized the difficulty of serving the other Defendants. He also submitted that his position was that once it became clear that he and the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant were not able to be in compliance with the order, he thought that it was best to obtain the Courts directions in the matter. He stated that the consent Order was an oversight.
- 35. Counsel for the Claimant, Ms. Robertha Magnus-Usher, expressed surprise by the declaration of Mr. Hubert Elrington S.C that he was not representing the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Defendants (echoing the Court's similar surprise), and Counsel for the Claimant expressed her firm view, that she believed that Mr. Elrington S.C. was representing both of the other two (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>) Defendants.
- 36. Mr. Hubert Elrington S.C. also confirmed that he and his client were not in a position to adhere to the agreed trial date fixed in the Consent Order for the 13<sup>th</sup> March 2013, and stated that he and the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant would like new directions to allow them to be ready to try the matters. That their Defence was that the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant was never in possession.

#### The Civil Procedure Rules

37. The Court of Appeal of Belize has considered the Supreme Court (Civil Procedure) Rules 2005 in the case of *Denzil Jenkins V William Bowman, Ernest Al Chanona, Steve Downard, Richard Polack, Ernest N. Raymond Sr. and John Usher* (Civil Appeal No. 26 of 2007). In this case the President of the Court of Appeal of Belize noted: "The whole objective of these Rules is to improve the administration of justice and to ensure that litigants have their cases heard without any hindrance or delay".

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See Judgment of Mottley, P at paragraph 27.

38. Morrison JA, in noting with approval the celebrated quotation of Lord Wolf MR in the leading English case *Biguzzi V Rank Leisure plc*<sup>2</sup>, stated that the courts are not "confined to considering the relative positions of the parties. They have to take into account the effect of what has happened on the administration of justice generally", the Rules describe a new procedural paradigm. Specifically Morrison JA noted:

"The Rules came into force on 4 April 2005. Closely patterned on existing model in the Caribbean region from Jamaica (the Civil Procedure Rules 2002) and the Eastern Caribbean (the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court Civil Procedure Rules, 2000), and from the United Kingdom (the Civil Procedure Rules, 1998), their objective is to promote efficiency, fairness and expedition in civil litigation by doing away with the various, often arcane, rules (many of which had hardened virtually into doctrines) of procedure that had developed over many years and that oftentimes produced the anomalous result of defeating rather than promoting the end so justice. <sup>3</sup>"

- 39. Part 1 of the Civil Procedure Rules 2005, sets out the "overriding objective" of the Rules which is to "deal with cases justly"<sup>4</sup>. Dealing justly includes the saving of expense, dealing with the case proportionately, ensuring that simple matters (such as the present case) are dealt with expeditiously and using an appropriate amount of the courts resources<sup>5</sup>. The Court is required to give effect to the overriding objective when it exercises any discretion given to it by the Rules and in interpreting any rule<sup>6</sup>.
- 40. Part 8.5 of the Civil Procedure Rules 2005 provides:
  - (1) The general rule is that a claim will not fail because:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> [1999] 4 All ER 934 at page 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See Judgment of Morrison, JA at paragraph 67.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Rule 1.1(1) of CPR 2005.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Rule 1.1(2) of CPR 2005.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Rule 1.2(1) of CPR 2005.

- (a) a person was added as a party to the proceedings who should not have been added; or
- (b) a person who should have been made a party was not made a party to the claim.
- 41. The Court of Appeal in the above case of *Denzil Jenkins V William Bowman and others*, had cause to also consider the Part 8.5 of the Civil Procedure Rules 2005, and Mottley P, felt that a Court should not take a restrictive approach to its interpretation<sup>7</sup> including, expecting Counsel to make an application for the substituting or adding of a party as a defendant<sup>8</sup>. Carey JA felt that:

"The purpose of the Rules is to enable the court to deal with cases justly. Punishing a recalcitrant lawyer is now considered as dealing justly with the case. It need hardily be emphasised that "just with cases", means and can only mean, justly with parties in the case. The duty of the court is to determine the issues in dispute between the parties in the action. The cases will, I am inclined to think be few and far between, which should be defeated by a challenge of misjoinder or non-joinder.<sup>9</sup>"

- 42. Part 26 of CPR 2005 deals with "Case Management The Court's Powers" and lists some of the powers which this Rule gives, in addition to those given by other Rules, practice direction and enactments.
- 43. Rule 26.7 specifically deals with the court's powers in cases of failure to comply with Rules. It provides:
  - (1) Where the court makes an order or gives directions, the court must whenever practicable also specify the consequences of failure to comply.
  - (2) Where a party has failed to comply with any of these Rules, a direction or an order, any sanction for non-compliance imposed by the Rule, direction

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> See Judgment of Mottley, P at paragraph 23

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> See Judgment of Mottley, P at paragraph 24

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> See Judgment of Carey, JA at paragraph 43.

or the order has effect unless the party in default applies for and obtains relief from the sanction, and Rule 26.9 shall apply.

- (3) Where a Rule, practice direction or order
  - (a) requires a party to do something by a specified date; and
  - (b) specifies the consequences of failure to comply the time for doing the act in question may not be extended by agreement between the parties.
- 44. Part 26.7(2) thus makes it clear, that there are, and stipulates what preconditions exists, for the exercise of the discretionary power not to impose a sanction for non-compliance with an order. It follows from this rule that the preconditions are that an application for relief from sanctions has to be made to the court, and that such relief must be obtained in accordance with Rule 26.9.
- 45. Part 26.8 then deals with "Relief from sanctions" and provides for the conditions which must be satisfied for such relief, the threshold requirements for the court granting such relief and the considerations which the court must have regard to in relation to any such application, and before granting any such relief from sanctions.
- 46. The remainder of Part 26 (26.9) deals with "General Power of the Court to rectify matters where there has been a procedural error and applies "only where the consequence of failure to comply with a …court order has not been specified by any …court order". Part 26.9(2) specifically provides that errors of procedure of failure to comply with any rule, practice direction or court order do not "invalidate any step taken in the proceedings, unless the court so orders", Rule 26.9(3) empowers the court in respect of any such error or failure to "make an order to put matters right".

Application of Part 26.7 of CPR 2005 to the Present Case

- 47. The Consent Order of the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2013 was made on what was a shared understanding, that Mr. Hubert Elrington S.C., was representing not only the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant but also the 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant (and possibly the 3<sup>rd</sup> Defendant).
- 48. In any event, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant was at all times present when the order of the 21<sup>st</sup> January was made to allow her to obtain legal advice and she was present, aware of and consented to, the Consent Order which was made on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2013.
- 49. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant had ample opportunity to make an appropriate application to this Court to ensure that she was represented and her interests were properly protected in the present proceedings, and this court can only conclude that she was advised or had decided not to take the opportunity to do so.
- 50. The court has, in any event, despite allowing the Defendants the opportunity to participate in the present proceedings, never felt that there was a lot, if any, merit in the Defendants' case (which appeared ad idem) or cases. These opportunities were held out irrespective of any failings which the court may perceive to exist in the conduct of the case on behalf of the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant.
- 51. As can be observed from above, the Consent Order of the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2013 clearly specified the consequence of failure to comply with the order, and the rule mandates what sanction (the specified consequence of entry of judgment) must take effect unless the defaulting party applies for and obtains relief from sanctions. See the Judgment of Lord Dyson in the case of *The Attorney General v Universal Projects Limited* [2011] UKPC 37] at paragraph 13 where it states:

"....it was the consequence of the failure to comply with the court order. It is artificial to say that the sanction was the permission to enter judgment. The permission of itself would not affect the defendant. The sanction was the judgment entered pursuant to the permission".

- 52. As has been observed such a draconian provision has the ultimate aim "to serve the purpose of improving the efficiency of litigation" which could so easily be sabotaged by failure to comply with court orders and disabling the court to deal with its stated objective of dealing with cases justly.
- 53. Such specified consequence for non-compliance, as in the present circumstances, in my view, even on a liberal interpretation of the rule, necessarily and inexorably must follow unless a defaulting party applied for and obtained relief from sanctions.
- 54. In the present case such an application was never made and up to the present time has still not been made. In the circumstances the Court has no alternative, and I so ruled, but to enter judgment against the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant for the specified consequence for non-compliance with a Consent Order: namely entry of judgment against the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant.
- 55. Also given the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant's history of non-compliance it may be thought that the overriding objectives of the CPR 2005, to deal with cases justly, may in any event be defeated by not imposing the sanction.
- 56. It seems to me that the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant, far from helping the court to further the overriding objective (to deal with cases justly) has been attempting to subvert the court's efforts to do so, and in any even, would not be prejudiced by an order being made against her given that she claimed not to be in possession in her own right and the persons whom she claimed to be in possession had not taken any action to be represented.
- 57. In these circumstances, I felt that a court would be entirely justified in not relieving the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant from the sanction specified in the Consent Order, were it asked to do so (which it had not been asked to do).

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> See The Attorney General v Universal Projects Limited [2011] UKPC 37] at paragraph 16

- 58. The situation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Defendants raised separate issues and is less simple to that of the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant.
- 59. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant was present at the significant hearings of this court and was fully aware of the orders which this court made including the Consent Order of the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2013. Indeed it was primarily for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant's benefit that the adjournments were made (as the court at all times felt that the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant really did not have any personal interest to protect as was always declared by both the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendants). Yet, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant failed to avail herself at all of the opportunities which were given to her to participate in the proceedings, by filing and serving an Acknowledgment of Service and/or a Defence or indeed of even unequivocally instructing Counsel to represent her interest in the present proceedings.
- 60. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant could properly be made subject to the present sanction of judgment being entered against them in relation to the property for which they jointly and severally accept responsibility (whether as agent or principal). Both of such Defendants were, in my view, caught by the provision of Part 8.5 of the Civil Procedure Rules 2005 that a claim will not fail because a person was added as a party to the proceedings, who should not have been added or a person who should have been made a party, who was not made a party to the claim.
- 61. The position of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Defendant is somewhat different. She has never taken any active or direct part in the present proceedings. In the circumstances this court made no order directly against the 3<sup>rd</sup> Defendant although it is accepted that indirectly the orders might impact her. It was felt that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendant would have been in a position to represent both herself and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Defendant if they had a position to defend.
- On the question of mesne profit and costs this court attempted to assess the same on terms which are most favourable (or least onerous) to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>

  Defendants on the basis that neither of them had defended the claims herein and/or that judgment was entered summarily.

### Conclusion

- 63. The above orders which this court made were made on the basis that the Defendants had a reasonable opportunity to defend the Claim herein but failed to do so, that there was no Affidavit filed by the Defendants in response to the above Notice of Application and no application for relief from sanctions filed as required by Part 26.8 of the Civil Procedure Rules.
- 64. It thus appeared to this court, in taking all the facts and matters above into account, that the 1<sup>st</sup> Defendant and/or 2<sup>nd</sup> Defendants have no defence to the Claim herein for possession and for mesne profit in the sum of BZ\$750.00 per month from the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2012 to today.
- 65. This court therefore felt that the present circumstances warranted the orders above which were made on the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2013.

COURTNEY A. ABEL
SUPREME COURT JUDGE (Ag)
25<sup>th</sup> March 2013