

Honourable Chief Justice

Honourable Speaker

Honourable Premier

Honourable Deputy Governor

Honourable Ministers and Members of Cabinet

Honourable Leader of the Opposition

Members of Parliament

Commissioner of Police

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

Thank you, Honourable Premier and Deputy Governor, for the very warm welcome you have extended to me today. It is a privilege and it is an honour to have been appointed as the Governor of the Cayman Islands by His Majesty King Charles III and to continue to build this special and important relationship between the United Kingdom and Cayman. I am greatly looking forward to working with you Honourable Premier and all of your Government and Parliament, and with all of the

distinguished representatives who are here today in a spirit of partnership based on mutual trust and respect, underpinned by the clear resolve we all share to serve the people of these beautiful islands.

Firstly, I wanted to pay tribute to Governor Roper for the work he has done over the past 4½ years, for his leadership throughout the pandemic, and for being a source of advice to me as I have prepared to take on this role. And I wish him and Mrs Roper all the best upon their return to the United Kingdom.

I would also like to thank you Deputy Governor Franz Manderson for, once again, so ably fulfilling the role of Acting Governor. And I look forward to working with you and your Chief Officers as you strive to ensure the civil service delivers for both the Ministerial team and for the entire community as you have just said.

The timing of my arrival is particularly auspicious of course as it affords me the opportunity to attend His Majesty's Coronation in just over two weeks, joining The Honourable Premier in representing Cayman at this historic event. Immediately afterwards the Joint Ministerial Council will provide an opportunity for the Honourable Premier to discuss with UK Ministers priorities both in Cayman and for our wider Overseas Territories family.

As I begin my appointment, I will have much to learn and I hope that you will all help me to do that. I am determined to ensure that our UK Cayman relationship continues to grow and continues to bring benefits for both sides. In this world in which we live, faced with geopolitical shifts, threats to the freedoms we cherish, and the galloping pace of new technology, it is good to have firm friendships and mutual support. In working on this agenda with all of you, I will always respect the

boundaries of the constitution, while being open to sharing expertise and experience from the United Kingdom where this can add value here in Cayman.

As you would all expect, I will focus firstly on those areas where the Governor has direct responsibility: external affairs, defence, internal security, and endeavouring to promote the good governance that is the hallmark of Cayman.

The war in Ukraine continues to rage in Europe. And I can imagine that this must at times seem to be a far off conflict, but I know that Cayman is playing its part in the stand against dictatorship and oppression, in particular through the enforcement of sanctions to ensure that Russia's unprovoked attack on a sovereign state is met with severe consequences. Cayman has frozen almost \$9 billion in assets and only last month a sanctions forum in London praised your high-level

cross government coordination as a model to be admired by others.

I am also committed to working with you all to fulfil my responsibilities to ensure the safety and security of Cayman. This includes supporting our law and order authorities to meet new threats, protecting our air and sea routes, supporting you as you deliver robust and fair immigration policies. And most importantly ensuring that we are all fully prepared to face each hurricane season. Hazard Management Cayman Islands have an excellent reputation across the region for the detailed work they do enhancing crisis response. The Cayman Islands Regiment has added a new dimension – combining the talents of a small but dedicated group of predominantly Caymanians, who want to give back something tangible to their homeland.

And there are, of course, many areas of domestic policy, where the Governor has no direct role, and I will continue to respect

the authority of this Parliament in creating and passing legislation. I look forward to our weekly Cabinet meetings, where I will support the effective handling of business, timely policy development and strong oversight and analysis behind decisions.

The strength of Cayman's economy and financial services industry as you have said Honourable Premier is impressive and clearly well regulated. As the daughter of shopkeepers from the small town of Bilston in the West Midlands, and as someone who has spent a large part of their career promoting trade and investment links, I will do what I can to support you in continuing to build these strong economic fundamentals in an increasingly competitive world. In this respect Cayman's overseas offices have an important role to play as we aim to fly the Cayman flag high.

I cannot conclude without talking about the beauty of these Islands that I have already seen from my doorstep, and the unique and fragile environment that you continue to curate, attracting visitors and residents from all over the world. I will support the Cayman Government in its environmental and climate change initiatives, including signing up to the Blue Belt Programme, and promoting Cayman's significant contribution to marine conservation in this iconic natural environment. I very much look forward to visiting both Cayman Brac and Little Cayman before I leave for the Coronation, and I will return regularly throughout my time as Governor to understand the unique place of the Sister Islands in the Cayman family. I am delighted that the United Kingdom has applied for Little Cayman's Marine Park to be recognised as a UNESCO world Heritage site –the only Overseas Territory to be included in the UK's recommendations.

And one of the most enjoyable aspects of my governorship, I expect, will be meeting the many people who make up Caymanian society and this diverse and vibrant culture. As a mum of two children in their early 20s, I know that young people have hopes and they have aspirations for the future, which they expect us as leaders to protect and promote. This includes being able to support themselves and their families, to live free of crime, and to enjoy happy and healthy lives.

Throughout history, change has perhaps been the one constant that is guaranteed. But we can shape and nurture that change to reflect the kind of society we want to see – offering opportunities for all, through fair and transparent governance, benefitting from the strong traditions within this Parliament, within our Civil Service, the judiciary, government agencies and institutions, and community and church leaders throughout these Islands. I hope I will really get to know people from all

walks of life, and to be able to listen to their priorities and their concerns.

So in conclusion Honourable Premier, it falls to me to simply say again that I am both humbled and excited to be appointed as Governor and to have this opportunity to work with you all. And I wanted to reiterate three commitments: first to listen and to learn. Second, to further strengthen this great vision that we share to ensure that Cayman remains vibrant, successful, safe and resilient. And finally, to devote myself to the service of all the people of the Cayman Islands on behalf of His Majesty the King.

May God bless the Cayman Islands!