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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Premier weighs in on Day of Democracy

GRAND CAYMAN, Cayman Islands – Today we celebrate the International Day of Democracy, a date the United Nations General Assembly resolved to observe in 2007 to promote and uphold the principles of democracy throughout the world.

Democracy is a concept born from the ideas of Cleisthenes, the Father of Democracy, who was one of ancient Greece's most enduring contributions to the modern world. The Greek system of direct democracy eventually paved the way for representative democracy across the globe.

And it is that representative democracy that we recognize, honour and support today in the Cayman Islands.

Democracy is a universal value based on the freely-expressed will of people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural systems, and their full participation in all aspects of life.

I am proud to say that democracy is alive and well in the Cayman Islands.

I believe that former Atlanta, Georgia, Mayor and US Ambassador to the United Nations Andrew Young summed up democracy quite well when he said, and I quote,

“There can be no democracy without truth. There can be no truth without controversy, there can be no change without freedom. Without freedom there can be no progress”.

The elections here in April showed true democracy at work and represented the collective will of the Caymanian people. The voters gave us the constitutional and moral responsibility to ensure the will of the Caymanian people is reflected and respected in our policies and priorities over the next four years.

Democracy does recognize that as a people we will always have differences, disagreements, discord and dissent.

But it also recognizes that we should have debate, discussions and dialogue to arrive at consensus.

And it goes right to the heart of my firm belief that Community Creates Country. The PACT Government is showing itself to be kinder, yet unafraid to constructively address any vested interests that may be holding our country back. We are creatively responding to the daily concerns of the people, rising inequality, stress on our quality of life, environmental consideration and rising cost of living. We are confronting failure, liberating the aspirations of our people and fighting for opportunity for all.

We have brought more openness in the way Government business is done, which is the hallmark of good governance. Our citizens are part of the process and we are letting them know the actions of Government on their behalf.

We know that free and democratic societies have healthier citizens, less violent conflict, and more prosperous communities. Indeed, democracy delivers for the many, not the few.

Democracy allows for people to advocate for their rights and hold government to account with equal rights and without discrimination.

On this International Day of Democracy we accept and appreciate that free and fair elections, freedom of expression and the rule of law are the foundation of a healthy democracy and help ensure the rights of all.

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