

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

**The Hon. Philip E. Davis, K.C., M.P.**  
**PRIME MINISTER OF THE BAHAMAS**  
**AND MINISTER OF FINANCE**

Welcome, and thank you for being part of this Forum.

You have many options when you decide where to invest and where to build. By choosing to spend time here, you are taking a serious look at The Bahamas. I do not take that lightly.

Let me start with a clear statement. The Bahamas is open for business.

For us, it rests on practical foundations. We are a stable democracy with an independent judiciary and a legal tradition investors understand. We have a long record of meeting our international obligations. We see our good name as an asset that must be protected. The world you work in is changing. Capital is shifting. Supply chains are being rethought. Energy systems are moving toward cleaner and more efficient models. In that setting, small countries must compete with credibility and consistency. That is the choice my government has made.



Our approach can be summed up in three commitments.

First, policy stability and clear rules. Investors need to know the ground will not move under their feet. We are strengthening regulation in financial services, digital assets, and other sectors so that expectations are clear and supervision is serious.

Second, a genuine partnership with investors. We want projects that are commercially sound, that create jobs for Bahamians, build skills, and support local firms. You should know who in government is responsible for your file, what the steps are, and how long they should take.

Third, long-term thinking. The Bahamas is on the front line of climate risk. That reality shapes how we plan infrastructure, energy, tourism, and coastal development. We are ready to work with investors who see the opportunity in cleaner energy, stronger buildings, and smarter use of our marine resources.

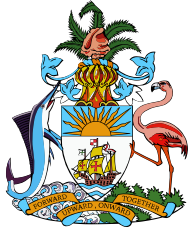
You will see opportunities in tourism and hospitality, financial services, real estate, ports and airports, digital services, and the wider ocean economy. In each of these areas we are working to raise standards, improve public services, and make it easier to do business without lowering the guardrails that protect our reputation.

We understand what you are looking for. You want clarity on approvals. You want predictable tax and regulatory treatment. You want a partner who keeps commitments. That is how we intend to conduct ourselves.

From your side, we are looking for investors who bring more than capital. We welcome those who bring expertise, training, and strong governance. We want partners who are prepared to stay the course, to build with local talent, and to share success with the communities in which they operate. If you are already invested in The Bahamas, I thank you for your confidence.

If you are considering a first step, I invite you to use this Forum to test us, to ask hard questions, and to explore what is possible. The Bahamas is open for business, and we are ready to Work with those who are serious about building for the long term.





# MESSAGE FOR BBIF WEST PALM BEACH

**The Hon. I. Chester Cooper, M.P.**

**DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER OF THE BAHAMAS**

**AND MINISTER OF TOURISM, INVESTMENTS & AVIATION**

The Bahamas is proud to deepen our engagement with investors and partners in Florida, a key gateway market for trade, travel, and investment. As we continue to strengthen our economy, our focus remains on attracting sustainable, high-quality investment that creates jobs, builds local capacity, and delivers long-term value for Bahamians.



Today, The Bahamas offers a stable and welcoming environment for investment across priority sectors, including tourism and hospitality, financial services, real estate, fintech, and the wider digital economy. We are committed to modern infrastructure, sound regulation, and targeted reforms that make it easier to do business while protecting the national interest.

This forum is an important platform to connect ideas with opportunity and to align serious partners with a country that is open for business and focused on results. I thank the organizers and participants for your interest in The Bahamas, and I look forward to the partnerships that will emerge from this engagement.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'I. Cooper'.

**The Honourable I. Chester Cooper, M.P.**

Deputy Prime Minister of The Bahamas and  
Minister of Tourism, Investments & Aviation



# MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS **THE HON. FREDERICK MITCHELL, M.P.**

Our country is an open country in so many ways. It is open to visitors and businessmen and to investment. Our Embassy's showcase today is a testament to that openness.

Our country is also small. It sits next to the world's largest economy. It benefits from that fact. It benefits from the stability and economic growth that this has brought the country.

Our country has a friendly atmosphere. You just have to ask the 11 million visitors that come to our shores every year and most have a wonderful experience and want to come back again.

That is often how investment gets to The Bahamas. People come to visit. They like the place. They like the people. They like the openness. They like the rules based system that we have. They like the transparency of our systems. They like the fact that we support an international rules based order; that is easily justiciable if there are defaults.

I am proud therefore to welcome you to this forum and thank you for your interest in The Bahamas. I thank the Embassy in Washington and the Bahamian diaspora for their contributions to making The Bahamas that place that people like to visit and invest.

Thank you for your support and welcome.

**Fred Mitchell**  
Minister of Foreign Affairs





# MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS **Sen. The Hon. Michael Halkitis**

We congratulate the Embassy of The Bahamas in the United States for this year's iteration of The Bahamas Economic Guide.

This is the third year of the gathering of Bahamian Government Officials and potential investors, whereby information is shared and investment options explored.

The Bahamas remains an attractive destination for investment due to its economic and political stability and positive growth prospects over the medium term.

We look forward to working together to bring potential to fruition and vision to reality.

**Michael Halkitis**

Minister of Economic Affairs





# MESSAGE FROM THE EMBASSY OF THE BAHAMAS

## **HIS EXCELLENCY WENDALL K. JONES** AMBASSADOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Bahamas is no longer a nation defined by our proximity to the shore, we are a nation defined by the depth of our ambition beyond it. This is why we continue to reach beyond our borders to introduce our nation in progress.

This is the third Business and Investment Forum of the Embassy of The Bahamas since my appointment to the position as Ambassador; the others were in New York and Washington D.C. We welcome our speakers, panelists and guests to this forum in West Palm Beach, Florida where we are able to provide insights and ideas on the Bahamian economy that moved beyond the seasonality of tourism into the permanence of digital finance and sophisticated wealth management. We have understood a fundamental truth: an economy moves at the speed of its connections. In the words of our Prime Minister: “we are shaping the future from a position of hard-won strength.”



To the investor and entrepreneur, we wish that your take away from this Forum is that The Bahamas is no longer a destination you simply visit; it is a jurisdiction where you build. The relationship between The Bahamas and the United States remains our most vital bridge, and through my office in Washington D.C., we have worked tirelessly to ensure that this bridge is paved with clarity, consistency and mutual respect.

As a result of this forum, we hope you will see that the horizon is wide, the foundations are firm and the opportunities are, quite literally without limits.

**H.E. Wendall K. Jones**

Ambassador of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas to the United States





THE BAHAMAS  
**BUSINESS  
AND INVESTMENT  
FORUM**

Friday 27th February, 2026

The Belgrove Resort & Spa  
West Palm Beach, FL



General Moderator: Edison Sumner, Principal - Sumner Strategic Partners

- 8:00 am – 9:00 am Registration and Buffet Breakfast
- 9:00 am – 9:10 am National Anthem for The Bahamas and the United States
- 9:10 am – 9:20 am Opening Remarks by H.E. Wendall K. Jones, Ambassador of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas to the United States – Washington, D.C.
- 9:20 am – 9:30 am Keynote Address  
The Hon. Philip Davis, KC, MP, Prime Minister, Commonwealth of The Bahamas
- 9:30 am – 9:45 am Official Photo and Coffee Break
- 9:45 am – 9:55 am Remarks by H.E. Herschel Walker, Ambassador of the United States of America to the Commonwealth of The Bahamas
- 9:55 am – 10:05 am Remarks by Sen. The Hon. Michael Halkitis, Minister of Economic Affairs, Commonwealth of The Bahamas
- 10:05 am – 10:50 am** **Panel One: Protecting Capital in a Digital World: Regulation, Security & Investor Confidence in The Bahamas**  
Moderator: Roland “Andy” Burrows, Consultant, Bahamas Investment Authority  
Christina R. Rolle, Executive Director, Securities Commission of The Bahamas  
Jerry Butler, Corporate Director & Business Development Manager  
Hartley Thompson, Chief Executive Officer, Microblink  
The Hon. Wayde Watson, MP, Minister of Economic Affairs, Commonwealth of The Bahamas
- 10:50 am – 11:00 am Investment Address  
Phylicia Woods-Hanna, Director of Investments, Bahamas Investment Authority
- 11:00 am – 11:15 am Special Address: Small Business & Entrepreneurship  
Samantha Rolle, Executive Director, Access Accelerator, SBDC Bahamas
- 11:15 am – 12:05 pm** **Panel Two: The Future of Money: Digital Finance, Payments & Innovation in The Bahamas**  
Moderator: H.E. Chet Neymour, Ambassador & Permanent Representative, OAS  
John A. Rolle, Governor, Central Bank of The Bahamas  
Nicholas Rees, Founder & Chairman, CaribPay (Bahamas) Ltd. / Kanoo Pays  
Jevon McIntosh, Vice President, IT & Innovation, Commonwealth Bank Limited  
Brandace Duncanson, Director of Financial Services, Ministry of Economic Affairs  
Dr. John Bain, Managing Partner, UHY Bain & Associates



THE BAHAMAS  
**BUSINESS  
AND INVESTMENT  
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## Beyond the Shorline: Investments, Private Wealth and Digital Finance



12:05 pm – 12:55 pm

**Panel Three: Private Wealth, Global Structuring & Financial Services in The Bahamas**

Moderator: Niekia Horton, Chief Executive Officer, Bahamas Financial Services Board (BFSB)

Delphino Gilbert Cassar, Chief Executive Officer, Equity Bank (Bahamas) Limited

Naro Zimmerman, Deputy Head of Caribbean – Private Capital Services, JTC Private Trust (Bahamas) Limited

Quinton Lightbourne, Executive Director, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

Brian Jones, Founder, Chairman, President & Chief Executive Officer, Agio Digital Ltd.

Khrystle Rutherford-Ferguson, Chief Operating Officer, Novus Dynastia

12:55 pm – 2:05 pm

Lunch

1:15 pm – 1:25 pm

Lunch Address

The Hon. Frederick Mitchell, MP, Minister of Foreign Affairs,  
Commonwealth of The Bahamas

2:05 pm – 2:15 pm

Tourism & Investment Remarks

Latia Duncombe, Director General, Ministry of Tourism, Investments and Aviation

2:15 pm – 3:00 pm

**Panel Four: Luxury Yachting, Private Aviation & Boutique Cruises**

Moderator: Jonathan Lord, Regional Manager, Special Markets – Yachting & Sports,  
Ministry of Tourism, Investments and Aviation

Eli Flint, President, Flexjet Vertical Lift, Flexjet LLC

Lauren Littlejohn Sergey, Charter Marketing Manager, Northrop & Johnson

3:00 pm – 3:10 pm

Afternoon Networking Break

3:10 pm – 3:55 pm

**Panel Five: The Business of Luxury: Hotel & Hospitality**

Moderator: Andy Ingraham, President, Chief Executive Officer & Founder, NABHOOD

Joy Jibrilu, Chief Executive Officer, Nassau Paradise Island Promotion Board

Kerry Fountain, Executive Director, Bahamas Out Islands Promotion Board

AJ Blackmon, Chief Executive Officer, Ikonic Yachts, LLC

3:55 pm – 4:45 pm

**Panel Six: From Vision to Value: Development & Real Estate Opportunities for Global Investors**

Moderator: Sen. Ja'Ann Major, Partner, Higgs & Johnson

Charles L. Pratt, Senior Manager, Sales & Commercial Development, DEVCO / GBPA

Kevin Sweeting, Managing Principal – Infrastructure, Bron Ltd.

Danny Lowe, Managing Director, The Agency Bahamas

Gavin Christie, Senior Sales Director, Four Seasons Residences, Paradise Island &

Managing Partner, Corcoran C.A. Christie

4:45 pm – 5:00 pm

Closing Remarks & Call to Action

5:00 pm – 6:00 pm

Cocktail Reception

# INVESTMENT SECTORS IN THE BAHAMAS

## Bahamian Sectors

*(Primarily reserved for Bahamian citizens or require majority Bahamian ownership. Foreign participation is limited, conditional, or structured through joint ventures.)*

These sectors are generally designed to protect local enterprise, employment, and small business development.

### Retail & Consumer Services

Grocery stores and convenience stores  
Restaurants and food service (non-hotel standalone)  
Beauty salons, barber shops, spas (non-resort)  
Auto sales (used vehicles) and rentals (small scale)

### Construction & Trades

Residential construction (small to mid-scale)  
Electrical, plumbing, carpentry trades  
General contracting for domestic projects

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### Professional & Personal Services

Real estate brokerage (licensing restricted)  
Domestic property management (non-resort focused)  
Security services  
Landscaping and maintenance services

### Media & Creative Industries

Local advertising agencies  
Publishing and printing  
Radio and local media operations

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### Transportation & Logistics

Taxi services  
Domestic courier services  
Small-scale trucking and hauling

### Small Scale Tourism Services

Tour operations and excursions  
Water sports operators  
Craft markets and souvenir businesses

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**Investor takeaway:** These sectors are typically **not ideal for passive foreign investment** unless structured through minority stakes, management contracts, or approved joint ventures with strong local partners

## Non-Bahamian/Open Sectors

*(Open to 100% foreign ownership, subject to approval, compliance, and sector-specific regulation.)*

These sectors are actively promoted for foreign direct investment and institutional capital.

### Tourism, Hospitality & Lifestyle

#### Assets

Hotels and resorts  
Branded residences and resort-linked real estate  
Marinas and cruise-related infrastructure  
Eco-tourism and experiential tourism developments

### Maritime & Blue Economy

Ship registration and maritime services  
Yacht services and refit facilities  
Offshore logistics and marine engineering  
Ocean technology and research

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## Real Estate & Development

Luxury residential developments  
Master-planned communities  
Mixed-use developments  
Private islands and large-scale land development

## Technology & Innovation

FinTech, RegTech, and digital assets  
Data centers and ICT infrastructure  
Software and platform-based businesses  
E-commerce and digital services

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## Financial Services

Private banking and wealth management  
Trust and fiduciary services  
Investment funds and fund administration  
Insurance and reinsurance  
FinTech and digital financial services

## Manufacturing & Industrial

Light manufacturing  
Food and beverage processing  
Pharmaceutical and medical supplies  
Assembly and export-oriented operations

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## Infrastructure & Utilities

Ports and logistics hubs  
Airports and aviation services  
Renewable energy and power generation  
Water, wastewater, and utility systems  
Public-private partnership infrastructure projects

## Agribusiness & Food Security

Commercial farming and agri-tech  
Aquaculture and fisheries  
Food processing and export

## Professional & Corporate Services

International consulting firms  
Legal and advisory services (subject to licensing)  
Back-office and shared services operations

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**Investor takeaway:** These sectors offer **scalability, clearer exit pathways, and stronger alignment with national development priorities**, making them more attractive for institutional and cross-border investors.





**SECURITIES  
COMMISSION  
OF THE BAHAMAS**

# 30 YEARS OF REGULATORY LEADERSHIP

The Securities Commission of The Bahamas remains a strategic force in The Bahamas' financial services industry—promoting confidence in financial markets, upholding international best practices, and ensuring global competitiveness.

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**INTEGRITY**

  
**STABILITY**

  
**INNOVATION**



The Bahamas Business and Investment Forum, New York City 2025



