

**HON. KENRED DORSETT
MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING**

**OPENING ADDRESS
MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING
&
THE NATURE CONSERVANCY
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCLAVE**

JANUARY 29TH, 2013

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

(SALUTATIONS)

GOOD MORNING LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

I WANT TO BEGIN BY THANKING EACH OF YOU FOR BEING HERE TO SHARE IN THIS OCCASION. I CANNOT TELL YOU HOW EXCITED I AM TO BE ABLE TO ADDRESS YOU AT OUR VERY FIRST NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCLAVE PRESENTED BY MY MINISTRY IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE NATURE CONSERVANCY. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS MEETING IS NOT JUST THAT WE HAVE GATHERED TO DISCUSS MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE BAHAMIAN ENVIRONMENT BUT THAT WE ARE BAHAMIANS WHO HAVE GATHERED TO DISCUSS MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE BAHAMAS AND THE WAY FORWARD. THIS CONCLAVE IS A STEP TOWARD MY GOAL OF ENSURING THAT THERE IS A ROAD MAP THAT CHARTS THE COURSE IN REGARD TO ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS BASED ON STAKEHOLDER INPUT AND THAT THE CONSENSUS ARRIVED AT WOULD NOT BE HAMPERED BY OR PINNED TO THE FIVE YEAR ELECTION CYCLE.

I HAVE SAID BEFORE THAT THE ENVIRONMENT OF OUR NATION IS ITS GREATEST BLESSING, SO MUCH SO THAT WE HAVE CREATED A WORLD CLASS TOURISM INDUSTRY BASED ON OUR SUN, SAND AND SEAS. IN ADDITION TO THESE, WE ARE ALSO BLESSED WITH GREAT LANDSCAPES, BEAUTIFUL MARINE LIFE, BLUE HOLES, CORAL REEFS, INDIGENOUS TREES AND FLOWERING PLANTS AND MUCH MORE. SINCE ASSUMING THE OFFICE I HOLD AS MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, I HAVE GAINED A GREATER APPRECIATION FOR THE BEAUTY OF THE BAHAMIAN ENVIRONMENT AND THOSE WHO WORK TO PROTECT IT. OUR ENVIRONMENT SUSTAINS OUR LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS. ALTHOUGH WE ARE STILL A DEVELOPING NATION, THE BEAUTY AND DIVERSITY WHICH THE BAHAMIAN ENVIRONMENT HOLDS SHOULD BE PROTECTED ZEALOUSLY FOR AND BY THE BAHAMIAN PEOPLE. THIS PLACE WE CALL HOME IS IN MY OPINION THE JEWEL OF NOT JUST THE CARIBBEAN BUT THE WORLD. IT IS WITH THIS APPRECIATION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE BAHAMAS THAT I THOUGHT IT WAS TIME THAT WE ALL GATHERED FOR A MEETING OF THE MINDS.

THIS PAST YEAR IN PARTICULAR, MY MINISTRY AND BY EXTENSION THE GOVERNMENT HAS MADE INCREDIBLE STRIDES IN MANY AREAS OF OUR WORK TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT. WE HAVE INTRODUCED AND IMPLEMENTED PLANS, TABLED LEGISLATION AND ADVANCED POLICY POSITIONS WHICH I THINK ARE TAKING THE COUNTRY IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. I WILL HIGHLIGHT SOME OF OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND FUTURE GOALS FOR YOU.

IN AUGUST OF LAST YEAR, THE GOVERNMENT REVEALED ITS ENERGY SECTOR REFORM STRATEGY WITH A STATEMENT RELEASED BY PRIME MINISTER CHRISTIE. IN HIS STATEMENT THE PRIME MINISTER OUTLINED THE GOVERNMENT'S KEY OBJECTIVES FOR REFORMING HOW WE GENERATE, TRANSMIT AND DISTRIBUTE ENERGY IN THE BAHAMAS. THOSE OBJECTIVE ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- TO PROVIDE ENERGY SUPPLIES TO CONSUMERS THAT WILL MEET LONG TERM GROWTH DEMANDS FOR ENERGY
- TO INCREASE INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS IN PRODUCTION IN ORDER TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION
- TO UTILIZE ECONOMICALLY VIABLE RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES TO PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
- TO PROVIDE LONG TERM ENERGY SECURITY TO PRODUCERS AND CONSUMERS
- TO INCREASE BAHAMIANS AWARENESS OF ENERGY ITS USE AND CONSERVATION METHODS IN THEIR DAILY LIVES
- TO INCREASE ENERGY EFFICIENCY
- TO PROVIDE MODERN AND EXPANDED ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE
- TO CREATE A REGULATORY FRAMEWORK THAT PROMOTES TRANSPARENCY, INVESTMENT, COMPETITION, EFFICIENCY, AND PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS
- TO FOSTER SUFFICIENT FLEXIBILITY THAT ADOPTS AND ADAPTS TO NEW ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES
- TO ESTABLISH AN INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK WITH HIGH LEVELS OF TECHNICAL CAPACITY TO SUPPORT AND FACILITATE THE IMPLEMENTATION

OF POLICY BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS; AND

- TO PROVIDE INVESTMENT AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES WITH SPIN OFF BENEFITS TO OTHER SECTORS.

THE FIRST STEP IN THE REFORM PROCESS IN THE WORDS OF THE PRIME MINISTER WAS TO ISSUE A “REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) TO SEEK A PARTNER OR PARTNERS TO ASSIST US IN TURNING AROUND OUR ENERGY SECTOR. OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO REALIGN BEC, AND TO CREATE EFFICIENCIES WHICH WILL ALLOW FOR SIGNIFICANT REDUCTIONS IN THE COST OF ENERGY, INCREASED ENERGY SECURITY, ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY, RELIABILITY, AND INCREASED COMPETITIVENESS AS A COUNTRY.”

THE RFP WAS ISSUED AND WE ARE AT THE STAGE IN THE PROCESS WHERE FIVE BIDDERS WERE INVITED TO CLARIFY AND EXPAND UPON KEY ELEMENTS OF THEIR BIDS AND PREPARE FINAL SUBMISSIONS BY THE END OF JANUARY 2013. ONCE THE FINAL SUBMISSIONS ARE RECEIVED AND EVALUATED OUR ADVISORS WILL MAKE FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT AND IT IS EXPECTED NEGOTIATIONS WILL COMMENCE IN LATE FEBRUARY TO EARLY MARCH 2014 WITH SELECTED PARTIES. AS A PART OF THIS PROCESS THE GOVERNMENT WILL ALSO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF USING CLEANER FUELS FOR OUR NEW POWER GENERATING FACILITIES AND EXPLORE THE INCORPORATION OF INDEPENDENT POWER PRODUCERS UTILIZING SOLAR ENERGY IN OUR FAMILY ISLANDS. THUS ENABLING US TO HONOUR OUR COMMITMENT TO THE BAHAMIAN PEOPLE AS

OUTLINED IN OUR CHARTER OF GOVERNANCE, TO REDUCE THE COUNTRY'S RELIANCE ON FOSSIL FUELS. THE ISSUE OF REMEDIATION EFFORTS AT CLIFTON PIER WILL ALSO BE ADDRESSED AS A PART OF THE REFORMS, ATTEMPTING TO RESOLVE AN ENVIRONMENTAL CALAMITY THAT HAS EXISTED FOR SEVERAL DECADES.

WITH REGARD TO RENEWABLE ENERGY AS PART OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ENERGY REFORM INITIATIVE. WE ARE COMMITTED TO OUR GOAL OF 30% RENEWABLE ENERGY BY 2030. WE ALSO REMAIN COMMITTED TO OUR GOAL TO ADVANCE A RESIDENTIAL ENERGY SELF GENERATION PROGRAMME THIS YEAR (2014), ALLOWING APPROXIMATELY 25MW TO BE TIED INTO GRID THROUGH A NET BILLING OR METERING PROGRAMME. AS AN EXTENSION OF THIS GOAL THE GOVERNMENT IN ITS 2013-2014 BUDGET REMOVED THE TARIFFS ON INVERTERS FOR SOLAR PANELS, SOLAR PANELS AND LED APPLIANCES TO ENSURE THAT MORE BAHAMIANS CAN ACCESS THESE ENERGY SAVING DEVICES WHICH CAN ALSO SAVE BAHAMIANS MONEY ON THEIR ELECTRICITY BILLS.

THE GOVERNMENT HAS SEEN THE BENEFITS THAT SOLAR POWERED DEVICES CAN BRING TO OUR PEOPLE. WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (IDB) AND THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY (GEF), THE GOVERNMENT WAS ABLE TO ADVANCE TWO PILOT PROJECTS DEvised TO COLLECT DATA ON RENEWABLE ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES. THE FIRST PROJECT PROVIDED FOR THE INSTALLATION OF SOLAR WATER HEATERS AND THE SECOND PROJECT FOR THE

INSTALLATION OF PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEMS IN BAHAMIAN HOMES. THE DATA RECEIVED THUS FAR CONFIRMS THAT THESE DEVICES ARE BENEFITING THOSE HOMEOWNERS WHO HAVE THEM IN LOWERING THEIR ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION THUS SAVING THEM MONEY.

MY MINISTRY WOULD LIKE TO EXPAND ON THE SUCCESS WE HAVE SEEN WITH THE INSTALLATION OF THESE GREEN DEVICES BY DEVELOPING THE NATION'S FIRST GREEN SUBDIVISION. THIS PROPOSED COMMUNITY WOULD FEATURE SOLAR POWER AND OR ENERGY EFFICIENT LED RESIDENTIAL AND STREET LIGHTS, SOLAR WATER HEATERS, PV SOLAR GRID TIE SYSTEMS AND ENERGY EFFICIENT CONSTRUCTION METHODS. I ENVISION THAT THIS DEVELOPMENT WOULD BECOME THE MODEL FOR ALL FUTURE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING PROJECTS.

MORE RECENTLY IN THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY I TABLED SEVERAL PIECES OF LEGISLATION THAT WILL GREATLY IMPACT OUR WORK. THE BAHAMAS PROTECTED AREAS FUND BILL IS ONE SUCH BILL THAT WAS DEBATED. AS I EXPLAINED IN MY COMMUNICATION TO PARLIAMENT, DURING THE SEVENTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES (COP-7) OF THE CONVENTION FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (CBD), HELD IN 2004, IT WAS AGREED TO PROMOTE THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF NATIONAL SYSTEMS FOR PROTECTED AREAS. THIS AGREEMENT INCLUDES A SERIES OF SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE BAHAMAS AMONG OTHERS COMMITTED TO IMPLEMENTING WITHIN CLEARLY DEFINED TIME FRAMES. THE OVERALL OBJECTIVE OF THE BAHAMAS PROTECTED AREAS FUND IS TO PROVIDE A

LEGAL FRAMEWORK TO ENSURE SUSTAINABLE FINANCING INTO PERPETUITY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS IN THE BAHAMAS. THIS IS INCLUSIVE OF MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES, SCIENTIFIC AND POLICY RESEARCH AND EDUCATION SUPPORTING THE CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY AND THE OVERALL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND THE CARIBBEAN CHALLENGE. THIS IS AN IMPORTANT INITIATIVE, AS SUCH PROTECTED OR MANAGED AREAS, WILL ENABLE US TO SUSTAIN AND EXPAND OUR FISHERIES RESOURCES THROUGHOUT OUR CHAIN OF ISLANDS AND IF DONE PROPERLY, INCORPORATE LOCAL FISHING COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE BAHAMAS THUS CREATING ADDITIONAL BLUE ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITIES AND BLUE JOBS. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT ALL OF MY COLLEAGUE MINISTERS THROUGHOUT THE CARIBBEAN, LATIN AMERICA AND THE PACIFIC HAVE NOTED THAT SUCCESS LIES IN THE EXTENT TO WHICH LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR ARE INVOLVED IN MANAGING THESE RESOURCES. WE WILL LEARN FROM THE MISTAKES OF THE PAST AND CHART A NEW COURSE FOR SUCCESS.

AMENDMENTS WERE ALSO MADE TO THE FORESTRY ACT. WE ALL KNOW THE IMPORTANCE OF FORESTS TO OUR ENVIRONMENT, THEY CLEAN OUR AIR, FILTER OUR WATER AND BUFFER THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE. THE BAHAMAS POSSESSES CONSIDERABLE FOREST RESOURCES OF PINES, COPPICE HARDWOODS AND MANGROVE. APPROXIMATELY, 80% OF FOREST RESOURCES ARE ON STATE LANDS (CROWN LAND). THE AMENDMENTS WERE SOUGHT TO VEST LANDS IN THE MINISTER IN ORDER THAT HE MAY BE ABLE TO DECLARE THE NATIONAL FOREST

ESTATE, FOR CLASSIFICATION AS FOREST RESERVES, PROTECTED FORESTS AND CONSERVATION FORESTS. THIS WILL NOW ENABLE US TO ADVANCE OUR EFFORTS IN RE-ESTABLISHING TIMBER PRODUCTION, UTILISING OUR FORESTS FOR GAMING RESERVES AND DEVELOPING A HUNTING INDUSTRY IN THE BAHAMAS, THUS CREATING GREEN ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITIES AND GREEN JOBS.

IN THE NEAR FUTURE I ALSO PLAN TO BRING BEFORE PARLIAMENT THE PUBLIC PARKS AND PUBLIC BEACHES BILL WHICH WILL ESTABLISH THE PUBLIC PARKS AND PUBLIC BEACHES AUTHORITY. A BODY WHICH WILL BE CHARGED WITH IDENTIFICATION, REGULATION, MAINTENANCE, DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION OF PUBLIC PARKS AND PUBLIC BEACHES. THIS IS IN LINE WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE GREEN SPACES FOR BAHAMIANS. THIS IS ANOTHER INITIATIVE WHICH WILL CREATE GREEN ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITIES AND GREEN JOBS.

IN DECEMBER OF LAST YEAR THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PRODUCED ITS FIRST PUBLISHED GARBAGE COLLECTION SCHEDULE. THE SCHEDULE WAS EDITED BY CONSTITUENCY, POLLING DIVISION, DAY OF THE WEEK AND TIME OF DAY THAT BAHAMIANS CAN EXPECT TO HAVE TRASH COLLECTED FROM THEIR RESIDENCES. IN TANDEM WITH THIS MEASURE THE DEHS ALSO CONTRACTED MULTIPLE PRIVATE COMPANIES TO AID IN THE COLLECTION OF RESIDENTIAL GARBAGE WHILE THE GOVERNMENT OF THE BAHAMAS DECIDES THE WAY FORWARD WITH ALL THE RELEVANT INFORMATION IN HAND SUCH AS THE

COST TO REPAIR OR REPLACE THE FLEET OF GOVERNMENT OWNED TRUCKS ETC. WE ALSO INTRODUCED A SHORT TERM PROGRAMME FOR THE COLLECTION OF BULK WASTE, WHICH CONSISTS OF SUCH ITEMS AS HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE AND APPLIANCES. THIS EXERCISE YIELDED THE COLLECTION OF OVER ONE MILLION POUNDS OF GARBAGE OFF THE STREETS OF NEW PROVIDENCE IN 45 DAYS AND THERE IS STILL MORE TO BE REMOVED. THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO SIGNED A CONTRACT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A MATERIAL RECYCLING FACILITY AT THE NEW PROVIDENCE LANDFILL AND THE REMEDIATION OF THE SAME. THESE EXERCISES AND INITIATIVES INCLUSIVE OF THE INTRODUCTION OF A SCHEDULE FOR TRASH COLLECTION ARE THE FIRST STEPS TO BRINGING THE BAHAMAS INTO THE 21ST CENTURY AS REGARDS TRASH COLLECTION, RECYCLING AND WASTE MANAGEMENT. IN THE NEXT BUDGET YEAR THE DERELICT VEHICLE SITE ON MARSHALL ROAD WILL BE MOVED TO A SITE ADJACENT TO THE NEW PROVIDENCE LANDFILL AND WE BEGIN TO ADDRESS THE DEPLORABLE STATE OF OUR LANDFILLS AND DUMPSITES IN THE FAMILY ISLANDS.

LAST YEAR, THE DEHS ALSO RELEASED A SHANTY TOWN REPORT WHICH OUTLINED SOME OF THE EXTREME ENVIRONMENTAL INFRACTIONS AND CONCERNS FOUND WITHIN THESE UNAUTHORIZED COMMUNITIES. I MOVED IMMEDIATELY TO ESTABLISH A SHANTY TOWN UNIT WITHIN THE DEHS TO SYSTEMATICALLY COMBAT THIS AGE OLD ISSUE. TO THEIR CREDIT THEY HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DEMOLISH SEVERAL OF THESE COMMUNITIES ALREADY IN A HUMANE AND PEACEFUL MANNER. THERE IS MORE WORK TO DO AND WE ARE RESOLVED TO DO IT. THESE

INITIATIVES CONTINUE DAILY AS IT IS MY INTENTION TO ERADICATE THESE SHANTY TOWNS THAT OUR PEOPLE CAN LIVE IN BETTER CONDITIONS AND THOSE ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS SUCH AS THE PRESENCE OF FECAL MATTER IN WATER AND THE PRESENCE OF DERELICT VEHICLES WOULD COME TO AN END.

THIS YEAR MY MINISTRY WILL ADVANCE THE FOLLOWING:

1. VEHICLES EMISSIONS REGULATIONS. A DRAFT BILL WILL BE CIRCULATED TO YOU DURING THIS CONCLAVE AS WE BEGIN THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS.
2. A BILL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND PLANNING AGENCY, AN EFFORT WHICH BEGAN IN 2005, WHICH I WILL PUSH TO BECOME A REALITY IN THIS TERM IN OFFICE SO THAT WE WILL ALWAYS HAVE A MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND AN AGENCY EQUIPPED AND TRAINED TO ADVANCE OUR ENVIRONMENTAL AGENDA.
3. NEW ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS FOR THE OIL EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION SECTOR.
4. THE FREEPORT ENVIRONMENTAL BYE-LAWS;
5. A BILL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SOVEREIGN WEALTH FUND;
6. A. BILL FOR THE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF CORAL REEFS;
7. THE INVOLVEMENT OF BAHAMIAN ENVIRONMENTAL FIRMS IN PROVIDING ADVICE TO THE GOVERNMENT INSTEAD OF OUR HEAVY RELIANCE ON NON-BAHAMIAN ADVICE, TO BEGIN THE PROCESS OF PUTTING BAHAMIANS FIRST IN THIS LUCRATIVE SECTOR AND BUILDING BAHAMIAN CAPACITY.

I HAVE SOUGHT THIS MORNING TO IMPRESS UPON YOU BY HIGHLIGHTING SOME OF THE WORK BEING DONE, THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO THE ENVIRONMENT. THE INITIATIVES THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS EMBARKED ON SEEKS TO LESSEN OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT, LESSEN OUR DEPENDENCE ON FOSSIL FUELS, ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT AND PROVIDE THE BAHAMIAN PEOPLE WITH OPPORTUNITIES FOR GREEN JOBS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP WHETHER IT BE IN THE INSTALLATION AND SALE OF SOLAR PANELS OR TIMBER MANUFACTURING; OPPORTUNITIES WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BECOME AVAILABLE AND WE MUST PREPARE OURSELVES TO TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF THEM. AT PRESENT, BTVI IN CONJUNCTION WITH UNITED STATES SOLAR INSTITUTE ARE ENGAGED IN THE INSTRUCTION OF THE PROPER INSTALLATION OF PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEMS AND SOLAR WATER HEATERS.

ONE CONCERN I DO HAVE IS THAT WE DO NOT LEAVE THE GENERAL BAHAMIAN POPULATION OUT OF THE INFORMATION EQUATION. WE MUST FIND WAYS TOGETHER TO ENSURE THAT BAHAMIANS KNOW AND UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSERVATION AND THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT. MY MINISTRY HAS BEGUN WITH THE LAUNCH OF THE ECO BAHAMAS MAGAZINE WHICH A NUMBER OF OUR PARTNERS LIKE THE NATURE CONSERVANCY AND THE BAHAMAS NATIONAL TRUST MAKE A STANDING CONTRIBUTION. IT SEEKS TO HIGHLIGHT THE WORK BEING DONE BY MY MINISTRY, NGOS AND OTHERS. WE HAVE ALSO DISTRIBUTED VIA SOCIAL MEDIA AND SUBMITTED TO ZNS AND CABLE BAHAMAS

CONSERVATION POSTERS AND COMMERCIALS ADVISING OF THE WAYS WE CAN CONSERVE ENERGY WITHIN OUR HOUSEHOLDS. THE EFFECTIVE WIDESPREAD DISSEMINATION OF THIS INFORMATION IS NOT JUST GOOD PUBLIC RELATIONS BUT IMPERATIVE IF WE EXPECT TO GET BUY IN FROM THE BAHAMIAN PEOPLE.

I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS TIME TO THANK ALL THE NGOS FOR PARTNERING WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE IMPORTANT ENVIRONMENTAL WORK THAT IS CARRIED OUT DAILY. YOUR WORK IS INVALUABLE TO THIS COUNTRY ESPECIALLY THE PROGRAMMES WHICH SERVE TO SENSITIZE OUR YOUNG PEOPLE TO THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ENVIRONMENT. AS WE ALL ARE AWARE, THE PRESERVATION OF OUR ENVIRONMENT IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS. IT HAS SUPREMACY IN OUR WAY OF LIFE AND MUST HAVE THE SAME SUPREMACY IN OUR DECISION MAKING PROCESSES.

I AM HAPPY THAT ALL OF YOU MADE THE TIME TO ATTEND THIS EVENT. WHEN WE LEAVE THIS PLACE AFTER SPENDING THESE THREE DAYS IN DISCUSSION, WE MUST MOVE FORWARD WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THOUGH WE MAY NOT ALWAYS AGREE ON THE DETAILS WE ARE ALL WORKING TOWARDS ONE COMMON GOAL, WHICH IS THE PROTECTION OF THE BAHAMIAN ENVIRONMENT. WITH THIS IN MIND WE SHOULD LEAVE THIS CONCLAVE ON ONE ACCORD CONCERNING THE WAY FORWARD AND RESOLVE TO ENSURE THAT OUR RESPECTIVE DEPARTMENTS, AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS WORK TOGETHER IN THE FURTHERANCE OF THIS MOST NOBLE CAUSE.

THANK YOU AND GOOD DAY