

Commonwealth of the Bahamas

Independence Message 2017

Dr. the Hon. Hubert Minnis

Prime Minister of the Bahamas

on the 43rd Anniversary of Independence

10 July 2017

Fellow Bahamians and friends of The Bahamas, it is with a deep sense of pride and gratitude, in this my inaugural independence message as prime minister, that I extend a happy independence to Bahamians and friends everywhere.

Bahamian pride is evident at home and abroad, as our flags are prominently and proudly displayed in homes, on vehicles and at cultural festivals.

From Salina Point, Acklins to Man-O-War, Abaco, from West End, Grand Bahama to Gambier Village, New Providence, Bahamians will celebrate independence with pride and devotion.

The theme for our 44th anniversary comes, in part, from an evocative strain in our national anthem, "Toward the rising sun: one God, one people, one Bahamas."

This year's theme encourages us all to "lift up our heads" and to continue the journey that began at independence. It is a theme meant to inspire us to move steadily sunward under the guidance of God, recognising the value of unity and shared purpose as we continue to foster the common good.

Our country is blessed in so many ways. We thank Almighty God that the basic tenants of our democratic traditions have been maintained. Since 1973, we have remained a peaceful and stable country where progress has been measured in social and economic advancement.

Though we are a people of diverse backgrounds, there is a common thread that runs through the Bahamian tapestry - our threads from Africa, Europe, the Caribbean, Asia and the Americas.

For decades, we have welcomed people from many countries who have embraced the distinctive ethos that gives life and energy to the Bahamian spirit.

Our independence celebrations from San Salvador to Ragged Island, from Eleuthera to Andros and throughout The Bahamas are wonderful occasions to renew our spirit and to display our national pride.

I urge us all to enjoy the various cultural displays and celebrations throughout our archipelago.

I extend greetings on behalf of my wife Patricia to Bahamians at home and abroad, including our diplomatic and other personnel who will also celebrate our independence with nationals from other countries.

May God continue to bless the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.