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FREE NATIONAL MOVEMENT
MANIFESTO 2012



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MANIFESTO 2012





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“We are committed to securing bright futures for generations of Bahamians to come.”

Hubert Alexander Ingraham



FNM PRIORITIES

1. Fight against crime
2. Economic and employment growth
3. Public debt
4. National security
5. Jubilee Bahamas - Deepening our democracy
6. An opportunity and shareholding society
7. Grand Bahama
8. Family Island development – Back to the Island
9. Improve educational outcomes
10. Healthy living
11. Home ownership
12. Legal and judicial efficiency
13. Reducing government red tape
14. Settlement of labour disputes
15. Agricultural and marine resources
16. Social and youth development
17. Public sector reform and efficiency
18. The environment
19. Cultural heritage
20. Public infrastructure

OTHER KEY OBJECTIVES FOR 2012-2017

1. Vocational and technical skills training
2. Education and training: scholarships, grants and professional development
3. National Jobs Readiness and Skills Training Initiatives
4. Business startups and expansion
5. Legal and illegal immigration



PROVEN LEADERSHIP



My Fellow Bahamians:

The promise of independence and of our Bahamaland belongs to us all. The well-known song reminds us:

This land is your land.

During their first years in office our opponents set up several important national institutions. Yet, the promise to our country was jeopardised and the covenant between the Bahamian people and their government came dangerously close to the breaking point in the years after independence.

Sadly, the Party that had fought for Majority Rule in order to empower the disenfranchised and address the privilege of the few became the party of perquisites and victimisation, and studiously refused to yield on an essential ingredient of democracy – freedom of the airwaves.

Prior to 1992, international publications referred to The Bahamas as “a nation for sale.” Our opponents had squandered the promise of our Bahamas with their neglect and abuse of our democracy. Their tacit support of lawlessness and their toleration of the drug culture laid the foundation for the climate of violence which today haunts our country. Upon taking office, the Free National Movement steered The Bahamas in a new direction. We ushered in a new era of clean, accountable and transparent government. Our Government in the sunshine was productive, forward-looking and progressive. During our two terms in office (1992-2002) we revived a faltering economy and gave our nation renewed hope. When our opponents once again assumed power from 2002-2007, progress was stalled by the weakest, most unproductive and incompetent government in the history of an independent Bahamas.

Even so, they believed they could escape accountability for their misdeeds if they could only convey a sense of economic progress. To do this they pursued shamelessly a host of unproductive projects for which they were willing to give away much of The Bahamas.

After a single disastrous term, the Bahamian people rejected that scandal-ridden administration. Since our re-election in 2007 we have been working nonstop to restore your trust and address many of the problems caused or ignored by our opponents during their time in government. We have fought to strengthen our economy during the worst global economic crisis since independence. We have relentlessly attacked the long simmering problem of crime and its root causes. We have begun to rebuild our country's ageing infrastructure and have put in place historic social programmes to aid Bahamians during these difficult times.

Today, the country is clearly headed in the right direction. We are making progress both in terms of economic recovery and national security. Yet, there is much work to be done and we must continue to move Steady Sunward.
In the words of March on Bahamaland:

*Steady sunward, tho' the weather hide the wide and treacherous shoal.
Lift up your head to the rising sun, Bahamaland.*

Just as we delivered the greatest overhaul in decades of our criminal justice system, and of our national infrastructure and social security systems, we will deliver more during our next term.

Our **National Security Strategic Plan** will guide our fight against crime, drug- and gun-trafficking, human trafficking, illegal immigration and poaching.

We will continue to build an Opportunity and Shareholding Society. In consultation with Bahamians, we will launch **Jubilee Bahamas**, a 10-year national plan leading to the 50th anniversary of our independence; key part of which will be a **Recovery and Growth Agenda** that focuses on jobs and wealth creation, small businesses, and support to entrepreneurs through innovative grants and incentives.

We will launch the **Back to the Island** campaign, which we hope will become the largest migration of Bahamians back to the Family Islands in our history.

A focused **Heritage Tourism Initiative** and a further incentivized **Creative Economy** will provide both sustainable economic growth and human development.

*We will introduce the most comprehensive social
intervention initiatives ever seen in the modern Bahamas.*

We will build on our **Social Development Agenda** in the fields of health care, education, housing and social security. We will introduce **National Catastrophic Health Insurance** and continue to build the best health care facilities in this region. We will expand home ownership. We will improve the quality of public education and student performance.

We will deliver these and other pledges just as we have in our prior terms in office. We will do this in full accord with the principle of fiscal prudence and through clean, honest and accountable government.

I thank you for the privilege of serving you over many years in public life. I thank you for placing your trust in my leadership and that of successive FNM governments. On behalf of my colleagues, I ask you, the Bahamian people, for another term to continue the good work we have begun.

Our Bahamas is an archipelago of opportunity and possibilities. I ask for your support, as we may, together, face today's challenges and seize the promises of tomorrow, as we take The Bahamas we love **Steady Sunward!**
With Gratitude,

Hubert Alexander Ingraham

Hubert Alexander Ingraham

Party Leader



OUR VISION & OUR RECORD



We began our journey of Deliverance in 1992. We have kept the faith of the Bahamian people providing transparent and accountable Government between 1992 and 2002, and again from 2007 up to this very day.

We deepened our democracy, freed the airwaves from Government monopoly, introduced elected local government in the Family Islands, provided for broadcast coverage of Parliament's activities, and launched an e-government portal to bring more services to the public through the internet.

We privatized the telecommunications sector and provided for its independent regulation. We changed the law so that Bahamian citizens temporarily resident overseas for work or study could vote in general elections at Bahamas Overseas Consular Offices.

Between 2002 and 2007 we valiantly shouldered our responsibility as a Loyal Opposition and exposed the corrupt, scandalously inefficient Government led by those who oppose us.

We remain steadfastly committed to our labour of love to assist our people in achieving their goals of personal development, and to promote the responsible and sustainable development of our country. We are committed to securing bright futures for generations of Bahamians to come.

Our hard work and diligence won us the trust of the people. And, on the 4th of May, 2007 the Free National Movement again assumed the responsibility of Government.

In July 2007 the world economy began its descent into the Great Recession with the collapse of the Real Estate Market. Governments of developed and developing countries around the world responded by cutting public sector jobs, reducing salaries, and shrinking social assistance benefits.





OUR VISION & OUR RECORD

We launched a \$750 million capital expenditure stimulus programme that created thousands of jobs and considerable economic activity.



Despite the Great Recession, we did not cut public sector jobs. Instead, your FNM Government safeguarded the jobs of 20,000 public sector employees; recruited additional police, prison, customs, and immigration officers to boost national security; and employed additional teachers, doctors, nurses and other health care professionals to pursue our education and health agendas.

We launched a six-month temporary employment programme that created an additional 2,500 jobs.

We supported new small business start-ups and the expansion of existing small businesses through Self Starter and Jump Start.

We simplified access to Government Guarantee Loans, and enacted a new Business Licence Act to reduce bureaucracy and the cost of doing business in The Bahamas.

And along with creating jobs, we dramatically increased social assistance for food, rent, mortgage payments, and energy assistance to aid Bahamians during difficult times.

We believe that the future of our country lies in the hands of our youth. And we have worked to help our young people ignite their future and achieve their full potential. We expanded investment in education. We built the first new primary and secondary schools in the country in over five years. We recruited additional specialist teachers, improved tuition materials in our schools and libraries, increased scholarships for tertiary education and supported the College of The Bahamas in its planned progression toward university status.



OUR VISION & OUR RECORD

We launched the 52-weeks National Jobs Readiness and Skills Training programme that is now training 4,000 citizens to fill voids in both the public and private sectors of our economy.



We also believe that a healthy nation is a successful nation. This term in office we raced to revive initiatives that had faltered between 2002 and 2007. We launched a programme to promote healthy life styles, to encourage good dietary habits and supported oral health initiatives. We launched the Prescription Drug Programme and re-started the planned upgrade and expansion of hospital and community health clinics around the country.

Additionally, we have worked to modernize The Bahamas. We enacted far-reaching legislation to regulate electronic communications, safeguard our financial services sector, better protect children and the disabled, and strengthen the hand of the law against criminals.

In spite of the terrible global economic conditions, we have worked tirelessly to deliver on the promises contained in the Manifesto '07.

We are pleased to have been able to deliver on all aspects of our commitments to the Bahamian people.

We are proud to have provided a scandal-free, accountable government throughout our last term in office. We asked you to place your trust in us and we honoured that trust, and we will continue to honour the Bahamian people.

But much important work remains to be done. We ask that you continue to place your trust in us. We promise and commit to continue our work on your behalf, and for the benefit of your children and the next generation.





Our National Security Strategic Plan:

TOUGH ON CRIME & TOUGH ON THE CAUSES OF CRIME



Working For Peace-Loving Bahamians

Bahamians are renowned for their friendly and welcoming nature. Being a good neighbour, generosity of spirit and Christian charity characterize our people. The anti-social behaviour that fuels high levels of crime is not a natural, constitutive side of our character. The forces that introduced it to us and that continue to reinforce it will remain the target of our relentless fight.

The trade and abuse of illicit narcotics are the root causes of the crime surge in The Bahamas over the past decades. Our National Anti-Drug Strategy is addressing the drug phenomenon in The Bahamas on all fronts: demand and supply reduction, the treatment and rehabilitation of abusers, and the identification, detention and prosecution of those engaged in the trade and distribution of drugs.

To stop the flow of drugs into our country and the crime that accompanies it, we are strengthening Border Control and will combine Customs and Immigration controls at our ports of entry. We have also expanded the presence of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force in and around our archipelago.

To tackle crime in our streets, we have modernized and better equipped the Royal Bahamas Police Force, passed and implemented tough anti-crime legislation and improved conditions in our legal, judicial and prison systems.

To complement to these efforts, we have also worked with educators, social workers and other citizens to implement new prevention programmes.

Ensuring the safety and security of all Bahamians is our number one priority.



ROYAL BAHAMAS POLICE FORCE



The brave men and women of the Royal Bahamas Police Force are the front line in the fight against crime. To enable them to better combat crime, we have:

✓ Streamlined the senior command:

- Appointed a new generation of leaders for the Royal Bahamas Police Force
- Recruited 434 new constables to “walk the beat” in neighbourhoods and begun the rebalancing of the make-up of the Police Force
- Implemented a **new Police Force Act**, in 2009
- Improved the conditions of service for Police Officers

✓ Invested in new equipment, technology and crime fighting tools, including two fully equipped mobile police centres

✓ Acquired a new Cessna Caravan aircraft for the police

✓ **Introduced electronic monitoring of suspects and convicted felons**

✓ Set up Closed Circuit TV in areas of New Providence with high crime rates

The way forward >

The Business of police must be preventing crime not simply responding to it.

The goal of the FNM is to have a modern, efficient crime fighting machine properly manned, trained and equipped to prevent crime where possible, detect crime when it occurs and bring those responsible to account before the courts. Our aim is not just to control bad behavior, but to change it.

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Increase the strength of the Royal Bahamas Police Force by an additional 250 officers
- Recruit and specifically train police officers from remote Family Islands to serve in their communities
- Combine community policing and modern technology to increase the predictive policing capacity of the police in crime prevention
- Set up specially targeted training to enhance the investigative skills of members of the Royal Bahamas Police Force
- Ensure continued and adequate funding for the Police
- Ensure dedicated police patrols and police presence in neighbourhoods
- Require Police District Commanders to hold public meetings on a monthly basis to report on police and criminal matters within each District
- Require the police to spend 50 per cent of their working week "on the beat", in order to gain visibility in neighbourhoods
- Require the police to spend as much time at nighttime on the street as they do in the daytime
- Significantly expand Closed Circuit TV coverage as a tool of crime fighting
- Continue aggressive national and international anti-drug trafficking campaigns with particular attention to eradicating drug cartels



JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT

Our judicial system is a crucial component in fighting crime. We are making our system more responsive, ensuring cases are heard sooner and more efficiently, while safeguarding fairness in the system.

FOR THIS PURPOSE WE HAVE:

- ✓ Ensured adequate funding for the Judicial Department
- ✓ Facilitated the appointment of additional Magistrates, Supreme Court Justices and Court of Appeal Judges
- ✓ Made possible the appointment of two full-time Supreme Court Justices in Freeport, Grand Bahama
- ✓ Caused the appointment of resident Magistrates in Abaco, Exuma and Eleuthera
- ✓ Facilitated the recruitment of 16 new prosecutors in the Department of Public Prosecutions
- ✓ Set up Witness Care Units
- ✓ Established Practice Groups in the Department of Public Prosecutions to assist with preparations for prosecutions which has increased the success rate for high profile sexual offence cases
- ✓ Improved criminal case management
- ✓ **Increased the number of criminal courtrooms in the Supreme Court from 2 to 5, of which:**
 - two courts are dedicated to cases predating 2010
 - one court dedicated to retrials
 - two courts dedicated to current cases, i.e. 2010 onward
- ✓ Completed and opened the new Magistrate's Court Building on South Street
- ✓ Established a Remand Court at Fox Hill with video-conferencing facilities, eliminating the need to bring remanded prisoners downtown every day
- ✓ Established a second Coroner's Court
- ✓ Undertaken renovations to the Supreme Court Building at Bank Lane and Parliament Street
- ✓ **Purchased and undertaken refurbishment of the former Ansbacher Bank Building, converting it into the new Judicial Complex:**
 - Two new courts on the ground floor of the Judicial Complex have been renovated and became operational in January, 2012.
 - Renovations to upper floors to establish five new courts have already started and will be completed this year

Amended and/or enacted 11 pieces of anti-crime legislation to strengthen criminal law, including:

- ✓ Restrictions on bail for rape, murder, armed robbery, gun possession, supply of illicit drugs and sexual abuse of minors
- ✓ Removal of the authority of magistrates to grant bail in murder, rape, armed robbery, gun and possession of drugs with intent to supply cases
- ✓ Imposing mandatory minimum sentences of 4 years upon conviction for drug and gun related crimes (5 years where the crime is committed in a school's proximity)
- ✓ Detention years for firearms and drug convictions are now measured as full calendar years (as opposed to 8 months); a life sentence in prison is now the natural life of a felon convicted for first degree murder and for other murder convictions -- 30 to 60 calendar years
- ✓ Establishment of a Gun Court
- ✓ Permitting evidence to be taken via video recording of testimony by witnesses
- ✓ Reducing the number of jurors from 12 to 9 members, except for murder cases
- ✓ Promulgation of Witness Protection legislation to provide anonymity for certain witnesses
- ✓ Regulation of pawn brokers and second hand dealers, including scrap metal and cash-for-gold dealers

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Ensure continued and adequate funding of the Legal Department and the Judiciary
- Continue and complete the Judicial Complex and the upgrade of the Supreme Court
- Appoint a resident Magistrate in Andros
- Further empower magistrates, in appropriate cases, to use their authority to implement alternative sentencing and restorative programmes with a view to reducing recidivism by juvenile non-violent offenders
- Implement a fast and effective programme in the school system and at the community level to address the early display of anti-social behaviour by young persons as well as a targeted programme for repeat offenders





**WE HAVE RECRUITED AN
ADDITIONAL 150 OFFICERS
IN THE PRISON SERVICE**



PRISON DEPARTMENT

Our goal is to ensure that convicted felons serve their sentences in a secure environment, where the rights of both prison officers and inmates are guaranteed, and where convicts destined for reintegration in society are afforded appropriate rehabilitation and skills training to facilitate that process by the completion of their sentences.

TOWARD THIS END WE HAVE:

- ✓ Recruited an additional 150 officers in the Prison Service
- ✓ Improved health insurance coverage for prison officers
- ✓ Built a new 40-unit Single Officers Quarters
- ✓ Enhanced security systems in the correction facility
- ✓ Improved exercise space for inmates
- ✓ Upgraded the prison's inmate toilet facilities
- ✓ Continued prison reform initiatives; expanded and improved tuition and skills training for inmates

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Accelerate prison reform initiatives with particular regard to the rehabilitation of non-violent offenders to facilitate their reintegration into society
- Build a Remand Centre on Grand Bahama
- Require weekly testing of prison inmates for abuse of illegal substances





ROYAL BAHAMAS DEFENCE FORCE

The goal of the FNM is to secure our maritime boundaries and prevent poaching of our marine resources, the influx of illegal immigrants, and entry or transit of illegal drugs and other contraband, including firearms. The FNM is committed to ensuring that the Royal Bahamas Defence Force is manned, trained and equipped to fully meet its mandate to protect our national borders.

TOWARDS THIS END THE FNM HAS:

- ✓ Promoted new leadership for the Royal Bahamas Defence Force
- ✓ Increased the Defence Force fleet by 10 new craft
- ✓ Added two new aircraft to the air wing of the Defence Force
- ✓ Built a new Defence Force Base at Ragged Island
- ✓ Expanded surveillance of our northern and south-western border through an expanded Defence Force presence in Grand Bahama, Abaco, and Inagua, and through a base built on Ragged Island
- ✓ Increased cooperation and collaboration within bilateral, regional and international initiatives and forums
- ✓ Recruited 343 marines

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Ensure continued adequate funding to allow the Defence Force to fully carry out its mandate to protect the territorial and marine integrity of our country
- **Modernize legislation and regulations governing the RBDF to:**
 - reduce the statutory functions and powers of the Minister to intervene in internal operations and administration relating to employment, discipline and other general administrative matters
 - provide for the full integration of females into the organization
 - create a more transparent and uniform military justice system
- Ensure that Defence Force officers receive ongoing training so as to remain abreast of the latest technology and best practices
- Incrementally increase the manpower complement of the Force by 235 enlisted men and women
- Establish a Royal Bahamas Defence Force Reserve with a complement of 60 Reservists commencing in 2012 and increasing to 180 by 2015 to assume specific duties as required in support of RBDF duties and assignments
- Acquire 2 additional patrol aircraft
- Dredge the harbour at the Inagua Base to accommodate larger craft and to provide safe moorage for the patrol vessel
- Dredge the harbour at the Coral Harbour Base and expand docking facilities to accommodate an expanded Defence Force Fleet
- **Refit the Defence Force fleet with 11 craft, comprising four classes of vessels so as to ensure its ability to effectively carry out its responsibilities to patrol our waters and protect our borders as follows:**
 - 4 - 70 feet - Banks Class
 - 4 - 108 feet - Protector Class
 - 2 - 140 feet - Island Class
 - 1 - 170 feet - Auxiliary Vessel - Fort Class used in the delivery of supplies to RBDF Bases around the country and in the delivery of emergency relief supplies for disaster preparedness and response



IMMIGRATION

The Immigration Department is responsible for processing applications for citizenship, permanent residency, annual residency and work permits. Immigration Officers determine whether an arriving passenger meets the criteria to enter the country as a visitor, a work permit holder, or as a temporary/permanent resident.

The FNM's goal is to remove elements which exploit deficiencies in processes, improve fairness for applicants, accommodate the needs of businesses, and address the needs of the Bahamian people and of our economy.

TOWARDS THIS END THE FNM HAS:

- ✓ Reorganized the senior command of the Immigration Department
- ✓ Recruited and trained 90 additional immigration officers
- ✓ Commenced cross-training of new recruits in the Immigration and Customs Departments toward the development of a unified Border Control and Revenue Officers Corps.
- ✓ Required firm and fair enforcement of immigration laws and regulations
- ✓ Begun issuing tamper-proof immigration permits and certificates
- ✓ Ensured the timely, expeditious and transparent regularization of the status of long-term residents and registration of children born abroad to Bahamian women married to non-Bahamians
- ✓ Completed an Immigration Audit with a view to informing applicants of the status of their applications before the Immigration Board
- ✓ Made the process for consideration of work permit applications more professional and efficient
- ✓ **Worked to reduce the number of illegal immigrants in the country by:**
 - The conduct of regular and routine arrest, detention and repatriation exercises
 - Extending surveillance of our national borders through an expanded Defence Force presence in Grand Bahama, Abaco and Inagua
 - Instituting a 24-hour immigration hotline for information on activity related to illegal immigration

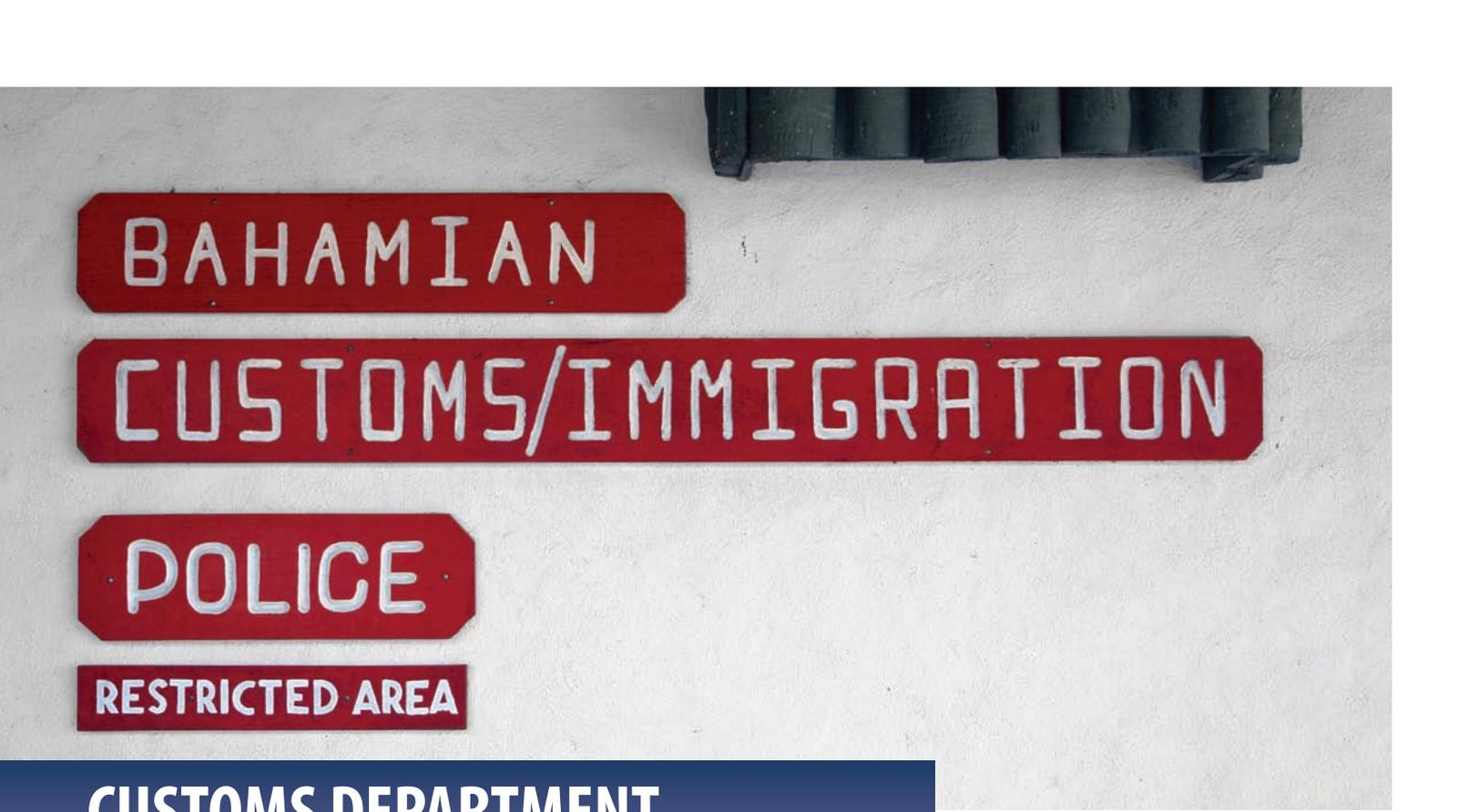


The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Continue the firm and fair enforcement of immigration laws and regulations
- Continue to expedite the naturalization and/or registration of children born abroad to Bahamian women married to non-Bahamians
- Continue the regularization of the status of long-term residents and of persons born and raised in The Bahamas to non-Bahamian parents
- Ensure that work permits are issued only to fill posts which cannot be genuinely filled by suitably qualified Bahamians
- Strengthen coordination between Customs and Immigration to maximize benefits from both those uniformed Services
- Continue to enhance the surveillance capacity of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force against illegal immigrants and other illegal traffic or trade
- Reduce illegal immigration through the continuous conduct of regular and routine arrests, detention and repatriation





BAHAMIAN

CUSTOMS/IMMIGRATION

POLICE

RESTRICTED AREA

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT

Customs duties are the largest and most important source of government revenue, providing funding, which makes every wheel of government turn. The FNM accelerated the process of customs duty rationalization begun during its previous terms. This streamlining has resulted in fewer and lower customs duty rates, measurably improved efficiency in the collection of revenue and reduced levels of lost revenue.

The goal of the FNM is to prevent fraud in the customs clearance process, maximize the collection of government revenue, and reduce the cost of living for Bahamians.

TOWARDS THIS END THE FNM HAS:

- ✓ Reorganized the senior command of the Customs Department
- ✓ Enacted a new Customs Management Act, 2011
- ✓ Enacted a new Excise Tax Act, 2011
- ✓ Recruited 243 trainee customs officers and 18 customs guards
- ✓ Commenced cross-training of new recruits in the Customs and Immigration Departments toward the development of a unified Border Control and Revenue Officers Corps
- ✓ Enacted a new Tariff Act, rationalizing and reducing the number of import duty rates

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

→ **Complete the modernization of the institutional framework of the Customs Department, improving management capacity by:**

- Developing a new organizational structure and putting in place policies and creating operational units as required by the Customs Management Act 2011
- Implementing a new human resource model to provide for executive development and improved planning
- Implementing the use of performance management indicators and reporting mechanism
- Developing strategic planning capacity
- Further strengthening revenue collection and reporting functions
- Increase and equip the Customs Department to facilitate surveillance of our borders beginning in New Providence and Grand Bahama in coordination with the RBDF

→ Ensure ongoing training for Customs Officers

→ Modernize Customs Operations through the upgrade and automation of Customs procedures, so as to facilitate trade while maintaining Customs control

→ Replace existing IT systems to improve management and control of all operations including exemptions, inventory tariff classification and direct data input by both public agencies and private traders.

→ **Improve trade facilitation, border control and security measures by:**

- Strengthening risk analysis and risk management programmes so that low risk shipments can be Customs cleared with minimal delays
- Implementing a single window for submission of documents
- Strengthening the post-clearance audit system to complement risk management
- Strengthening enforcement capabilities and developing enforcement strategies





BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES

The FNM is especially conscious that reducing levels of crime over the long term means promoting a new set of values, principles and character formation in the next generations of Bahamians.

TOWARDS THIS END THE FNM HAS:

- ✓ Enhanced and expanded programmes and initiatives at the community and school levels to counter violence and promote the peaceful resolution of disputes
- ✓ Restored the Willamae Pratt School for Girls' dormitory, which was destroyed by a fire in 2003, and built a new cosmetology laboratory
- ✓ Expanded technical assistance and educational programmes at Willamae Pratt School for Girls and Simpson Penn School for Boys in collaboration with BAIC, including the preparation and putting into productive use of 12 acres of land for live-stock farming at the Simpson Penn School
- ✓ Increased Government subsidies to NGOs, charities, youth bands, choirs, and other civic groups and organizations
- ✓ Launched Volunteer Bahamas, expanding opportunities for law abiding Bahamians to serve and to extend the umbrella of services to other Bahamians.

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Promote and support the expansion of Volunteer Bahamas
- Develop an “Outward Bound” type youth programme
- Introduce into the primary and secondary school core curriculum a “Universal Principles of Life Programme”, whose goal and aim will be the cultivation of life-affirming values that make for positive work, play and living environments
- Make mandatory for all students in government-operated schools participation in a Community Service Programme
- Institute, in consultation and cooperation with the private sector, a mandatory “Work Experience” programme so as to ensure that all 12th grade students satisfy a requirement for a minimum number of hours of apprenticeship work prior to graduation
- Implement a Bahamas Youth Development Corps Programme for young people between the ages of 18 and 25 to volunteer their time and earn money towards higher education or entrepreneurship
- Develop a Summer Institute for boys leaving primary school for junior high
- Extensively renovate, upgrade and expand the Simpson Penn School for Boys and the Willamae Pratt School for Girls
- Improve rehabilitative and character-building initiatives at the Simpson Penn School for Boys and the Willamae Pratt School for Girls
- Create a Jobs Training Fund to facilitate school leavers’ participation in six-month long, targeted training programmes meant to satisfy unmet demands in the economy
- Facilitate increased youth employment through the continuation of the successful National Job Readiness and Skills Training programme
- Develop a youth outreach initiative based on the success of the Afro Reggae Programme in Brazil





Working to create
the Opportunity
Society for
Bahamian families

The past four years of devastating global, economic and financial crisis created huge hurdles for The Bahamian economy. Only careful management and targeted public sector investments enabled us to successfully navigate the difficult times.

In the face of this crisis the FNM Government launched the most progressive and far-reaching programme of institutional and infrastructural development in our nation's history: a first-of-a-kind job readiness and training programme, and additional and expanded social assistance initiatives.

Painfully conscious of the harmful impact of the Great Global Recession on jobs and income levels of Bahamian families, the FNM took targeted action to reduce the burden on families, to save and create jobs, encourage investment and to broaden business and employment opportunities for Bahamians by:

- ✓ **Creating 2,500 temporary jobs in 2010**
- ✓ Introducing the **National Job Readiness and Skills Training Programme that created 4000 jobs**
- ✓ Instituting the **Self-Starters** programme providing grants of up to \$5,000 for **young Bahamian entrepreneurs** starting their own businesses.
- ✓ **Giving small and medium sized businesses a 2 year exemption from licensing fees**
- ✓ Introducing the **Jump Start Programme**, providing grants of up to \$7,500 to fund new business startups and expand existing businesses
- ✓ Introducing for the first time an unemployment benefit under the NIB programme which 25,000 Bahamians have accessed
- ✓ Mandating the reduction or elimination of customs duties on the importation of numerous food items, green-energy appliances, construction materials, security systems and other essential consumer goods
- ✓ Exempting, at a cost of \$21 million, 3,500 first time home owners from payment of stamp tax (on homes purchased)
- ✓ Exempting the transfer of a mortgage of a dwelling place from one financial institution to another from the payment of Stamp Tax and exempting from Stamp Tax the consolidation of debts by mortgaging a dwelling home up to a value of \$500,000
- ✓ Providing concessions and incentives for tourism-related businesses and those catering to the tourist trade: restaurants, night clubs, and retail establishments
- ✓ Facilitating the development of Albany Resort and Golf Club
- ✓ Facilitating the acquisition, re-development and re-opening of the Four Seasons Resort, now the Sandals Emerald Bay Resort in Exuma
- ✓ Facilitating the entry of Buckeye/VOPAC and Statoil into the oil storage and transshipment sector in Grand Bahama
- ✓ Facilitating the redevelopment of Baha Mar Mega Resort on Cable Beach
- ✓ Launching a \$750 million capital expenditure stimulus programme generating thousands of jobs and facilitating increased private sector activity
- ✓ Enacting the **City of Nassau Revitalization Act**
- ✓ **Enacting the Family Island Development Encouragement Act**
- ✓ **Removing cargo ports from downtown Nassau**
- ✓ Facilitating over 11,00 Bahamians becoming shareholders in the lucrative new Cargo Port at Arawak Cay, an economic area previously controlled by a small elite group of families



Implementing our Recovery and Growth Agenda



MODERNIZING OUR ECONOMY

The FNM put in place laws for the regulation and administration of the communications sector. These laws pertained to telecommunications, internet, radio and television broadcasting including Cable TV, by the Utilities Regulatory and Competition Authority (URCA).

- ✓ Privatized the Government-owned telecommunications company
- ✓ Launched the e-Government Portal improving access to “E-Government” services via the Internet
- ✓ Significantly advanced negotiations for The Bahamas’ accession to the WTO
- ✓ **The FNM enacted and amended existing legislation to bring The Bahamas further along the path of a modern and efficient economy by enacting:**
 - A new Business Licence Act, revamping the business licence process and making it simpler and more efficient for Bahamian entrepreneurs and businesses to obtain a licence
 - A new Town Planning and Subdivisions Act
 - A new Financial Administration and Audit Act
 - The historic Freedom of Information Act
 - Reorganizing and strengthening management at the Customs Department to reduce and minimize revenue leakage

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- ➔ Accelerate taxation system reforms to reduce dependence on border taxes and broaden the tax base
- ➔ Establish a Consumer Protection Agency
- ➔ Complete the process of accession to the World Trade Organization, providing for the full integration of our economy into the international trading system under the most favourable terms possible.



FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT

Foreign direct investment (FDI) plays an important role in the Bahamian economy. The two most important sectors of our economy in terms of job creation and business opportunity for Bahamians - tourism and financial services – have always been and remain heavily dependent on FDI.

The FNM supports and encourages international investment in our economy under clear, transparent and favourable conditions for Bahamians. Successive FNM Administrations have delineated, published and implemented clear national investment policies, and enacted related legislative frameworks to regulate business and investment in our economy.

During this term in office, the FNM reviewed and amended our National Investment Policy to attract those investors who have access to new technologies, capital, processes, products, organizational and management skills, and are able to open new markets and marketing channels for Bahamian goods and services. The FNM also fine-tuned policies meant to increase The Bahamas' attractiveness as a desirable location in which to establish residency and acquire second homes to ultra high- net-worth individuals.



The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Conduct strategic overseas investment promotions for our traditional markets in North America and Western Europe, but particularly in Latin America and Asia targeting environmentally sustainable investments in sectors of the economy targeted for FDI
- Review policies and legislation meant to incentivize investment in our economy to ensure that The Bahamas remains a favourable destination for FDI



DOMESTIC INVESTMENT

The creation of an Opportunity Society is central to the philosophy of the FNM. That is why successive FNM Administrations have sought to reduce bureaucratic red-tape which adds costs and slows the investment and business start-up processes. And that is why the FNM has, through three non-consecutive terms in office, emphasized the importance and urgency of providing all of our islands with the modern infrastructure and efficient services necessary to attract and support job-creating investment. Ours is a coherent plan to build a better Bahamas for all Bahamians.

In documenting the National Investment Policy of The Bahamas, the FNM clearly identified sectors of the economy reserved for domestic participation; incentivized those sectors, and minimized procedures involved in accessing concessions. Additionally, the FNM continues to make Crown and government-owned land available at concessional rates to accommodate the expansion of domestic investment in our economy.

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Provide additional incentives for Bahamian businesses to return to the Family Islands to create employment as a part of our "Return to the Island Initiative"
- Further incentivize the light manufacturing and industry sector
- Promote and encourage increased development of Bahamian-owned small resorts and bone-fishing lodges in the Family Islands
- Continue to make Crown Lands available to Bahamians at concessional rates
- Maximize opportunities for Bahamians to become shareholders in profitable businesses, particularly those resulting from the privatization of previously wholly government-owned enterprises



Developing The Bahamas by Sector

The Bahamas is a service-based economy. Tourism, Financial Services and Construction are the principal engines of the economy.



We negotiated an increase in the value of contracts to be awarded to Bahamian companies by Baha Mar from \$200 million to \$400 million

TOURISM & AVIATION

Travel and Tourism is today the fastest growing industry in the world. In The Bahamas, tourism matters.

It is the engine of the Bahamian economy. In order to strengthen our tourism sector, deepen local value-added, create and save jobs and promote investment, the FNM:

- ✓ Facilitated negotiations leading to the sale of the former Four Seasons Emerald Bay Hotel in Exuma to Sandals, allowing for its speedy reopening, saving hundreds of jobs, and creating additional spin-off jobs and business opportunities
- ✓ Facilitated the redevelopment of Baha Mar's Mega Resort in Cable Beach creating new business opportunities for Bahamian construction firms and jobs for Bahamians
- ✓ Negotiated an increase in the value of contracts to be awarded to Bahamian companies by Baha Mar from \$200 million to \$400 million
- ✓ Supported the continued expansion and improvement to the country's hotel inventory through targeted concessions to resort developers around the country at Atlantis, Albany and Baha Mar on New Providence; Baker's Bay and Winding Bay in Abaco, Sandals in Emerald Bay, Exuma, at Fowl Cay in the Exuma Cays and at Sandals Balmoral in New Providence
- ✓ Amended the Hotels Encouragement Act so as to extend concessions to restaurants, shops and places of interest catering for the tourism industry beyond hotels and resorts
- ✓ Enacted the City of Nassau Revitalization Act to provide concessions and incentives to encourage property owners in downtown Nassau to upgrade their properties creating and safeguarding jobs in the construction sector and contributing to the improvement of the city's environment. Some twenty-two property owners have enjoyed benefits under the provisions of this Act at a cost of nearly \$5 million in duty concessions
- ✓ Attracted more than 380,000 new airline seats to the islands of The Bahamas in 2011, the largest annual increase in airlift in our history
- ✓ Implemented policies resulting in the lowest level of discounting of hotel room rates and assisting in maintaining the highest average hotel rates of any of the larger destinations in our region
- ✓ Initiated the modernization of civil aviation, making provisions for upgrading radar systems at Lynden Pindling International Airport (LPIA) and the Leonard Thompson International Airport (Abaco), and for the facilitation of air access to and through the islands of The Bahamas
- ✓ Completed Phase I of the redevelopment of LPIA (the US Departures Terminal) at a cost of \$191 million and commenced Phase II (the International Departures Terminal) which will become the hub for the redevelopment of air transportation throughout the country. **This is the largest public sector project in Bahamian history**



We completed Phase I of the redevelopment of LPIA (the US Departures Terminal) at a cost of \$191 million. This is the largest public sector project in Bahamian history





TOURISM & AVIATION

- ✓ Upgraded the Leonard Thompson International Airport at Marsh Harbour to meet higher safety standards, and to increase capability in order to accommodate small and mid-sized commercial jets
- ✓ Commenced construction of the new terminal at Marsh Harbour International Airport
- ✓ Dredged Nassau Harbour at a cost of \$48 million, so as to accommodate the largest cruise ships in the world. As a result, Nassau was able to welcome the Oasis of the Seas on its inaugural voyage in December 2009. The additional megaships that followed the Oasis allowed the Government to recoup the \$48 million investment in less than two years from incremental cruise passenger taxes alone. Those incremental taxes will continue to be collected in each coming year
- ✓ Updated the Cruise Ship Overnighting Incentive Act and negotiated an agreement for cruise lines to guarantee yearly increases of 250,000 passengers over a three year period making the port of Nassau the largest in our region, exceeding 3 million cruise passengers in 2011 for the first time ever
- ✓ **Extended concessions to facilitate the upgrade of privately held cruise ports in The Bahamas**
 - Disney upgrade of Cast Away Cay, Abaco at the cost of \$30 million
 - Norwegian Cruise – Coco Cay at Great Stirrup Cay, The Berry's - \$25 million
 - Princess Cruise Lines – Princess Cays, South Eleuthera - \$3 million
- ✓ Hosted both the FIFA Conference and the Miss Universe Pageant becoming the smallest country in the world to host both these prestigious international events
- ✓ Deepened Bahamian value-added in the sector by engaging a Bahamian-owned company to manage Bahamas.com
- ✓ In collaboration with the private sector, introduced the Tourism Apprentice Programme to train the next generation of tourism leaders with increased focus on customer service
- ✓ Designed, built and opened, at a cost of \$13 million, the new Nassau Straw Market on the site of the Market destroyed by fire in 2001
- ✓ Enacted the Straw Market Authority Act, 2011 to provide for the Market's management and regulation, and to restore focus on selling Bahamian made products
- ✓ Subsidized the Isle of Capri and Treasure Bay Casinos, saving 240 jobs in Grand Bahama's tourism sector
- ✓ **In support of Grand Bahama's tourism sector, provided \$10.5 million in subsidies to:**
 - Treasure Bay Casino at Our Lucaya,
 - Hutchison Lucaya Ltd,
 - And provided direct marketing support of air lift to US Airways and of cruise arrivals to Bahama Celebrations, NCL and Carnival Cruise Lines
- ✓ Increased the subsidy for Grand Bahama's tourism sector in 2011 to \$17.2 million

The way forward >

It is important that The Bahamas tourism industry remains fresh and inviting, and maintains its standing as the premier warm weather destination in our region and the source of reliable steady employment and business opportunities for our people.

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Conduct strategic overseas investment promotion targeting developers of environmentally-friendly hotels and resorts, marinas, golf courses and other amenities
- Promote and support substantial expansion of Bahamian-owned tourism facilities in the Family Islands, providing promotion and marketing support, duty waivers and concessions
- Continue to promote and support the expansion and renewal of all tourism facilities around our country with a combination of concessions available under the Hotels Encouragement Act and joint public/private promotion and marketing initiatives
- Offer targeted concessions to encourage the use of green, energy-efficient technologies in tourism resorts and amenities, including the retrofit of existing properties
- Continue collaboration with the private sector to ensure continuous upgrade and maintenance of Bahamian tourism products
- Accelerate the redevelopment of the City of Nassau in collaboration with the Downtown Nassau Redevelopment Committee
- Launch “The Bahamas Service Readiness and Excellence Challenge”, a programme aimed at refocusing public attention on and training for achieving the highest standards of service throughout our economy, with special emphasis on the tourism sector
- Launch a Heritage Tourism Initiative



TOURISM & AVIATION

The way forward >

- Complete the restoration of and reopen the Pompey Museum and annexed Pompey Square in downtown Nassau
- Promote and support the development of new niche market tourism facilities
- Enact a Sports Tourism Act to promote the staging of major regional and international sporting events
- Facilitate an internationally accessible electronic reservation system for air and sea transportation for participating carriers
- Promote The Bahamas as a region of many and very different destinations by showcasing the significant and compelling character peculiar to each island or group of islands
- Facilitate electronic reservations for all licensed hotels, resorts, restaurants and tour operators throughout The Bahamas via Bahamas.com

CIVIL AVIATION

Safe, efficient and convenient air transportation is essential to the success of our economy, hence the focused attention to the enhancement of civil aviation.

During this term the FNM approved funding of \$50 million for the Air Transport Programme, which will facilitate the purchase of a new radar system for the Lynden Pindling International Airport (LPIA) and the Leonard Thompson Airport in Abaco.

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Undertake the reform of the aviation sector
- Incentivize the development of private Bahamian inter-island air services
- Construct new terminals at the Exuma and New Bight, Cat Island International Airports
- Construct a new airport inclusive of terminal and runway at Deadman's Cay, Long Island

BAHAMASAIR

The FNM recognizes that, as The Bahamas is a nation of islands, Bahamasair, the national flag carrier, has a critical role to play in delivering affordable and reliable air transportation to both residents and visitors.

The FNM is committed to coordinating scheduling between the airline's domestic service and an expanded, reliable private air sector in order to facilitate regular, convenient connections for residents and visitors to our Family Islands and to key international destinations. The FNM is also committed to the use of technology in delivering better customer service and schedule reliability.

The FNM has placed Bahamasair on the path to becoming an integral part of our country's tourism strategy, serving as a lynchpin connector between key international markets and The Bahamas principal international airport hubs. Bahamasair's performance has long been challenged by its mandate to provide uneconomic inter-island and international air transportation with unsuitable aircraft.

With the assistance of the IDB, the FNM has initiated a study to determine the role, which Bahamasair might play in the development of aviation in the years ahead. Further, the FNM has facilitated financing for the airlines acquisition of aircraft suited to its schedule and routes, and facilitated the delivery of the first modern 737-500 jet aircraft in March 2012. Two additional jets of the same series are scheduled for delivery, one in May and the third by the end of 2012.

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Put in place medium and long term plans for the future of Bahamasair, taking into account the advice and recommendations coming from the IDB review of the airline and its potential role in the further development of aviation in The Bahamas
- Continue to seek ways of cooperation and collaboration with licensed domestic carriers to increase efficiencies and lower the cost of air transportation services to and through The Bahamas with particular focus on fuel, maintenance and reservations services
- Continue the alignment of Bahamasair's services with the needs of the tourism sector, with particular emphasis on Bahamasair's connecting services to The Bahamas from major airports
- Expand the number of code share agreements with international carriers to facilitate reservations to major destinations in The Bahamas from more global markets
- Continue to acquire the best available technologies to improve the quality and efficiency of customer services throughout the Bahamasair network



FINANCIAL SERVICES

Financial services have been continuously under attack as a result of various tax initiatives in the developed world dating back to as early as 1999. A compendium of legislation enacted between 2000 and 2001 allowed the FNM to stabilize the sector and secure our position as a premier, clean and well-regulated jurisdiction for operation of the world's largest and most important financial institutions.

The failure of the previous Government to advance international cooperation in tax matters between 2002 and 2007 again placed The Bahamas' financial services sector in danger. Beginning in 2007 the FNM acted quickly to safeguard and protect the sector, especially the high-value jobs held by Bahamians therein by:

- ✓ Signing more than 25 new Tax Information Exchange Agreements (TIEAs) resulting in the removal of The Bahamas from G-20/OECD Financial Jurisdictions' Grey List
- ✓ Completing a new Strategic Framework for the future development of the Financial Services Industry in The Bahamas in conjunction with the Bahamas Financial Services Board
- ✓ Doubling the funding for the Bahamas Financial Services Board (BFSB)
- ✓ Providing, for the first time, budget support for The Bahamas Association of Compliance Officers
- ✓ Launching a Service Improvement programme in the Public Service, piloted in key services delivery agencies
- ✓ **Enacting new and amended existing legislation to:**
 - keep the Financial Services Sector competitive and desirable for the international business community
 - ensure that the Sector meets internationally acceptable standards in its operation, particularly regarding securities and information sharing
 - provide modern legal instruments which are flexible, and user-friendly
 - augment and strengthen the existing regulatory framework in identified segments of the Sector
 - further facilitate establishing and conducting business from and within The Bahamas

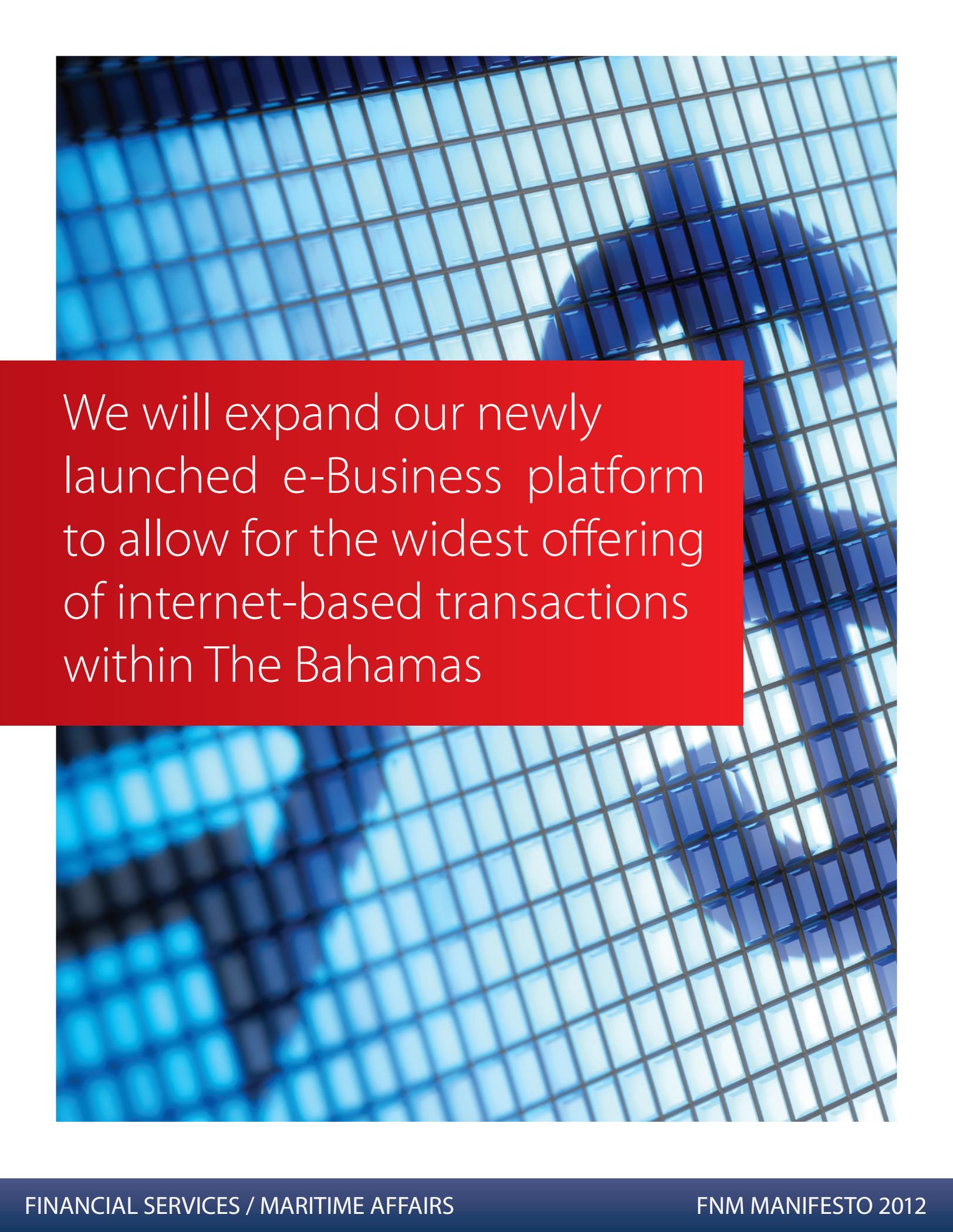
The way forward >

Having taken the necessary measures to ensure our compliance with internationally adopted best practices, the FNM will continue to insist on adherence to the “level playing field” principle.

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Complete the consolidation of financial services regulators
- Modernize the services provided by the Registrar General’s Department to ensure that its commercial facilities are of world class standard to support both domestic and international business operations
- Expand our newly launched e-Business platform to allow for the widest offering of internet-based transactions within The Bahamas
- Make the Bahamas Financial Services Board a statutory board and the promotional arm for Financial Services
- Explore the broadest options for embracing the opportunities in the new global financial environment ensuring that The Bahamas’ financial services sector is both more resilient and better able to profit from international trade
- Provide focused opportunities in partnership with the various financial services professional and training associations to expand the diversity and number of Bahamian experts
- Promote greater efficiency to ensure timely consideration and determination of applications, policies and procedures
- Maintain continuous dialogue with business leaders and stakeholders, so as to remain abreast of the changing needs of the sector
- Keep policies, programmes and legislation important to the success of domestic and international business under review





We will expand our newly launched e-Business platform to allow for the widest offering of internet-based transactions within The Bahamas



MARITIME AFFAIRS

The Bahamas' well-regarded international ship registry is an increasingly important sector of our economy, creating new and increased opportunities for investment and employment for Bahamians.

In order to preserve our reputation in the international maritime sector, the FNM has:

- ✓ Introduced an annual Bahamas International Maritime Conference & Trade Show
- ✓ Restructured the Port Department
- ✓ Produced a conceptual blueprint for The Bahamas Maritime Training Institute to train Bahamian Mariners
- ✓ Expanded the Maritime Cadet Corps
- ✓ Opened a new Bahamas Maritime Office in Hong Kong
- ✓ Advanced plans for the opening of another Maritime Office in Athens, Greece

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Locate the Department of Maritime Affairs on the island of Grand Bahama
- Maintain The Bahamas as a high quality and respected ship registry included on the White List of the world's Port State Control regimes
- Open additional Bahamas Maritime Offices overseas



Manufacturing and Industry



SUPPORTING SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZE BUSINESS

The FNM believes that small businesses are key to job creation and to the further development of our economy. That is why the FNM adopted and implemented policies helpful to the sector, and expanded and improved support and assistance to small and medium size businesses by:

- ✓ Making it easier to access duty concessions on equipment and materials for small business, manufacturers and independent entrepreneurs under Item 8 (previously Item 9) of the Tariff Act, with the result of rapidly increasing the number of persons productively engaged in upholstery, production of bottled water, juices, condiments, pepper sauces, jellies, jams and other sweets, construction of aluminum fences and rails, ice production, textile and clothing manufacturing, shoes, jewelry, souvenirs and craftwork
- ✓ Speeding up the processing of applications under the Industries Encouragement Act for medium and large scale producers engaged in a wide range of economic activities, including concrete production of stones and other items, manufacture of home and office furniture, hurricane shutters, gates and rails, fencing, chemical products (bleach), and large scale production of bottled water and juices
- ✓ Introducing the Small Business Guarantee loan programme
- ✓ Reducing Customs duties generally, and rationalizing customs duty rates on computers, construction materials and supplies, retail apparel, and bread basket food items carried by Mom and Pop shops
- ✓ Expanding the Industrial Park providing low-rent accommodation for more small and medium size manufacturers
- ✓ Requiring large scale investors entering into Heads of Agreements to access locally produced products, e.g. uniforms, mattresses and pillows, paints and paint products, to use original and reproductions of Bahamian art for resort décor, and to source local expertise and professional services
- ✓ Encouraging large international resorts to hire Bahamian musicians for their in-house entertainment
- ✓ Promoting and encouraging the use of Bahamian art (originals and/or reproductions) in hotel resort properties by removing customs duty from the import of reproduction of Bahamian artwork (custom duties apply to all other reproductions of original art)
- ✓ Launching Self Starters to support young aspiring entrepreneurs between the ages of 18 and 29
- ✓ Launching Jump Start to support small entrepreneurs over 29 years old to start up or expand existing small businesses





We launched Self Starters to support young aspiring entrepreneurs between the ages of 18 and 29



The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Further incentivize the manufacturing and industrial sector
- Offer a one-time Apprenticeship Financial Incentive to manufacturing industry employers for each new or current employee sponsored as a registered apprentice
- Continue support and assistance to encourage the development of independent entrepreneurship
- Issue Road Traffic Franchises to persons now leasing plates from franchise holders
- Put a stop to leasing franchises except in instances where a widow/widower of a deceased franchise holder seeks to maintain and operate a franchise previously held by a deceased spouse

CONSTRUCTION

Activity in the Construction Sector reflects the health of an economy.

Hence successive FNM administrations placed importance on the sector. The FNM enacted the Professional Architects Act 1994, prepared draft legislation to regulate professional engineers, which resulted in the enactment of the Professional Engineers Act in 2004, and enacted the Planning and Subdivisions Act 2010, all meant to better regulate and professionalize the construction sector.

While in office, the FNM has required large foreign companies to engage or otherwise sub-contract work to Bahamian construction professionals, such as architects and engineers, building, electrical, plumbing and decoration contractors in the development of their projects. This has resulted in the transfer of relevant technology to Bahamian professionals as well as to skilled and semi-skilled construction workers. Such transfer of knowledge and technologies has also been strengthened as a result of FNM initiatives fostering mentoring partnerships between large international developers and/or their large international construction companies and Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute, and with technical and vocational departments of government-operated senior high schools.

The FNM also made the Bahamian construction industry more competitive by introducing a programme which has rationalized and reduced customs duties on imported construction materials and supplies, and further incentivized Bahamian manufacturers for the construction of components like windows and doors, paints and paint supplies, joinery and other furniture.

During this term in office the FNM put in place special skills training and job readiness programmes to enhance the Bahamian workforce.



CONSTRUCTION

The \$750 million economic stimulus infrastructure improvement and expansion programme undertaken by the FNM Government created and saved thousands of jobs for Bahamians.

The programme included:

- ✓ The New Providence Road and Utility Improvement Programme
- ✓ The upgrade of the Houses of Parliament, the Supreme Court and the Judicial Complex
- ✓ The construction of two multimillion government administrative buildings in Grand Bahama and Abaco
- ✓ The dredging of Nassau Harbour and the Expansion of Arawak Cay
- ✓ The construction of the new Arawak Cay Cargo Port
- ✓ The construction of the 100,000 sq. ft. bonded customs warehouse off Gladstone Road
- ✓ The redevelopment of the Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH), the Rand Memorial Hospital and Sandilands Rehabilitation Centre
- ✓ The construction of a new Magistrates Court in New Providence to house all Magistrates
- ✓ The construction of new power plants in Abaco and Eleuthera
- ✓ The Airport Gateway Project
- ✓ The construction of the Nassau Straw Market
- ✓ Ancillary road, utility, parking and landscape works required for the operationalization of the new National Stadium
- ✓ Electricity supply upgrades in Bimini, Abaco, Harbour Island and Eleuthera
- ✓ Improved water works in Eleuthera, Harbour Island, Current Island and North Acklins
- ✓ Completion and opening of the Anatol Rodgers Junior High School and the T. G. Glover Primary School in New Providence
- ✓ Construction and opening of the new Sister Mary Patricia Russell Jr. High School in Grand Bahama
- ✓ Construction of 20 shade houses at high schools
- ✓ Expansion and upgrade of infrastructure at schools around the country, including: administrative and classroom blocks at S. C. McPherson Junior High School and at Abaco Central High School; new classroom blocks at C. I. Gibson Senior High School, C. H. Reeves Junior High, and at Carmichael & Garvin Tynes Primary Schools; technical blocks at the Doris Johnson Senior High School and at the NGM Major High in Long Island
- ✓ Roads reconstruction and repaving throughout the Family Islands
- ✓ The upgrade of the runway and the construction of a new terminal at the Leonard Thompson International Airport in Marsh Harbour, Abaco
- ✓ The redevelopment of the LPIA
- ✓ The awarding of contracts for construction of community hospitals in Exuma and Abaco
- ✓ Construction of sea defences in Grand Bahama, Eleuthera, Cat Island, Abaco and New Providence
- ✓ Launching a \$75 million government-initiated housing programme to assist Bahamians with home-ownership



The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Enact a Contractors Bill to regulate the construction industry
- Further incentivize the sector
- Designate additional Industrial Parks elsewhere in The Bahamas
- Continue and expand technical and vocational skills training programmes in government-operated high schools
- Increase budgetary support to The Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute
- Bolster programmes at BTVI, to certify skills levels and standards for Bahamian trained construction workers in plumbing, electrical, joinery, masonry, and carpentry sectors





Agriculture

MAKING PROGRESS TOWARD FEEDING OURSELVES

The FNM believes that it is increasingly important to our national development that we improve performance in our agricultural and marine resources sectors. A successful agricultural and marine resources sector will raise standards of living in all of our Islands. This will create employment for unskilled workers as well as for university trained professionals and experts, while providing a disincentive to migration to the capital, and improving the economic viability of our Family Island communities, increasing foreign reserve earnings and retention and improving food security.

Our agriculture and fishing industries can increase local value-added to our economy and reduce the cost of food, raise the level of domestic savings, improve our balance of payments, and create more sustainable jobs by encouraging economic activity, while making our tourism industry more authentically Bahamian. Greater consumption of locally produced agricultural and marine products will also improve the health of Bahamians by reducing the consumption of imported processed food, genetically-modified food and agricultural products contaminated by pesticides and other chemicals.

The FNM encouraged and supported such achievement and inter-sectoral linkages by:

- ✓ Developing and publishing a five-year plan for Agriculture & Marine Resources for the country
- ✓ Enacting the Animal Control and Protection Act which facilitates the control and safeguarding of marine species, such as turtles, sharks, groupers, and conch
- ✓ Completing the draft Plant Protection, Animal Health and Food Safety Bills
- ✓ Carrying out a land audit and census of all agricultural lands
- ✓ Developing disaster modeling tools with a view to providing organized commodity insurance for farmers
- ✓ Making provisions for Credit Unions to be regulated by the Central Bank
- ✓ Developing and implementing a livestock genetic upgrade programme
- ✓ Developing a new veterinary diagnostic laboratory
- ✓ Upgrading marketing strategies through institutional strengthening at Packing Houses on Family Islands
- ✓ Upgrading of the Abattoir, including the installation of a new incinerator and the purchasing of a new dehorner and scalding machine
- ✓ Implementing, through The Bahamas Agricultural and Industrial Corporation, an unprecedented programme of agricultural support projects across the country, including in North Andros, Long Island, Exuma, Eleuthera and Abaco, providing farm land, tractors, refrigerated trailers, legal assistance, and computer and business services to bolster and strengthen Bahamian agriculture
- ✓ Implementing a subsidized 'crop specific' programme in agriculture
- ✓ Expanding the feed mill capabilities to provide more animal feed for farmers at subsidized prices
- ✓ Re-establishing the annual Agri-business Expos on every major island
- ✓ Instituting a weekly Farmers' Market at Gladstone Road Agricultural Centre
- ✓ Create a Native Food market in the Over-The-Hill community for the display and sale of Bahamian produce and Bahamian processed foods to both residents and visitors to New Providence



MAKING PROGRESS TOWARD FEEDING OURSELVES

- ✓ Developing a Farmers' Market in Marsh Harbour, Abaco
- ✓ Establishing green houses in more than 30 schools around the country
- ✓ Initiating the Backyard Garden programme involving over 5,000 participants
- ✓ Developing Craft Village in Grand Bahama and in Central Andros
- ✓ Drafting a New Fisheries Act to include aquaculture development, invasive species and the protection of various species such as bonefish and sea cucumber
- ✓ Creating additional national marine and land parks in Abaco, Andros and Conception Island
- ✓ Creating additional marine reserves in the Berry Islands and Exuma with a view to achieving our national goal of protecting 20% of the national seabed
- ✓ Completing a lobster Fisheries Improvement Project (FIP) aimed at bringing the Bahamian spiny lobster fishery up to Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification standards

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

Agriculture

- **Achieve diversified crop and livestock production to secure food security by:**
 - Facilitating the re-establishment of at least one major dairy, poultry, cattle, pork or mutton production facility
 - Ensuring diversified production on each island with appropriate investment in infrastructure, to support the production and marketing of produced crops
 - Promoting and incentivising private sector investment in crop handling, storage and cooling facilities
 - Creating an "Agricultural Research Unit" to scientifically test and examine bug-resistant crops and the potential development of new "cash crops" for the domestic and foreign markets, such as soybeans, breadfruit, neem and cocoa
- Develop a new veterinary diagnostic laboratory to bring facilities to WTO (SPS) standards
- Reduce customs duty on veterinary equipment
- Ensure the continuous upgrade of marketing strategies
- Provide technical support to farmers

- Accelerate the production of export quality products through the integration of packing and cooling facilities, especially in Andros, Abaco, and Grand Bahama
- Establish and support Farmers Organizations in the creation of mass production, packing and supply of products, so as to ensure a continuous chain of supply and quality to customers
- Assist farmers in identifying the most demanded crops and providing technical support to produce them reliably for the maximum duration of that season
- **Help create and foster stable and reliable markets and income for farmers by:**
 - coordinating the production and supply of fruits, vegetables and livestock to government institutions including public hospitals, Her Majesty's Prison and the Royal Bahamas Police and Royal Bahamas Defence Forces
 - providing farmers with key market intelligence and technical support to produce the range and variety of crops demanded by the tourism sector and supermarkets
- Continuously review Agriculture and Fisheries legislation

Fisheries

- Develop sustainable fisheries including mariculture and aquaculture
- Enact a new Fisheries Act to include regulation of aquaculture development and the protection of additional species such as bonefish and sea cucumber
- Create additional protected marine areas with a view of achieving the stated national goal of protecting 20% of national seabed by 2020
- Achieve full Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification standards for the Bahamian spiny lobster fishery
- Restrict employment on fishing vessels to Bahamian nationals
- Require foreign owned charter boat operators offering fly fishing services to engage Bahamian licensed fly fishing guides
- Restrict the licensing of fly fishing guides to Bahamian citizens only



Children are our future



Your FNM candidates 2012

WE DELIVER





Hubert Ingraham *North Abaco*

Your FNM



John Bostwick
Bains Town & Grants Town



Cassius Stuart
Bamboo Town



Darron Cash
Carmichael



Peter Turnquest
East Grand Bahama



Duane Sands
Elizabeth



Caron Shepherd
Englerston



Zhivargo Laing
Fort Charlotte



Shonel Ferguson
Fox Hill



Ronald Bosfield
Mangrove Cay and South Andros



Heather Hunt
Marathon



Norris Bain
Marco City



Sidney Collie
Mical



Richard Lightbourn
Montagu



Bryan Woodside
Pinewood



Karen Butler
Tall Pines



Phenton Neymour
The Exumas and Ragged Island



Carl Bethel
Seabreeze



Monique Gomez
South Beach

candidates 2012



Michael Pintard
Cat Island, Rum Cay & San Salvador



Neko Grant
Central Grand Bahama



Edison Key
Central & South Abaco



Howard Johnson
Central & South Eleuthera



Ella Lewis
Centerville



Brensil Rolle
Garden Hills



Winsome Miller
Golden Gates



Charles Maynard
Golden Isles



Hubert Minnis
Killarney



Loretta Butler-Turner
Long Island



Tommy Turnquest
Mount Moriah



Basil Moss
Nassau Village



Desmond Bannister
North Andros and Berry Islands



Theo Neilly
North Eleuthera



Kwasi Thompson
Pineridge



Kenyatta Gibson
Southern Shores



Hubert Chipman
St Anne's



Pakesia Edgecombe
West Grand Bahama and Bimini



Dion Foulkes
Yamacraw



Your FNM candidates 2012

WE DELIVER



We developed Saunders Beach





LABOUR

The Free National Movement is a true friend of workers. During our three terms in office, the Free National Movement has systematically improved legislation governing labour, including the introduction of a 40-hour week, a minimum wage, and the enhancement of health and safety requirements in the workplace, including increased maternity leave entitlement.

During this term the FNM made provision for the automatic increase of NIB pension and other benefits on a 2 year cycle effective July, 2010.

The FNM introduced large scale training and retraining programmes meant to improve the skills of the Bahamian labour force and to increase employment opportunities and support of entrepreneurship. And, for the first time ever, the FNM introduced an Unemployment Benefit funded by the National Insurance Board.

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Extend the maximum period for National Insurance Unemployment Benefits from 13 weeks to 26 weeks
- Institutionalize the National Training and Retraining Programme to build Human Resource capacity in our nation and provide career development opportunities for Bahamians
- Expand and improve training at BTVI in ornamental horticulture, landscaping and grounds maintenance
- Incrementally increase the minimum wage over a five year period
- Improve the effectiveness of social safety nets and public assistance programmes by introducing a system of conditional cash transfers
- Place increased emphasis on the development of articulated training programmes at Technical Colleges to meet specific unmet needs in the economy for skilled labour in the productive sector, in areas such as welding, scuba diving, drafting and design work with Auto-cads and other technology-based applications
- Establish, in conjunction with Trade Unions and Employers, certified courses in Labour Relations following upon consultation with the College of The Bahamas
- Name Labour Day in honour of Sir Randol Fawkes





We delivered the New
Providence Road and Utility
Improvement Programme







EDUCATION, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH

Education

The Free National Movement believes that our youth represent the future of our country, hence its dedication to preparing them to participate in the country's life and compete at international standards. In education, the goal of the FNM is to improve the performance of Bahamian students, enabling each one to become economically productive, and capable of competing successfully in their future fields of endeavour both at home and abroad. Toward this end, the FNM has focused on the following:

- ✓ Expanding and improving government-operated schools from pre-school to tertiary education
- ✓ Reducing class sizes for grades 1-3 to a maximum of 25 pupils, for grades 4-6 a maximum of 30 and for grades 7 & 8 a maximum of 35
- ✓ Improving the teaching and learning environment
- ✓ Providing class spaces for 4 year olds
- ✓ Increasing and upgrading tuition materials available to teachers
- ✓ Expanding teacher-training initiatives
- ✓ Increasing the number of specialist teachers including science, technical and vocational subjects, and foreign languages
- ✓ Creating a teaching career path

- ✓ computerizing government-operated schools
- ✓ devolving certain responsibilities for the maintenance and upkeep of schools to elected School Boards in New Providence and to elected Local Government bodies in the Family Islands
- ✓ building new public libraries
- ✓ devolving the administration of the College of The Bahamas

Since 2007, the FNM has worked to overcome setbacks in the administration of national educational objectives, particularly during the preceding five years by:

- ✓ Stopping the long-standing practice of recruiting all teachers at the bottom of the salary scale
- ✓ **Ensuring the timely opening of government-operated schools at the start of the school year**
- ✓ Expanding and improving the quality of technical & vocational education in secondary schools
- ✓ Enacting a **new Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute Act**
- ✓ Instituting after-school reading rooms and homework centres
- ✓ Completing the construction and opening of the Anatol Rodgers Junior High School and the T G Glover Primary School in New Providence
- ✓ Building and opening the new Sister Mary Patricia Russell Jr. High School in Grand Bahama
- ✓ Building 20 shade houses at high schools
- ✓ Expanding and upgrading infrastructure at schools around the country, including: administrative and classroom blocks at S. C. McPherson Junior High School and at Abaco Central High School; new classroom blocks at C. I. Gibson Senior High School, C. H. Reeves Junior High, and at Carmichael & Garvin Tynes Primary Schools; technical blocks at the Doris Johnson Senior High School and at the NGM Major High in Long Island
- ✓ **Increasing scholarships available at College of The Bahamas from \$5 million between 2002 and 2007 to \$25 million between 2007 and 2012 for qualifying Bahamians**
- ✓ **Investing \$6.9 million on teacher education at the College of The Bahamas**
- ✓ **Increasing government educational scholarships for national and international institutions from \$400,000 in 2006 to \$8 million in 2012**
- ✓ **Restoring government payment of one half interest charges in respect of government educational loans**
- ✓ Devolving the administration of The Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute
- ✓ Increasing funding to the College of The Bahamas in 2007 by \$7 million, and facilitating the following:
 - The establishment of the School of Sustainable Development
 - The completion and opening of the \$16 million Harry Moore Library
 - The completion of COB's Northern Campus



We have developed
and commenced a
10 Year Education Plan



The way forward >

Having developed and commenced the implementation of a 10 Year Education Plan and constructed and/or completed 4,535 new and additional classroom spaces in the last term in office,

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Further the implementation of the 10 Year Education Strategic Plan
- Make literacy and numeracy the highest priority
- Develop “Head Start” programmes to improve literacy, numeracy and fundamental computer skills for all children by age 5
- Provide a school place or a stipend of up to \$1,500 for all 4 year olds in approved educational institutions
- Assist churches in opening and operating nursery schools for 3 year old children of working parents
- Facilitate the recruitment of qualified/experienced retired teachers to staff ‘Head Start’, Homework and Nursery Centres
- Ensure that a teacher’s aide is provided to classes in grades 1 through 3 in government-operated primary schools over a three year period commencing with Grade 1
- Ensure that all children completing the 3rd Grade are appropriately numerate and able to read and write
- Add the “Universal Principles of Life Programme” to the core curriculum of primary and secondary schools to foster life-affirming values of positive work, play and living environments
- Make students’ participation in a Community Service Programme mandatory
- Institute a mandatory “Work Experience” programme to ensure that all 12th grade students satisfy a requirement for a minimum number of hours of apprenticeship work prior to graduation
- Continue the scheduled renovation, maintenance and expansion of government-operated schools
- Delegate School Boards in New Providence and Local Government Authorities in the Family Islands to contract out routine maintenance and landscaping of government-operated schools





Special Education

- Increase spaces available in government-operated schools for students with special learning disabilities, like autism
- Increase the number of specialists teachers recruited by government-operated schools
- Promote special education training for Bahamian teachers

Teacher Education

- Enhance the quality of teaching
- Facilitate the development of teachers through continuing education
- Enhance the Teacher Cadet Corps
- Encourage high-achieving students to become teachers
- Provide a stipend for teachers who participate in supplementary tutoring of academically weak students after school, on weekends and or during holidays, so as to ensure that students achieve appropriate numeracy, literacy and writing skills up to 6th Grade
- Facilitate the recruitment of the best retired teachers to participate in supplementary tutoring programmes

Tertiary Level Education

- Build additional dorms to accommodate Family Island students at the College of The Bahamas
- Provide rent subsidies based on needs assessment, of up to \$500 per month for Family Island students enrolled at COB
- Provide more scholarships for qualifying Bahamians pursuing studies in mathematics, sciences, engineering, information and communication technology, special needs education, construction science, land surveying and estate management
- Support the College of The Bahamas in continuing its transition to university status

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The FNM supports and encourages high-school and college graduates' vocational and professional training, so that they can become productive and be rewardingly engaged in the country's economy. Toward that end the FNM:

- ✓ Introduced the Self Starters programme and provided \$2.5 million to some 600 young budding entrepreneurs for new business start-ups
- ✓ Doubled Government's budgetary provisions for Junior Achievement
- ✓ Engaged thousands of young people in sound life affirming activities in cooperation with the Governor-General's Youth Awards programme
- ✓ Increased Government's budgetary support to youth bands
- ✓ Increased Government's budget for the annual Summer Youth Programme to \$1 million
- ✓ Improved and upgraded community parks

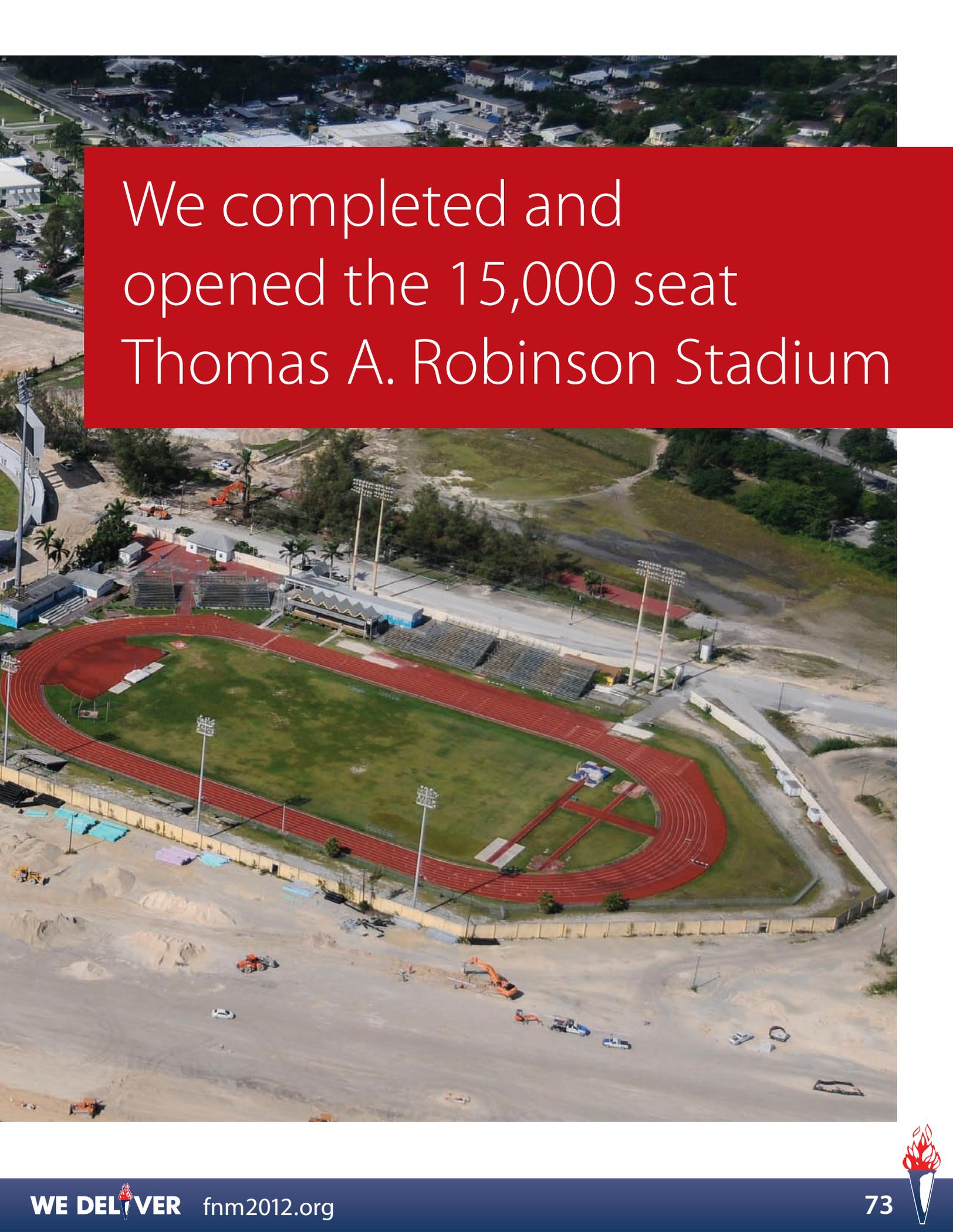
The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- ➔ Develop a nature-based Outward Bound-type youth programme with a view to building character, teaching leadership skills and inspiring service ethics among participants
- ➔ Implement a Bahamas Youth Development Corps Programme for young people between the ages of 18 and 25 to earn money towards higher education or entrepreneurship
- ➔ Launch a voluntary Summer Institute for boys leaving primary school for junior high, requiring the participation of parents and or guardians in a related parenting programme with a curriculum focused on English, Maths and verbal communication; character development; promotion of respect for Bahamian culture and heritage, anger management and development of healthy lifestyles practices including sports
- ➔ Create a Jobs Training Fund to facilitate school leavers' participation in six-month targeted training programmes meant to satisfy unmet demands in the economy
- ➔ Facilitate increased youth employment through the continuation of the successful National Job Readiness and Skills Training programme





An aerial photograph of the Thomas A. Robinson Stadium during its construction phase. The stadium's red running track is visible, surrounding a green field. Several tall stadium light towers are positioned around the track. The surrounding area includes parking lots, some buildings, and a residential neighborhood in the background. A red banner is overlaid on the top portion of the image, containing white text.

We completed and
opened the 15,000 seat
Thomas A. Robinson Stadium





DEVELOPMENT OF SPORTS

It is the goal of the FNM to provide access to excellent sports facilities and training to young people across The Bahamas. Participation in sports encourages healthy lifestyle choices, and builds strong character, teaching important lessons in discipline, commitment and loyalty, which are all important to our wider goal of nation building.

That is why successive FNM Governments have increased official support for the development of sports in our schools, improved sports facilities in community and neighbourhood parks, supported the development of national sporting facilities at the Queen Elizabeth Sports Centre, facilitated the development of the Grand Bahama Sports Centre and increased Government support to our athletes competing internationally. During this term in office the FNM:

- ✓ Increased Government's sports funding to \$2 million
- ✓ Increased direct funding to athletes to over \$1 million
- ✓ Enacted the Anti-Doping in Sports Act, 2009, and established a functioning Commission to bring the Bahamas in compliance with the World Anti Doping Code
- ✓ Enacted the New Sports Act and National Sports Authority Act 2011
- ✓ Put in place a new National Sports Policy
- ✓ Developed a Master Plan for the Queen Elizabeth Sports Centre (QESC) and constructed new access roads and necessary infrastructure for the new stadium
- ✓ Completed and opened the 15,000 seat Thomas A. Robinson Stadium
- ✓ Began construction on a state-of-the-art Hot Rod racing facility
- ✓ Successfully received the designation by the IAAF of an "accredited sprint, hurdle and jump centre"
- ✓ Improved and upgraded community parks, constructing restroom facilities and improving equipment at Parks in New Providence
- ✓ Created a new community park in Seabreeze, New Providence

The FNM also promoted the development of sport tourism. To that end, the FNM:

- ✓ Improved and constructed major sports infrastructure which has provided ideal facilities for major international training, tournaments and competitions
- ✓ Established a Sports Tourism Unit within the Ministry of Tourism, which works closely with the Ministry of Sports to promote the development of sports initiatives, attracting a number of major amateur events to The Bahamas
- ✓ Budgeted \$2m/year for the promotion and execution of these events. Established a National Sports Authority for the management, maintenance and promotion of sports

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- ➔ Complete the development of the Queen Elizabeth Sports Centre in accordance with the Master Plan, replace the Andre Rodgers Baseball and Churchill Tener-Knowles Softball Fields and build the Athletes Village
- ➔ Continue the development of the Grand Bahama Sports Centre to include upgrades to the training and competition tracks facilities to accommodate American Football, Soccer, Baseball, a Gymnasium and an additional Softball field
- ➔ Construct gymnasias in Grand Bahama, Abaco, Eleuthera and Exuma and in a number of schools in New Providence
- ➔ Construct a new running track in Abaco
- ➔ Establish a National Olympic Headquarters and Museum for all olympic sports recognized in The Bahamas, equipped with conference rooms, reception area and federation offices
- ➔ Build a national high performance sports fitness and training centre for Local and International Athletes
- ➔ Develop training fields in east, south and west New Providence and various areas in the Family Islands
- ➔ Introduce a junior athlete developmental program for future Olympians



We are working
to provide access
to excellent
sports facilities
and training



In order to further promote the development of sports tourism, the FNM will:

- Increase funding to the Sports Tourism Unit to strengthen its capabilities
- Provide support to the National Sports Authority and complete the process of establishing a partnership with a top international sports management and promotions firm
- Work with the local federation to expand its capacity to effectively bid, plan and execute regional and international events
- Encourage industry partners to expand their focus on this major Bahamian Tourism component



CULTURE & HERITAGE

The Bahamas has a rich cultural heritage encompassing our natural and built environments, our traditions and customs, arts and music, folklore, literature and language, artifacts and our monuments. It is the goal of the FNM to promote and encourage greater appreciation for all things Bahamian, strengthen our identity and instill a sense of place and belonging among all our people, most particularly our young people. The FNM is committed to supporting and encouraging the preservation and conservation of our culture and heritage, thereby enriching the lives of Bahamians while increasing opportunities to share our history and the accomplishments of our people with visitors to our shores.

Towards these ends the FNM created the Bahamas National Art Gallery; enacted the Antiquities, Monuments and Museums Act, created the Junkanoo Expo at Prince George Wharf, granted Crown Lands to major Junkanoo Groups to facilitate the development of “Junkanoo Shacks”; provided infrastructural support to the spontaneous development of the Down Home Fish Fry at Arawak Cay inclusive of granting crown leases to regularize the development of native restaurants; and acquired the former Shirley St. Theatre as the site for the development of the National Centre for the Performing Arts.

During this term in office the FNM:

- ✓ incentivized, promoted and encouraged the restoration of architecturally and historically valuable buildings in the City of Nassau through the enactment of the City of Nassau Revitalization Act
- ✓ lowered the price of Junkanoo tickets raised by the former Government
- ✓ commenced the upgrade of the existing Fish Fry at Arawak Cay with a view to its eventual evolution into a major cultural festival site and city park
- ✓ increased Government subventions and grants to various national cultural institutions including: Bahamas Concert Orchestra, Bahamas National Youth Choir, Bahamas National Youth Orchestra, Bahamas National Children’s Choir and the National Dance Troop
- ✓ financed the restoration, repair and reconstruction of important public buildings in the City of Nassau, notably the Houses of Parliament, the Supreme Court, the new Justice Centre and the new Straw Market;
- ✓ and completed Phase I of and officially opened the Clifton Heritage National Park, and undertook comprehensive restoration and improvements to Fort Charlotte and Fort Fincastle sites

The nexus between heritage and artistic expression has been transformative for many communities around the world, providing a very exciting and hugely financially rewarding dimension to tourism. Already many of our communities have begun creating heritage tours and site visits to places of historic and cultural interest.

Beyond the potential to contribute to our economy, the FNM is aware that the arts can enrich our lives.



The nexus between heritage and artistic expression has been transformative for many communities around the world, providing a very exciting and hugely financially rewarding dimension to tourism.





The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Undertake new initiatives to encourage the artistic energy which has demonstrated considerable growth in our community in recent years
- Launch a Heritage Tourism Initiative and increase the number of tours focused on visiting historic sites and monuments around the country
- Give greater recognition and support to artistic and cultural expression so as to enhance the preservation of our heritage, the advancement of our artistic endeavours, and the growth in the contribution of both to our economy
- Complete the restoration and reopening of Pompey Museum
- Establish a National Arts Council to facilitate and encourage the private sector's financial participation in the advancement of the arts, and to encourage artistic expression at public sites throughout the country
- Launch the Oral History Project to create a national cultural archive by the re-establishment and funding of an Oral History Department at the College of The Bahamas
- Launch a public private sector Our Bahamian Stories Initiative
- Launch a Public Arts Project to display the works of Bahamian artists in a variety of public buildings in addition to formal art galleries and museums
- Incentivize the development of venues to display works of art at private studios and workshops
- Encourage the private sector to take advantage of duty and tax concessions available for the restoration of significant buildings under the provisions of the Antiquities, Monuments and Museums Act and the City of Nassau Revitalization Act
- Provide support for the expansion of The Bahamas National Art Gallery
- Establish the National Museum
- Establish the Nassau Centre for the Performing Arts
- Increase funding for Public Libraries



MARINE SALVAGE

Located at the crossroads of the Americas, the islands of The Bahamas have been the site of countless shipwrecks dating back to the 16th century. Such ancient wrecks have long been the object of multiple salvage operations; unregulated, such operations have robbed the Bahamian people of both their historic heritage and of the considerable economic benefit derived therefrom. 20 years ago the FNM Government imposed a moratorium on historic salvage operations in Bahamian waters to protect our submerged archaeological sites.

During this term in office the FNM repealed the obsolete and ineffective Abandoned Wreck Act and regulated underwater archaeology and the salvage of historic wrecks through the provisions of an amended Antiquities Monuments and Museums Act.

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Facilitate regulated underwater archeological operations
- Put in place appropriate museum space for the public display of the Bahamian Treasure Trove





The creative industries in The Bahamas not only diversify, but also provide local added value to tourism.

PROMOTING THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

Interest in supporting the development of creative industries has grown internationally with the recognition of the economic value in creative and cultural production. The Bahamas has a rich cultural legacy and a pool of gifted people who constitute a natural source for the development of creative enterprises.

The FNM is committed to supporting and encouraging the further development of the nascent Creative Economy in The Bahamas with a view to broadening the involvement of Bahamians at all economic levels.

The creative economy comprises a wide range of cultural and economic activities as diverse as advertising, architecture, art, crafts, design, fashion, film, music, performing arts, publishing, R&D, software, toys and games, TV and radio, video games, and the culinary arts.

It is increasingly clear that the overlap and interconnection of these activities, and exploiting modern technologies, are creating new opportunities for sustainable economic and human development. The creative economy enables knowledge and information to be exploited in ways that create jobs and generate income, while at the same time promoting social inclusion and building cultural self-identity.

The creative industries in The Bahamas not only diversify, but also provide local added value to tourism. FNM policies have long recognized, supported and promoted the advancement of this type of economic development.

It was the FNM Government that, beginning in 1992, required resorts to source Bahamian made products and integrate original Bahamian art and music into resort developments as a condition for accessing concessions under the Hotels Encouragement Act. This served to provide recognition and created a marketplace for Bahamian artists.

In keeping with the FNM government's policies to proactively encourage cultural development and preservation, the FNM enacted the Antiquities Monuments and Museums Act in 1999 and acquired the premises of the National Theatre for the Performing Arts. It was also under the guidance of the FNM that the National Art Gallery of The Bahamas (NAGB) was created. The gallery, housed in the historic Villa Doyle which was acquired in 1995, provides exposure for local artists as well as educational opportunities for schools, tourists and the general public.

The FNM understands the contribution of Bahamian craftsmen to our economy and the tourism experience. As such, it created the Junkanoo Expo to display the meticulous design of these costumes. This Expo was later expanded to include the "Authentically Bahamian Craft Market" and the Hair Braiders' Pavilion, both at Prince George Dock. The creative economy and associated industries serve to revitalize the city of Nassau. To support these endeavours, the FNM enacted the City of Nassau Revitalization Act, incentivizing entrepreneurial development within the City of Nassau.



PROMOTING THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

The FNM introduced private radio as well as cable television and internet services, expanding exponentially employment opportunities for budding radio broadcasters and journalists as well as opening the airwaves for diversified opinions. The FNM's efforts to support the necessary infrastructure for these industries extended to removing customs duty on computers, computer hardware, software and electronic readers.

Furthermore, to engage the public sector in technological advancement, the FNM introduced the application of computer technology throughout the public sector, including government-operated schools. The FNM also created the official Government website and launched the Government e-portal to make information more accessible and to facilitate transactions.

The FNM, under Item 8 of the Tariff Act, promoted and encouraged easy access to duty free concessions on imports used by independent entrepreneurs who are engaged in craft and souvenir production and removed customs duty on the importation of materials used in the production of Junkanoo costumes.

The way forward >

So as to further promote and support the expansion of the Creative Economy,

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Enact the Promotion of the Creative Industries Act to incentivize the development and expansion of creative industry enterprises and, in particular, to provide relief from Customs Duty for imports of artistic tools and raw materials, such as wood for carving, marble and metallic and other materials for sculptures, and creative and artistic fixtures and fittings, such as decorative household ornaments
- Promote and enhance an environment conducive to the increased appreciation for creative and cultural industries including private sector and joint public/private sector initiatives
- Encourage the private sector to maximize opportunities available under the City of Nassau Revitalization Act to redevelop properties formerly used for docks and warehouses in the downtown area for the development of new, esthetically pleasing commercial and residential spaces along Bay Street
- Encourage the development of "creative spaces" or "creative clusters" around the country where free access to Wi-Fi and close proximity to a variety of creative enterprises can promote, encourage and support the success of small creative enterprises (e.g. Pompey Square in close proximity to the Pompey Museum, the Nassau Straw Market, Pirates Museum, Antonius Roberts' Hillside House Gallery)
- Support the creative industries through engaging in trade agreements that facilitate access to foreign markets for the participants in the local creative industries
- Incentivize the local and international film industry

SOCIAL AGENDA

The FNM is committed to building a society, in which those with the greatest need are granted the greatest assistance. Toward that end, the FNM has, since 2007:

- ✓ Introduced an unemployment benefit under the National Insurance Board
- ✓ Introduced a Prescription Drug Benefit for senior citizens, children and public officers under the National Insurance Programme
- ✓ Improved and expanded the school lunch programme
- ✓ Increased social assistance to widows and orphans and to other qualifying citizens (rents, utility reconnections, food stamps)
- ✓ Put in place an automatic adjustment to NIB benefits and assistance every two years, beginning in 2010
- ✓ Drafted and circulated for public comment a Persons with Disabilities Equal Opportunity Bill

The Bahamas has met the UN Millennium goal of universal primary education and has made commendable progress in combating HIV/AIDS. While the Bahamian Constitution contains discriminatory provisions as regards the rights of women, the FNM has by legislation and policy removed all vestiges of official discrimination against women and girls in The Bahamas. Females have access to all the rights and protections available in law to their male counterparts. The recognition by international pollsters that The Bahamas is the most desirable location for female entrepreneurs is testimony to this accomplishment.

The goal of the FNM is for The Bahamas to meet the remaining UN Millennium Development Goals which address the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, the reduction of the under five-child mortality rate, the reduction of maternal mortality, and achieving full gender equality by 2015.

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- ✓ Institute cash transfers to social assistance beneficiaries in lieu of food stamps
- ✓ Give enhanced attention to combating HIV/AIDs
- ✓ Give heightened attention to reducing infant mortality and maternal mortality rates
- ✓ Enact a Persons with Disabilities Equal Opportunity Act
- ✓ Improve the effectiveness of the Disability Register



Health Care



A fundamental tenet of the Free National Movement is that it is the right of every citizen to have easy access to affordable, adequate health care. Essential to the realization of this goal is the promotion of healthy lifestyles and the expansion of preventive health care. The Free National Movement has therefore:

- ✓ Introduced a Prescription Drug Programme for selected chronic diseases and medical conditions
- ✓ Decentralized the delivery of health care through community health clinics helping to increase efficiency by 25%, including wider use of electronic medical records, providing real-time patient information
- ✓ Introduced a pilot telemedicine programme for specialist's tele-dermatology services and a pilot telemedicine programme so that patients can remain in the Family Islands and be examined and assessed by doctors in New Providence
- ✓ Introduced a teleradiology programme allowing Cat scans taken in Grand Bahama to be viewed in New Providence and vice-versa
- ✓ Constructed new state-of-the art operating theatres at the Rand Memorial Hospital in Grand Bahama
- ✓ Renovated the Emergency Room at the Princess Margaret Hospital in Nassau
- ✓ Constructed the Robert Smith Child and Adolescent Unit at the Sandilands Rehabilitation Hospital
- ✓ Commenced the construction of the new PMH Critical Care Block and a suite of operating theatres
- ✓ Enacted a new Pharmacy Act to ensure improved standards for licensing, inspection and registration of pharmacists
- ✓ Opened the State-of-the-Art HIV/Reference Laboratory with diagnostic oncology capacity enhancing the services available to people living with HIV/AIDS and increasing opportunities for research
- ✓ Adopted policies leading to a steady reduction in the number of mother to child transmission of HIV from 25% to less than 1% with no reported cases in 2010
- ✓ Implemented the integrated pharmacy information system in New Providence and Grand Bahama Clinics
- ✓ Opened an Oncology Centre at Princess Margaret Hospital
- ✓ Introduced Health Insurance for nurses
- ✓ Instituted a fully accredited Renal/Nephrology Training Programme for Registered Nurses at the PMH





The way forward >

The Free National Movement is committed to empowering individuals and enhancing the quality of life of communities through social and economic development, while providing for the social security and well-being of Bahamians, particularly the more vulnerable.

In particular, the FNM is committed to strengthening the focus on priority health issues: reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, combatting the spread of HIV/AIDS and supporting efforts to find a cure and eliminating conditions contributing to the increase of incidences of other communicable diseases like malaria and tuberculosis, and improving mental health services.

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Introduce, within three years, a National Catastrophic Health Insurance Programme to be administered by a public/private partnership
- Ensure the full activation of a National Cancer Register
- Expand the Prescription Drug Programme to cover all workers and their families
- Establish a National Blood Bank.
- Construct a state-of-the-art maternal and child health wing and new Emergency Department
- Strengthen the focus on priority public health issues including:
 1. Chronic non-communicable diseases — diabetes, hypertension, cancer, kidney and heart diseases
 2. Contagious diseases — HIV/AIDS, TB
 3. Infant mortality
 4. Mental health
 5. Environmental and occupational health
- Make telemedicine available to more Family Islands and in more Family Island communities
- Refocus the Department of Public Health healthcare delivery model to place increased emphasis on community-based preventive health care
- Renovation and upgrade of all community clinics to achieve cross-country standardization of primary health care delivery
- Extend visiting hours at community health clinics in New Providence to 10pm
- Construct community hospitals in Abaco, Exuma, Eleuthera and Long Island
- Provide incentives for Bahamian doctors and other health professionals to serve in the Family Islands
- In concert with education professionals, undertake an evaluation of the school lunch programme to clarify the rationale for intervention: economic, social and educational
- Ensure that the school lunch programme reaches targeted student populations; that meals offered are nutritious, meet the standard desired to counter obesity in children, promote healthy eating habits and counter the growing epidemic of non-contagious diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, kidney disease and cancer among young people



We constructed the new state-of-the-art operating theatres at the Rand Memorial Hospital in Grand Bahama







LIVABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS

The FNM is implementing an ambitious plan to revitalize the City of Nassau and the neighbouring Over-the-Hill communities of New Providence so as to enhance the quality of life for Bahamians and for visitors to our country.

Whether its the installation of new roads with sidewalks , the restoration of the Houses of Parliament, the reconstruction of the Nassau Straw Market or the removal of cargo shipping from the centre of downtown Nassau, we are creating a whole new world of opportunities and amenities for residents of New Providence. And, in traditional Over-the-Hill neighbourhoods, we are improving life for residents with more effective drainage, improved lighting, and the installation of upgraded water services.

The FNM is expanding housing opportunities by developing new housing subdivisions in southern New Providence and linking existing neighbourhoods with new ones with a network of 21st century road corridors.

The FNM also delivered improved leisure spaces for families to enjoy. We are developing new parks, upgrading older ones and opening green spaces. Some notable examples are Western Esplanade Beach, Montagu Beach and Saunders Beach Parks. Further the FNM is transforming the Queen Elizabeth Sports Centre with the new Thomas A. Robinson Stadium as its focal point.

The FNM enhanced Nassau's famous harbour and completed Phase I (US Departures Terminal) and advanced Phase II (International Departures Terminal) of the three phase \$400 million redevelopment of the Lynden Pindling International Airport. These improvements provide our capital island with modern and efficient sea and air ports of entry. And when completed next year, the impressive new four-lane Airport Gateway Highway will link the new LPIA to the traditional old charm of New Providence.

The privatization of the communications sector delivered by the FNM has given residents of New Providence more telecommunications options and better, faster internet service with enhanced broadband and Wi-Fi capacity.

It is the goal of the FNM to make our capital island an urban center that is safe, has an efficient infrastructure and is a creative home for the arts and culture with an extensive network of parks, heritage sites and windows to the sea.

The FNM is committed to making New Providence greener, more beautiful, cleaner, and more environmentally sustainable even as we respond to the challenges of urbanization, inclusive of human services and well-being, infrastructure, livability and aesthetics.

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

Parks & Open Green Spaces

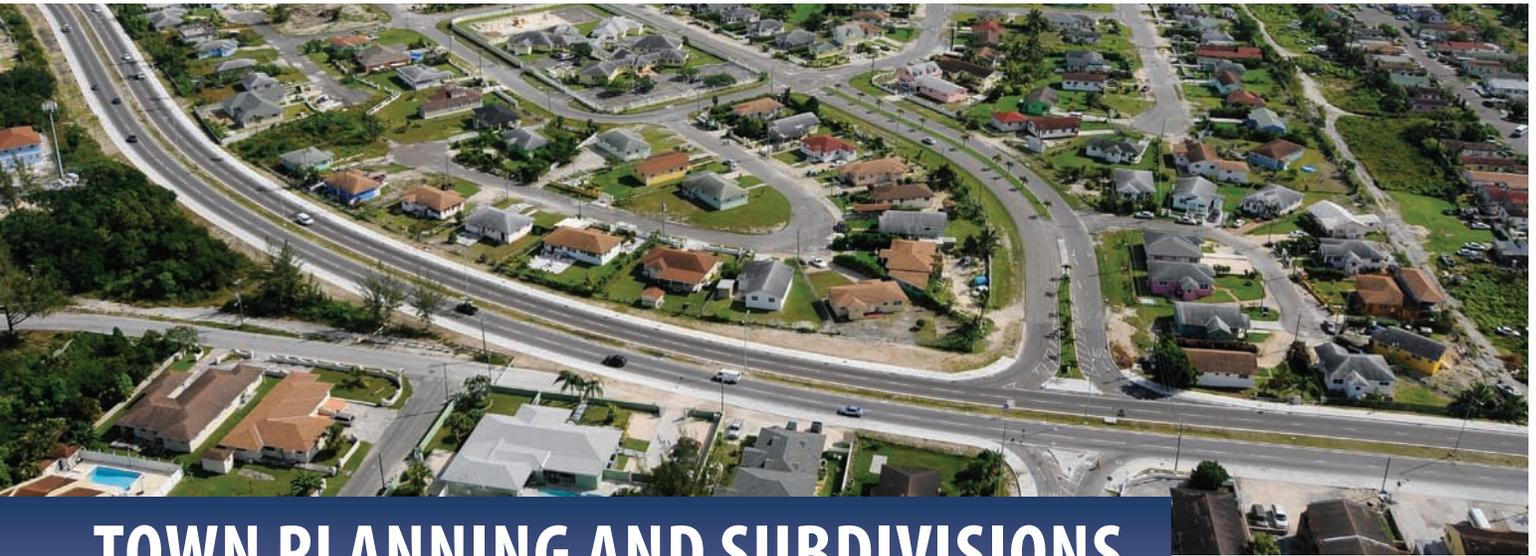
Establish a Parks and Recreation Authority to:

- Manage, maintain and/or operate neighbourhood, community, and beach parks
- Maintain open green spaces and roadside verges on New Providence
- Develop new sea-side beach parks at Yamacraw, South Beach and Jaws Beach along the southern coast of New Providence
- Coordinate public/private partnerships with churches, neighbourhood groups and corporate citizens to facilitate life affirming activities in community parks
- Encourage and promote the display of artwork in public recreational spaces

New Providence Infrastructure

- Complete the expanded New Providence Road and Utility Upgrade Programme
- Complete the Airport Gateway Project
- Complete the three phases of the redevelopment of the LPIA
- Continue the building of sidewalks on all major thoroughfares and busy neighbourhood streets
- Place all roads on a repaving schedule appropriate to road usage
- Ensure that BEC properly maintains street lights so that all streets are properly lit
- Complete the ongoing naming and numbering of all buildings in New Providence





TOWN PLANNING AND SUBDIVISIONS

During this term in office the FNM enacted the Town Planning and Subdivisions Act to improve the planning of land use, protect the natural environment, manage the expansion of the built environment, establish improved standards for construction and better regulate construction practices.

The goal of the FNM is to achieve responsible development and the enforcement of appropriate safety standards.

To this end, the FNM will promote and encourage the adoption of green technologies so as to reduce the impact of development's footprint upon the natural environment.

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Introduce and approve new building techniques and designs to reduce the total cost of a basic Government initiated single family unit
- Encourage and promote the use of solar water heaters in new home construction
- Establish through the Bahamas Mortgage Corporation an **Urban Gentrification Fund** for restoration of homes within a prescribed geographic area
- Eliminate penalties for contribution to the electrical grid of energy produced by environmentally renewable and friendly means such as solar, wind or water based techniques
- Incentivize the construction of rainwater tanks in all new construction

WATER AND SEWERAGE

It is the goal of the FNM to provide all residents of The Bahamas with access to adequate supplies of piped potable water.

Forty years ago, the inadequacy of ground water supply on New Providence resulted in the implementation of what was to be a temporary arrangement of barging water from Andros to New Providence.

In each of three non-consecutive terms in office the FNM has caused the Water and Sewerage Corporation to undertake significant refurbishment, replacement and expansion of its water infrastructure with a view to realizing a permanent solution to New Providence's water supply.

Similarly, the FNM caused the Water and Sewerage Corporation to address the development of adequate water infrastructure in the Family Islands commencing with Eleuthera, but including works on virtually every island in the country.

During this term in office, the FNM improved water quality on New Providence by facilitating the installation of over 72 miles of water pipes improving service levels, and increased reliability and production capacity with the expansion of the Blue Hills Water desalination facility.

As a result of these works the Corporation has been able to finally bring to an end the barging of water from Andros to New Providence, thereby reducing the unit cost of water.

In addition to addressing water supply, the Corporation was required to undertake important improvements to sewer disposal and treatment facilities in Pinewood Gardens and Yellow Elder Gardens.

In the Family Islands some 43 miles of new water mains have been installed, in Green Turtle Cay and Spring City, Abaco; Snug Corner, Acklins; Bimini; Cat Island; Harbour Island, Current Island, Windermere, Palmetto Point, James Cistern, Upper and Lower Bogue, Bannerman Town, Eleuthera; Sweeting's Cay, Grand Bahama; and Ragged Island.

Existing desalination plants have been expanded and new plants commissioned in Grand Cay, Abaco; Snug Corner, Acklins; Tarpum Bay, Rock Sound, the Naval Base, and Current Island, Eleuthera.

New plants are also presently under construction in William's Town, Staniel Cay and Black Point in Exuma, and at Deadman's Cay, Long Island, and a sewer treatment facility is being installed in Georgetown, Exuma to treat wastewater deposited from moored vessels.

Additionally, the Corporation has executed a renewable energy Power Purchase Agreement for the new desalination facility in Tarpum Bay, Eleuthera. Similar MOUs have been concluded in connection with desalination facilities on Eleuthera, Exuma, Inagua and San Salvador.





The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- ➔ Empower URCA to regulate the Water and Sanitation Sector
- ➔ Complete the IDB funded \$81 million Water and Sewerage Corporation Project to:
 1. Reduce water losses
 2. Rehabilitate and expand selected sewerage facilities
 3. Increase water pressure & reduce red water complaints
 4. Design a master plan for Waste Water Treatment
 5. Improve the Water and Sewerage Corporation's ability to provide more efficient and effective service to the public including automated meter reading and on-line payment facilities
- ➔ Continue the Family Island water infrastructural improvements in the following Family Islands:
 1. Mayaguana
 2. Crooked Island
 3. Cat Island
 4. Clarence Town, Salt Pond and Simms, Long Island
 5. Little Exuma & Barratterre, Exuma
 6. Mastic Point and Nicholls Town, North Andros
 7. Fresh Creek, Mangrove Cay & South Andros
- ➔ Establish an independent environmental regulator for water and sanitation

BAHAMAS ELECTRICITY CORPORATION

The FNM is aware of the vital role of energy in economic activity and hence in the development and growth of our economy. Hence, the FNM has, during three non-consecutive terms in office, sought to upgrade and expand the supply and distribution of electricity to even the most remote of our populated Family Islands. During its previous terms in office the FNM delivered central electricity supply to the farthest southern reaches of our archipelago and to isolated islands and cays. During this term in office, the FNM concentrated attention on addressing the reliability and cost of electricity supply. These efforts have been especially crucial given the impact volatile prices of fuel have had on the world market.

The FNM has continued to be mindful of the cost and the environmental implications of the continued exclusive use of fossil fuels for energy production. As a result, the FNM adopted policies to promote and encourage the use of renewable sources of energy for the nation's electricity.

During this term in office Bahamas Electricity Corporation:

- ✓ Constructed new power generating stations and enhanced distribution networks in Central Abaco, Eleuthera and Bimini
- ✓ Assumed operation of electricity generation in Inagua and expanded generation capacity by some 30%
- ✓ Upgraded infrastructure including the construction of additional substations to increase reliability of supply in New Providence
- ✓ Improved service reliability to Green Turtle Cay via installation of a submarine cable
- ✓ Increased fuel storage capacity in Bimini and Exuma to improve fuel supply and hence electricity security
- ✓ Constructed new transmission line from North to Central Andros to allow interconnection of the two operations thereby improving the reliability of supply and reducing generation requirement at each site
- ✓ Undertook, in conjunction with the IDB, operational and sustainable energy reviews of BEC
- ✓ In conjunction with the Ministry of the Environment, conducted 675 free residential energy audits and provided participants with recommendations on reducing consumption
- ✓ Concluded a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the OTE Corporation with a view to pursuing development of renewable ocean thermal energy for utility-scale generation of electricity
- ✓ Commenced energy conservation educational campaigns prompting the use of CFLs, increasing air conditioning temperature settings, using energy efficient appliances, and promoting the adoption of "green" technologies and designs so as to reduce electricity consumption (using insulation, shading, solar water heaters, timers on electrical appliances)
- ✓ Introduced flexible payment plans permitting customers disconnected from service due to non-payment to pay arrears over a stipulated period and be reconnected to electricity supply



The FNM adopted policies to promote and encourage the use of renewable sources of energy



The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Empower URCA to regulate the energy sector
- Adopt a policy capping fuel surcharge passed on to customers
- Provide a Renewable Energy Act to lower the hurdles and expand the use of Renewable Energy
- Amend the Electricity Acts to open the Energy Matrix to facilitate small and medium independent power producers
- Implement key recommendations from the National Energy Committee Report targeting its goal of “30-30 by 2030” which aims to increase energy conservation by reducing average consumption by 30% and achieving 30% of total energy generated by renewable energy by the year 2030
- Construct a Waste to Energy facility to take advantage of the volume of waste generated
- Reduce Government’s energy consumption by 10% through an aggressive Energy Efficiency programme that includes budgetary incentives
- Provide Government guaranteed Soft Loans with reduced interest rates and preferential pay-back for low and middle income residential homes who seek to install solar water heaters, solar energy systems and other approved energy efficient equipment
- Review the Building Code to Improve energy efficiency in Bahamian home construction
- Design and construct Government funded subdivisions using energy efficient technology (such as solar water heaters, ‘green’ design standards)
- Introduce renewable energy into the curricula of government-operated schools
- Encourage the production of biodiesel and the use of biomass for energy production
- Install Solar systems in newly constructed Government Buildings
- Install 50 MW additional generation capacity (approx. 30 MW at Clifton Pier and 20 MW at Blue Hills Power Plants)
- Pursue inter-island electrical connections to take advantage of excess generation capacities and efficiencies that exist on various islands as a result of BEC’s expansion
- Introduce a SCADA system to reduce system outages and improve efficiency
- Create a “Call Center” to improve customer related response times, information dissemination, account related information, disconnection notices and complaint tracking
- Provide free energy audits to assist customers in lowering their electricity bills
- Remove the reimbursement for damaged electrical equipment from the responsibility of BEC and place it under an independent body
- Implement a “net billing” programme for those who generate energy from renewable energy and wish to sell a portion of the energy generated to BEC or any other energy supplier



LAND & HOUSING

In New Providence, as in virtually all of our Family Islands, for generations, parcels of government-owned and Crown Land have been occupied and developed without title or authorization for residential or for commercial purposes.

Beginning in 1992, the FNM began a programme to systematically reclaim publicly owned lands taking into account construction that had been undertaken and occupation thereon.

Such consideration resulted in the Government's making title to parcels of land available to families in long and productive occupation of Government-owned land. Already as many as 3,000 individuals around the country have received title to property upon which they have lived and worked in some cases for generations.

The FNM has also continued a policy of developing government housing subdivisions on Crown Land or government-owned land and making them available to qualifying applicants under programmes administered by the Department of Housing and The Bahamas Mortgage Corporation.

During this term in office the FNM:

- ✓ Launched a \$75 million government-initiated housing programme to assist Bahamians with home-ownership
- ✓ Increased first time homeowners' stamp tax exemption to \$500,000
- ✓ Continued regularization exercises for individuals and families who have occupied property around the country, and markedly in Grand Bahama, Andros, Eleuthera, Long Island, Acklins and New Providence
- ✓ Reduced the down payment required for persons applying for low-income government houses from 10 to 5 percent to extend the opportunity for home ownership to more Bahamians

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Continue the regularization of occupation of land for individuals and families in long-term unauthorized occupation of Crown land
- Continue the development of new government housing subdivisions to meet the unmet demand for affordable housing
- Put in place arrangements to provide assistance to homeowners threatened with foreclosure on their homes who but for unemployment, illness or loss of income had maintained good credit histories with their lenders

ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

The FNM is committed to the responsible use of the resources of The Bahamas so as to ensure the conservation and protection of our biodiversity.

The FNM believes it incumbent of Governments to take appropriate action to guard against the threats posed by climate change and sea level rise, including the dramatically increased threat presented by increasingly powerful tropical storms and hurricanes annually.



In furtherance of these objectives during this term in office the FNM:

- ✓ Enacted the **Town Planning and Subdivisions Act** fully integrating planning and development with protection of the Bahamian environment and setting the stage for stricter enforcement of safe building standards
- ✓ Demonstrated global environmental leadership by joining forces with The Nature Conservancy and like minded Caribbean States to launch the Caribbean Challenge, a commitment by Caribbean governments to support and manage new and existing national parks and protected areas throughout the region and protect at least 20 percent of marine and coastal habitats by 2020
- ✓ Increased the **subvention to the Bahamas National Trust to \$1 million** dollars annually
- ✓ **Amended the Bahamas National Trust Act, 2011** to strengthen that NGO enabling more effective management of The Bahamas' national park system
- ✓ Having doubled the national parks under the management of the Bahamas National Trust in 2002, the FNM further expanded the park system in 2010 by expanding the Harrold and Wilson Park and enabling the development of Bone Fish Pond in New Providence, expanding the West Side National Park System in Andros to include extensive biodiversity rich wetlands, expanding the Conception Island National Park to include important marine areas and creating the new Fowl Cay Land and Sea National Park in the Abacos
- ✓ **Provided through Regulations full protection for all sea turtles**
- ✓ **Banned the harvesting of sharks in Bahamian waters**
- ✓ **Enacted a Forestry Act** strengthening conservation and protection of forests and providing for improved management and sustainable use of forestry reserves
- ✓ Together with BNT and private sector donors, completed a Plant Preserve in Eleuthera
- ✓ Constructed the NEMA warehouse storage facility
- ✓ Strengthened the management and organization of NEMA
- ✓ Provided training to local government authorities and other public officers and volunteers enabling

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- ➔ Establish additional national parks and create new marine protected areas (MPAs) so as to achieve our declared intention to protect at least 20 percent of marine and coastal habitats by 2020
- ➔ Continue to support the development and expansion of public-private partnerships in support of conservation
- ➔ Expand public education programmes on disaster preparedness and response

PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM

The goal of the FNM is to make The Bahamas a well-regulated, efficient country where transparent government processes and procedures facilitate business development and job creation in the private sector.

During this term in office the FNM focused its attention on the implementation of six service improvement pilot programmes designed to measurably improve standards of service provided by the Department of Public Service, the Registrar General's Department, the Road Traffic Department, the Building Control Division of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, the Passport Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Physical Planning Department of the Ministry of the Environment. And significant reorganization was undertaken in a number of Departments, namely: Customs, Immigration, the Defence Force and the Police Force.

The launch of the Government e-portal during this term in office also permits residents to renew drivers' licences, pay real property tax, pay fines for ticketed traffic violations, access a multitude of Government application forms on-line and to receive the tamper-proof passports and work permits. The introduction of the e-portal complements FNM modernization initiatives from earlier administrations which provided for year-round renewal of drivers and vehicle licences, the removal of political influence in the grant of business licences.

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Enact an Ombudsman Act
- Continue programmes designed to eliminate remaining cumbersome bureaucracy within the service
- Continue exercises of review of public service salary scales with a view to removing anomalies
- Create a "Fast Track Career Path" in the Public Service to attract highly qualified and especially skilled individuals to enter and remain in the Service
- Commence the review of pensions of retired public servants with a view to, when possible, increasing pensions in tandem with public service salary increases
- Make flexi-time an option for civil servants with children from infancy to junior high school
- Encourage the introduction of flexi-time in the private sector
- Complete the review of General Orders and the Public Service Commission Regulations
- Formalize the Policy, Planning and Development Unit in the Public Service
- Promote the participation of public officers in continuing education programmes meant to improve the delivery of services to the general public



Our goal is to maintain our national profile as a responsible member of the international community



FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The FNM is committed to enhancing and maintaining the stature of The Bahamas on the international stage and to advancing the interests of our country internationally.

This past term, The Bahamas was an active leader in a variety of international organizations. The Prime Minister served as the Chairman of the Annual Meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The Bahamas was re-elected to the Council of the International Maritime Organisation. The Bahamas was also elected as the President of the General Conference of UNESCO and served on the Commission on Sustainable Development, Economic and Social Council for the United Nations; and has been a member of the ECOSOC–Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti, the ECOSOC-Committee of Experts on Public Administration and ECOSOC-Committee of Experts on International Cooperation on Tax Matters.

DURING THIS TERM IN OFFICE THE FNM:

- ✓ Concluded negotiations for the delimitation of our national maritime boundaries with Cuba
- ✓ Commenced delimitation of maritime boundaries with USA
- ✓ Advanced delimitation of maritime boundaries with the United Kingdom in connection with the Turks and Caicos Islands
- ✓ Provided leadership to the international discussions on Climate Change
- ✓ Continued to participate in regional, hemispheric and international organizations and to advance the interests of The Bahamas at such organizations as Caricom, the Organization of American States, the United Nations and the Commonwealth
- ✓ Remained in the forefront of regional and international initiatives related to the international and regional fight against the illicit traffic of narcotic drugs and other illegal substances
- ✓ Concluded bilateral visa abolition agreements with selected countries including the Schengen States of the European Union and most states of Central and Latin America to facilitate visitor travel to The Bahamas and Bahamian travel internationally
- ✓ Computerized the Passport Office; instituted the issuance of tamper resistant, machine readable passports, started the issuance of electronic passports at overseas Consular Missions and began the issuance of tamper resistant visitors visas
- ✓ Eliminated the requirement for Bahamian citizens and Permanent Residents to complete and submit an immigration landing card upon their return to The Bahamas from foreign travel
- ✓ Opened a new career consulate general in Atlanta, Georgia
- ✓ Amended the Parliamentary Elections Act to permit serving foreign service officers, students enrolled in a course of study and other eligible citizens to register to vote and to cast ballots at specified overseas Consular Offices
- ✓ Created a career path for foreign service officers
- ✓ Acquired an official residence for the Consul General in Atlanta, Georgia



The way forward >

The goal of the FNM is to maintain our national profile as a responsible member of the international community and to forge ties in the international community so as to advance our interests and security.

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Maintain the level of The Bahamas' participation in regional, hemispheric and international organizations such as Caricom, the Organization of American States, the United Nations and the Commonwealth
- Continue in the forefront of regional and international initiatives connected to the international and regional campaigns against the illicit traffic of narcotic drugs, other illegal substances and fire arms
- Act nationally and with regional and hemispheric partners to counter human trafficking
- Conclude negotiation for the delimitation of our maritime boundaries with the United States of America and with the United Kingdom in respect of the Turks and Caicos Islands
- Remain active in regional and international discussions on mitigating the impacts of climate change and sea level rise
- Advance discussions leading to The Bahamas' entry into the World Trade Organization
- Open a new career diplomatic mission in Geneva to facilitate and improve representation of The Bahamas before UN Agencies resident in Switzerland
- Continue to explore opportunities to conclude bilateral agreements for the reciprocal employment of spouses of diplomatic and consular officers where The Bahamas maintains resident representation
- Continue a programme of acquisition of residential properties to house Bahamian diplomatic personnel and diplomatic and consular offices overseas

FAMILY ISLAND DEVELOPMENT

The goal of the FNM is the creation of an opportunity society throughout The Bahamas. As a part of this initiative the FNM has put in place a development framework for the encouragement and facilitation of economic activity in Family Islands. Our plan recognizes the distinctive characteristics of the islands to sustain tourism, agricultural, marine resources and food processing industries and the expansion of the important second home sector.

The FNM understands that for the Family Islands to best attract and sustain productive local private sector and foreign direct investments, public infrastructure needs must be met. That is why during successive terms in office FNM Governments have delivered the construction and repaving of hundreds of miles of Family Island roads and made Crown Land available at concessional rates for the development of businesses including hotel resorts and cruise ship private island experiences. The FNM extended central electricity services to the remotest populated islands and cays, introduced cable TV to Family Island communities, extended and improved telecommunications services, including cellular services, and invested in the upgrade of air and sea ports and docks around the country. The FNM continues to improve water infrastructure, has constructed nine state-of-the-art community health clinics, expanded and upgraded the government-operated school plant, and introduced elected Local Government giving Family Island residents local control over their own affairs.

During this term in office the FNM re-enacted the Family Island Development Encouragement Act (permitted to expire by the previous Government) providing customs duty concessions on building supplies for new construction or expansion of existing residential and commercial enterprises in the least developed Family Islands; constructed new multimillion dollar Government administrative office complexes in Grand Bahama and Abaco, completed the water distribution system on Harbour Island and inaugurated the new R/O facility at Tarpum Bay, Eleuthera, constructed new electricity generating plants in Central Abaco, in Bimini and on the mainland of Eleuthera, and expanded BAIC's farm extension services and craft production training programmes throughout the Family Islands.

Along with improving infrastructure, the FNM gave focused attention to developing each Family Island as a separate tourist vacation destination through measures such as the negotiating of increased air lift to Grand Bahama and Exuma.

Further, in the closing weeks and months of this term in office the FNM is completing its commitment to ensure access to ZNS television and five other off-air television channels to residents in the most remote communities of our Family Islands, in the deep south of Eleuthera, north Long Island and west and south Exuma.





Our goal is to create
an opportunity
society throughout
the Bahamas

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Extend the life of the Family Island Development Encouragement Act for a further 5 year period
- Launch the Back to the Island campaign
- Launch the Heritage Tourism Initiative in each Family Island
- Launch the Oral Histories Project in each Family Island
- Continue the focused development of Family Islands as distinct destinations
- Incentivize the expansion of fast ferry services to Family Islands
- Promote and encourage the development of additional Bahamian-owned tourism facilities
- Incentivize the development of small, environmentally friendly boutique hotels, bone fish lodges and other small quality resorts through marketing and promotional support
- Complete the installation of water infrastructure to meet unmet needs for potable water in some Family Island communities
- Complete infrastructural projects to improve roads, bridges, sea defences, docks, and airports in the Family Islands
- Build community hospitals in Abaco, Exuma, Eleuthera and Long Island
- Continue the expansion and upgrade of the government-operated school plant
- Improve the level of technical and vocational training available in Family Island Schools
- Through scholarships and boarding stipends assist more Family Island students to access tertiary education at the College of The Bahamas, BTVI, and the Culinary and Hospitality Management Institute



Grand Bahama is the second city of The Bahamas and the hub of the country's maritime, transshipment, oil storage, manufacturing and industry sectors. Grand Bahama also has important tourism and agricultural sectors.







GRAND BAHAMA

Grand Bahama is the second city of The Bahamas and the hub of the country's maritime, transshipment, oil storage, manufacturing and industrial sectors. Grand Bahama also has important tourism and agricultural sectors.

The Grand Bahama economy had not recovered from the damages caused by two severe hurricanes in 2004 and 2005 when the international financial crisis and economic downturn, beginning in 2007, caused further deterioration in its economic performance, most particularly in its tourism sector. So as to assist the island's tourism sector the FNM Government:

- ✓ Increased the subsidy for Grand Bahama's tourism sector in 2011 to \$17.2 million
- ✓ Subsidized the Isle of Capri and Treasure Cay Casinos saving 240 jobs in Grand Bahama's tourism sector
- ✓ Provided \$10.5 million in subsidies to:
 - Treasure Bay Casino at Our Lucaya
 - Hutchison Lucaya Ltd.
 - And provided direct marketing support of air lift to US Airways and of cruise arrivals to Bahama Celebrations, NCL and Carnival Cruise Lines
- ✓ Constructing a \$19 million new government administrative office complex
- ✓ Constructing the new Sister Mary Patricia Russell Jr. High School
- ✓ Constructing and opening a new A&E unit and a new suite of operating theatres at the Rand Memorial Hospital
- ✓ Acquiring the Island Palm Hotel in Freeport to accommodate the expansion of the Rand Memorial Hospital

And the FNM Government undertook additional targeted actions to create employment, save jobs, improve the delivery of health care and lessen the burden on residents of Grand Bahama by:

- ✓ Facilitating the investment by Statoil and Buckeye in Grand Bahama's oil storage and transshipment sector
- ✓ Creating employment opportunities for some 1500 individuals in the National Skills Training and Job Readiness Programme and through the Self Starter and Jump Start Initiatives

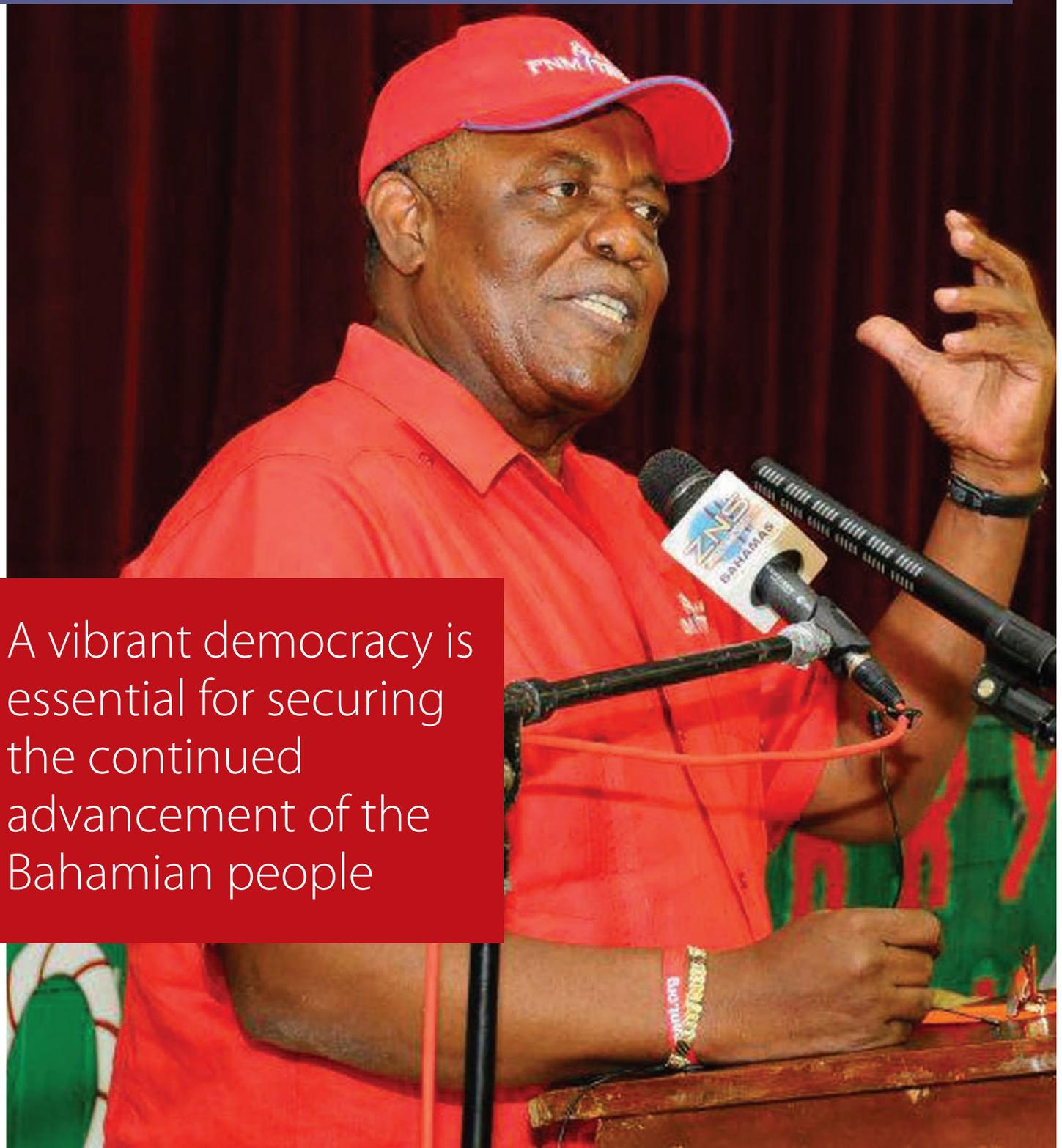
The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Relocate the Departments of Local Government and Maritime Affairs to Grand Bahama
- Establish the Grand Bahama Business Development Board to promote the further development of business in Grand Bahama
- Promote Freeport as the industrial capital of The Bahamas
- In concert with the private sector and BTVI, improve the level of technical and vocational training so as to meet unmet demands for skilled and unskilled workers in the maritime and industrial sectors
- Promote Grand Bahama as a first class sea and air container transshipment centre
- Establish URCA as the utility regulator for all of Grand Bahama including Freeport
- Promote and incentivize the establishment of an aircraft registry
- Promote and incentivize the establishment of a Yacht Registry
- Facilitate the development of a “Logistic Distribution Hub” for international cargo in an effective “Free Trade Zone”
- Construct a Fire Station in Freeport (to replace that destroyed by hurricane in 2004)
- Construct a new Community Health Clinic in Freeport
- Construct a new Sunset Village Fish Fry and Cultural Centre at Eight Mile Rock



DEMOCRACY, LOCAL GOVERNMENT & RELATIONS WITH THE MEDIA



A vibrant democracy is essential for securing the continued advancement of the Bahamian people

The FNM believes that a deep and vibrant democracy is essential for securing the continued advancement of the Bahamian people and for ensuring their social and economic welfare. Our commitment to this belief drove the opening-up of the broadcast airwaves early in our first administration and we have continually acted to deepen our democracy ensuring that debates in both Houses of Parliament are transmitted live via radio and television to the entire country.

During this term in office the FNM:

- ✓ Created URCA as an independent regulator of media and utility services in the country
- ✓ Improved access of the media to Government business
- ✓ Enacted Freedom of Information Legislation
- ✓ Created economic space for dramatic expansion of private radio broadcasts

The way forward >

DURING THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT THE FNM WILL:

- Accelerate reform and modernization of government so as to make all branches of Government more effective and more efficient
- Relocate the Department of Local Government to Grand Bahama
- Establish branch offices of the Public Treasury, the Registrar General's Office and the Passport Office on major Family Islands
- Restructure Question Time in the House with a view to the adoption of a weekly Prime Minister's Question Time
- Expand Volunteer Bahamas with a view to further empowering local communities
- Appoint an independent Commission to explore the feasibility of establishing local government on the island of New Providence
- Create a **Parks and Recreation Authority** to be headed by a **Parks and Recreation Commissioner** to assume responsibility for management of seaside, community parks, open green spaces and road verges
- Promote and encourage respect for law through increased enforcement of the law adopting "zero tolerance" of traffic, environmental, disturbance of the peace, or building standard violations
- Continue to promote and encourage transparency and accountability in government



THE FREE NATIONAL MOVEMENT IS READY TO MAKE TOMORROW BETTER FOR ALL

Standards In Public Life

The Free National Movement strongly believes that the traditions and institutions of a democracy are the most precious of a nation's assets.

The Free National Movement believe that it is the personal responsibility of every Member of Parliament to maintain those standards of conduct that the Parliament and the public are entitled to expect, to protect the good name of Parliament and to advance the people's interest.

Similar standards of conduct are also expected of senior public officers, whose responsibility it is to implement the laws of The Bahamas and the policy directives of Cabinet.

Accordingly, Members of Parliament and all those who hold public office are expected to observe seven general principles of conduct which apply to all persons in public life.

The Seven Principles Of Public Life

1. Selflessness

Holders of public office should take decisions solely on the basis of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, members of their family, or their friends.

2. Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to individuals or organizations that might compromise them in the performance of their official duties.

3. Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

4. Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to scrutiny appropriate to their office.

5. Openness

Holders of public office must be open about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly so demands.

6. Honesty

Holders of public office have an obligation to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts in a way that protects the public interest.

7. Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FOR MINISTERS OF GOVERNMENT

The Free National Movement believes that Ministers of Government must be held to the highest standards of constitutional and personal conduct. In particular they must observe the following principles of ministerial conduct:

- ✓ Ministers must ensure that no conflict arises, or appears to arise, between their public duties and their private interests.
- ✓ Ministers are accountable to Parliament for the policies and operations of their departments and agencies.
- ✓ Ministers must not mislead Parliament. They must be open with Parliament and with the public.
- ✓ Ministers must avoid accepting any gift or hospitality which might appear to compromise their judgement or place them under improper obligation.
- ✓ Ministers in the House of Assembly must separate their roles as Ministers, Members of Parliament and Party Representative.

FREE NATIONAL MOVEMENT
MANIFESTO 2012



WE DELIVER



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