

FREE NATIONAL MOVEMENT



2021 MANIFESTO

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CANDIDATES	1
PRIME MINISTER'S INTRODUCTORY REMARKS	2
SECTION ONE	
THE CONTINUED FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19	5
JOBS AND INVESTMENTS	7
DIGITIZATION	15
SECTION TWO	
MORE ACCESS TO LAND FOR BAHAMIANS AND EXPANDED HOME OWNERSHIP	18
TOURISM	19
THE ENVIRONMENT AND RENEWABLE ENERGY	25
GRAND BAHAMA	27
INFRASTRUCTURE	30
ONGOING TRANSFORMATION OF DOWNTOWN	36
SECTION THREE	
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT	38
NEW GOVT. COMMUNICATIONS STRUCTURE	40
PRODUCING FOOD AND EXPANDED FISHERIES	41
CULTURE, HERITAGE AND THE ARTS	43
SECTION FOUR	
CRIME AND SECURITY	46
JUDICIAL AND LEGAL REFORM	55
CANNABIS POLICY	56
EDUCATION	57
HEALTH	63
OVER-THE-HILL DEVELOPMENT	66
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND IMMIGRATION	63
LABOR AND PUBLIC SERVICE	69
FISCAL AFFAIRS, ACCOUNTABILITY & PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION ...	70
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND DISABILITIES	73
SPORTS	76
LOCAL GOVERNMENT	77
PARLIAMENTARY REGISTRATION DEPARTMENT REFORM	78
CLOSING NOTE FROM PRIME MINISTER	79



2021 FREE NATIONAL MOVEMENT CANDIDATES



TRAVIS ROBINSON
TOURISM
PROFESSIONAL
BAIN & GRANTS TOWN



RENWARD WELLS
ENGINEER
BAMBOO TOWN



DESMOND BANNISTER
ATTORNEY
CARMICHAEL



FELICIA KNOWLES
INSURANCE EXECUTIVE
CAT ISLAND, RUM CAY,
& SAN SALVADOR



COURTNEY COULIBALY
ENGINEER
CENTREVILLE



VANDEIA STUART
TOURISM
PROFESSIONAL
CENTRAL & SOUTH ABACO



HANK JOHNSON
ELECTRICIAN
CENTRAL & SOUTH
ELEUTHERA



IRAM LEWIS
ARCHITECT
CENTRAL GRAND BAHAMA



KWASI THOMPSON
ATTORNEY
EAST GRAND BAHAMA



DR. DUANE SANDS
CARDIOVASCULAR
SURGEON
ELIZABETH



QUINTIN PERCENTIE
ECONOMIST
ENGLERSTON



DRUMECO ARCHER
ATTORNEY
FORT CHARLOTTE



JOHN PINDER
TRADE UNIONIST
FOX HILL



DIONISIO D'AGUIAR
ENTREPRENEUR
FREETOWN



DR. HUBERT MINNIS
PARTY LEADER

KILLARNEY



STEPHEN GREENSLADE
ENTREPRENEUR
GARDEN HILLS



MICHAEL FOULKES
ATTORNEY
GOLDEN GATES



BRIAN BROWN
FINANCIAL ADVISOR
GOLDEN ISLES



ADRIAN GIBSON
ATTORNEY
LONG ISLAND



D'ANGELO FERGUSON
IT BUSINESS
PROFESSIONAL
MANGROVE CAY
& SOUTH ANDROS



ROMAULD FERREIRA
ATTORNEY
MARATHON



MICHAEL PINTARD
ENTREPRENEUR
MARCO CITY



MIRIAM EMMANUEL
PASTOR
M.I.C.A.L.



MARVIN DAMES
ENTREPRENEUR
MOUNT MORIAH



NICOLE MARTIN
LABOUR CONSULTANT
NASSAU VILLAGE



DARREN HENFIELD
ATTORNEY
NORTH ABACO



CARLTON BOWLEG
COMPUTER
PROGRAMMER
NORTH ANDROS &
THE BERRY ISLANDS



RICKEY MACKAY
ENTREPRENEUR
NORTH ELEUTHERA



WELBOURNE BOOTLE
LAW ENFORCEMENT
PINERIDGE



REUBEN RAHMING
ENTREPRENEUR
PINEWOOD



MAXINE SEYMOUR
COMMUNICATION
SPECIALIST
SEABREEZE



JEFFREY LLOYD
EDUCATOR
SOUTH BEACH



FRANKIE CAMPBELL
LAW ENFORCEMENT
SOUTHERN SHORES



ADRIAN WHITE
ATTORNEY
ST. ANNE'S



SHANENDON CARTWRIGHT
MARKETING EXECUTIVE
ST. BARNABAS



DONALD SAUNDERS
ATTORNEY
TALL PINES



JENNIFER ISAACS-DOTSON
TRADE UNIONIST
THE EXUMAS &
RAGGED ISLAND



**PAKESIA PARKER-
EDGEWODE**
JOURNALIST
WEST GRAND BAHAMA
& Bimini



ELSWORTH JOHNSON
ATTORNEY
YAMACRAW

INTRODUCTION BY THE PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF THE FREE NATIONAL MOVEMENT

Dear Fellow Bahamians:

In May 2017, after five years of PLP mass corruption and endless scandals, economic stagnation, ever-climbing crime rates, longstanding problems unsolved and more than a billion dollars borrowed with little to show for it, you, the people, placed your trust in a new FNM Government.

You overwhelmingly asked the FNM to take the country in a new and better direction. We quickly got to work.

We improved our economy with many more jobs and record tourism numbers.

We brought down crime.

We fixed longstanding problems such as the New Providence Landfill and the need for new equipment at Bahamas Power and Light (BPL) to supply the electricity needs of the people of New Providence.

We worked to restore Grand Bahama, including saving jobs at the Grand Lucayan. And we put in motion plans for a new hotel and cruise ship facilities to help to restore the economy of Grand Bahama.

We worked to bring economic projects, investments and infrastructure to our Family Islands.

We reduced the annual national budget deficit and enacted legislation to ensure greater financial accountability.

The daily drumbeat of scandals ended.

We began the revitalization of infrastructure throughout the country, including better water supply, roadworks, refurbished clinics and docks, with plans for new airports.

In the midst of our national renewal and recovery, The Bahamas was hit first by Hurricane Irma in 2017. Hurricane Dorian followed in 2019 as one of the strongest storms ever recorded on the planet.

Hurricane Irma devastated Ragged Island. Hurricane Dorian brought destruction to parts of Grand Bahama and Abaco.

We worked with domestic and international partners to rescue those in need and to begin the rebuilding of our second and third most populous islands. We are making progress in renewing and rebuilding these islands, cays and communities.

Within months of Dorian, the world and The Bahamas were struck with COVID-19, the worst public health disaster and crisis in a hundred years.

The global economy and tourism shut down, causing the worst economic crisis in our nation's history.

Your FNM Government responded aggressively and with compassion to save lives and livelihoods.

We spent what it took to boost the capacity of hospitals and clinics with the necessary medicine and supplies to care for those who became ill.

We introduced public health and emergency measures to protect our people. We spent an unprecedented amount on food and social assistance.



We spent an unprecedented amount on unemployment assistance and grants and loans for businesses to keep our country afloat.

We accessed and secured three of the best vaccines in the world to help to end the emergency stage of the pandemic and reopen our economy and society.

We mourn those we have lost. We must continue to pray for and support their families as we aggressively respond to the current period of the pandemic.

Despite many dark and difficult days, there is light and hope on the horizon. More Bahamians are getting vaccinated.

The pandemic will not end quickly. But if more of us become vaccinated the emergency phase will be brought to an end. The Emergency Orders will end in November.

Because of our health and other measures our economy is beginning to improve, more tourists are arriving and more Bahamians are getting back to work.

Given all that we have been through, we need to make big, comprehensive and long-term decisions in the post-COVID-19 world.

The FNM is asking you and I am asking you for a new mandate to help to rebuild our country and economy, adding to the accomplishments of my Government and former FNM administrations.

I am asking you for your support to help to secure your future! The Bahamas is getting ready to come back!

We cannot afford to go back to the same failed leadership of the PLP, with a leader who represents the past and the worst excesses and failures of their party.

Just as their party failed to deliver a "New PLP" years ago, they do not represent a new day for The Bahamas.

In our 2021 Manifesto we are offering you a bold, exciting and comprehensive vision. We are offering new ideas and plans for The Bahamas.

Our vision is of more dynamic and sustained growth, with some of the highest potential growth rates in decades.

Our vision is of greater Bahamian ownership of the economy, with many more Bahamian small businesses and entrepreneurs.

Our vision is of greater access to opportunity for Bahamians in education and training, including for preschoolers.

We will provide more Crown Land and access to home ownership.

At long last, with significant public and private investments in tourism and infrastructure, Grand Bahama and Abaco are finally beginning to come back!

Our FNM team includes seasoned ministers and Members of Parliament, and new blood and talent, including more women as candidates.

I am asking you for a new mandate to build on the work we began four years ago. I also need a new mandate to get us past the COVID-19 crisis and to move our economy forward for you, the people.

If you repose your trust in me and my Government once again, we pledge to work ceaselessly to build a more inclusive, resilient and just society in the interest of all the people and not in the interest of a few who will take us back to a dark past.

With the grace of God and with your prayers and support we will endure, we will rebuild, and we will seize and embrace a better future together.

With Boundless Gratitude,



Dr. Hubert A. Minnis
Prime Minister and Leader of the
Free National Movement





SECTION ONE

THE CONTINUED FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19



The COVID-19 crisis is the worst pandemic in a century. More than four million people have died around the world. Hundreds of millions of others were made sick.

The highly infectious coronavirus has caused so much suffering that at various times healthcare systems around the world collapsed.

Our administration has been aggressive in creating new treatment spaces for COVID-19 patients, expanding testing and securing vaccines. We have secured more than half a million vaccine doses.

However, the pandemic is not over. The fight must continue against this deadly virus.



IN OUR NEXT TERM THE FNM WILL:

- ✓ Ensure there is adequate supply of approved vaccines for all Bahamians and residents;
- ✓ Ensure there is adequate supply of vaccine booster shots as needed based on the advice of medical professionals;
- ✓ Ensure various types of vaccines are available;
- ✓ Acquire equipment to conduct in country analysis to determine the presence of variants of SARS-COV-2;
- ✓ Provide the National Reference Laboratory with the resources needed to continue expanding its testing and analysis capacity;
- ✓ Set up a coordinating group in the Ministry of Health to oversee the acquisition of therapies and treatments for people suffering from the long-term effects of COVID-19;
- ✓ Continue ensuring adequate supplies of personal protective equipment are consistently on hand to protect frontline healthcare workers;
- ✓ Ensure there are adequate supplies of proven medical therapies to treat those with COVID-19;
- ✓ Provide the resources to ensure robust contact tracing continues; and
- ✓ Pass and bring into effect legislation to replace the Emergency Orders.



JOBS AND INVESTMENTS



In the post-COVID-19 world, The Bahamas must quickly rebuild its economy to boost jobs, economic opportunity and business ownership, and to take advantage of the global economic recovery.

Our economic vision includes greater ownership of the economy by Bahamians, including:

- *Small- and medium-sized businesses ownership;*
- *Land ownership;*
- *Home ownership;*
- *Shares for Bahamians in enterprises such as the new cruise port in downtown Nassau; and*
- *Greater ownership in sectors such as tourism, agriculture, fisheries, the digital economy and the creative economy.*

We are focused on economic growth for a better future for all Bahamians.





IN OUR NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Work with investors to complete major tourism and investment projects on New Providence, Grand Bahama and the Family Islands, including hotels, boutique resorts and new cruise facilities and ports, including the expansion of the Grand Bahama Shipyard;
- ✓ Develop a Home Porting Act for the cruise industry, similar to the Hotels Encouragement Act;
- ✓ Continue capital works throughout the country, including the completion of major Family Island airports;
- ✓ Approve and mobilize new infrastructure projects to prepare the entire country for economic revival;
- ✓ Approve new construction projects to get the economy moving rapidly;
- ✓ Approve building permits to jumpstart housing projects;
- ✓ Approve projects in every sector to leverage the private sector and international investors; and
- ✓ Approve and implement the digital marketplace to enhance the sale of Bahamian products and to ease the purchase of imported goods.

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Over four-plus years, the FNM has provided unprecedented levels of support for Bahamian entrepreneurs. We are helping to expand opportunity and creating wealth for more Bahamians.

Since 2017, the Small Business Development Centre, created by the Minnis Administration, provided tens of millions of dollars in loans and grants to Bahamian micro and small businesses. This included more than \$40 million in direct support for those who were affected by Hurricane Dorian and the COVID-19 pandemic.

From 2017 to 2020, there was a 58 percent increase in small- and medium-sized businesses, with nearly 14,000 small businesses launched.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Provide \$50 million a year in support for Bahamian entrepreneurs, totaling \$250 million over five years;
- ✓ Provide a minimum of \$25 million over these five years specifically for an entrepreneurship program geared toward Bahamian women and youth;
- ✓ Ensure that the Bahamas Development Bank continues to support small business development;
- ✓ Ensure that Bahamians with disabilities have access to funds for small business development;
- ✓ Continue to promote incentives and concessions for Bahamian businesses, including in light manufacturing, fisheries, agriculture, the creative economy, heritage tourism, sports, technology, education, the culinary arts and other economic sectors; and
- ✓ Continue the Government Employment Incentive Program. This program will lead to 2,500 jobs being created in the near term. Businesses have been able to apply for a VAT credit to cover the salaries of up to 10 new employees brought on to their payrolls as of July 1st, 2021. The allowable tax credit is up to \$400 per week per employee.



INVESTMENTS

Because we are a commonwealth, all Bahamians must enjoy the common wealth of our Bahamas.

Poor and working families must be able to see improved opportunities and better standards of living. Middle-income families must be able to see improved opportunities and standards of living.

Our vision is that of wealth-creation and ownership for Bahamians of every walk of life, on every island, cay and settlement in our Bahamas.

Government has its role. But we must continue to create more dynamic public-private partnerships to build the billions of dollars in infrastructure we need throughout our archipelago.

Government alone cannot finance all the critical infrastructure The Bahamas requires for dynamic and sustained growth throughout our archipelago.

We are determined to unleash the vast economic potential of our Family islands. This is why we have embarked on the expansion of modern international airports in key islands.

We must also invest in our Family Islands so that more Bahamians may consider moving to various islands where they can work and raise their families.

IN OUR NEXT TERM THE FNM WILL:

- ✓ Resource a National Sovereign Wealth Fund;
- ✓ Create a new Ministry of Investments, Financial Services and Commerce;
- ✓ Launch Invest Bahamas, a new investment agency to replace the Bahamas Investment Authority;
- ✓ Create a National Infrastructure Fund;
- ✓ Foster new public-private partnerships for infrastructural development;
- ✓ Offer an ambitious Family Island Infrastructure Plan;
- ✓ Ensure banking facilities on all major islands;
- ✓ Further implement ease-of-doing business recommendations;
- ✓ Offer incentives and opportunities for various technology industries, light manufacturing and mining;
- ✓ Review the Data Information Act and amend where necessary;
- ✓ Facilitate the development of privately issued micro-property insurance policies for people who meet specific criteria;
- ✓ Implement a public-private partnership for the Post Office to make it more efficient and modern; and
- ✓ Review the possible implementation of an Economic Permanent Resident Program.

SOVEREIGN WEALTH FUND

As the Economic Recovery Committee noted:
“The establishment of a Sovereign Wealth Fund ... will mobilize public assets and private capital to generate hundreds of millions of dollars in infrastructure investments across the country every year.”





THE FNM WILL:

- ✓ Create a Sovereign Wealth Fund as a vehicle for public-private partnerships in order for Bahamians to economically benefit from our natural resources and to invest in infrastructure development and to provide a source for the generation of future wealth;
- ✓ The fund will be vested with Bahamian assets, which are the basis of the country's wealth, and it will accumulate and convert those assets as necessary in order to spur developments in the country; and
- ✓ Income generated through the fund's activities as well as returns on investments will accumulate in the fund for the benefit of the Bahamian people.

MINISTRY OF INVESTMENTS, FINANCIAL SERVICES AND COMMERCE

To help to spur more dynamic growth and job creation, the FNM will create a Ministry of Investments, Financial Services and Commerce.

This ministry will help to: expand the conditions for economic growth and trade, opportunity and job creation, and to enhance Bahamian ownership of the economy through entrepreneurship and innovation.

The portfolio areas of the ministry will include: Invest Bahamas, financial services, trade and industry promotion, the ease of doing business and digitization, the promotion of concessions and incentives for Bahamians, and Family Island economic development.

Other portfolio areas include: the promotion of medium- and small-sized businesses, the Small Business Development Centre, promotion of the blue, green and orange economies, new industry promotion and diversification, cooperatives and relations with the Bahamas Development Bank.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Financial Services remains a critical and vital industry.

IN KEEPING WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY COMMITTEE AND OTHERS, THE FNM WILL:

- ✓ Position and promote The Bahamas as an international headquarters hub and Centre of Excellence;
- ✓ Promote and position The Bahamas as an international family office hub;
- ✓ Streamline immigration processes and policy to improve efficiency for investors;
- ✓ Clarify, streamline and promote a well-defined investment and regulatory framework;
- ✓ Continue to work to promote The Bahamas as an international Commercial Arbitration Center;
- ✓ Promote natural linkages between tourism and financial services; and
- ✓ Enhance promotional and marketing events and activities, both in The Bahamas and internationally, through the new Ministry of Investments, Financial Services and Commerce.



INVEST BAHAMAS

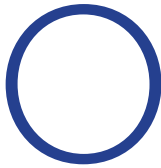
The FNM has already commenced the process to create a new “Invest Bahamas” Authority, a new investment promotion and approval regime and structure.



THE FNM WILL:

- ✓ Establish Invest Bahamas;
- ✓ Invest Bahamas will be a major revamping and restructuring of our domestic and foreign direct investment structure and regime, building on the work of the Bahamas Investment Authority over many years;
- ✓ Invest Bahamas will have the mandate and the means to establish protocols that will ensure expedited support and approvals for major domestic and foreign investments;
- ✓ This will be accompanied by a divestment of authority from the National Economic Council to expedite approvals for smaller direct investments; and
- ✓ Invest Bahamas will also have the resources and expertise to consistently market The Bahamas as an investment destination of choice for Bahamian and foreign investors alike.

DIGITIZATION



ur administration has launched a historic digitization initiative to make all major Government services accessible online. This is critical to improving the ease of doing business in our country.

Through our MyGateway portal, tens of thousands of Bahamians have already accessed numerous services, including e-passport renewals, driver's license renewals, and marriage, death and birth certificates. Our digitization effort is making it easier for Bahamians and international persons to access services.

We also think it makes it easier for citizens to get needed documents with less hassle. For example, our e-Passport initiative significantly improved delivery of this service.

We think this overall digitization initiative will help grow the Bahamian economy by removing some of the red tape that slows commerce.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO ENSURE:

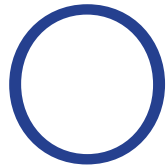
- ✓ There is access to more than 200 Government services electronically;
- ✓ There is access to services through a single window, reducing costs and time in obtaining Government services;
- ✓ There is proper security of personal data via the Data Protection Act and appropriate cyber security processes;
- ✓ There are opportunities to learn/improve and execute digital skills;
- ✓ There is a further reduction in the cost and time of registering businesses;
- ✓ National Cybersecurity Legislation is introduced;
- ✓ There is acceleration of the digitization of intellectual property registration;

- ✓ The creation of the Ministry of Investments, Financial Services and Commerce helps lead to the digital transformation of Government and the economy, making technology a major pillar of the economy;
- ✓ The full implementation of the National Policy on e-Commerce and digitization for The Commonwealth of The Bahamas;
- ✓ Creation of an electronic ID. Electronic identification is a vital first step toward a 'Digital Bahamas';
- ✓ Completion of the digitization of the Department of Social Services, and allow Bahamians to apply for all services and benefits online;
- ✓ Complete digitization and upgrade of the Registrar General Department to allow for online application and payment for all services;
- ✓ Expansion of the IT Cadet program throughout the Family islands;
- ✓ Digitization of the Parliamentary Registration Department to allow for digital registration and biometric voters cards;
- ✓ Digitization of the Crown grant process to expedite approvals for Bahamians;
- ✓ Review of the introduction of 5G Technology;
- ✓ Expand our existing program of free Internet service on community parks and Government facilities throughout The Bahamas;
- ✓ Grand Bahama is made the center for technology and innovation training at BTVI and the University of The Bahamas;
- ✓ That hundreds of software developers are trained, making The Bahamas a hub for software development. This would allow us to offer services to companies all around the world;
- ✓ Introduction of software development, cyber security and other technology courses at primary and high school levels;
- ✓ Implementation of a National Cyber Security Response Team to monitor and respond to cyber-attacks; and
- ✓ More Government agencies go cashless, allowing more Bahamians to have better and faster services.



SECTION TWO

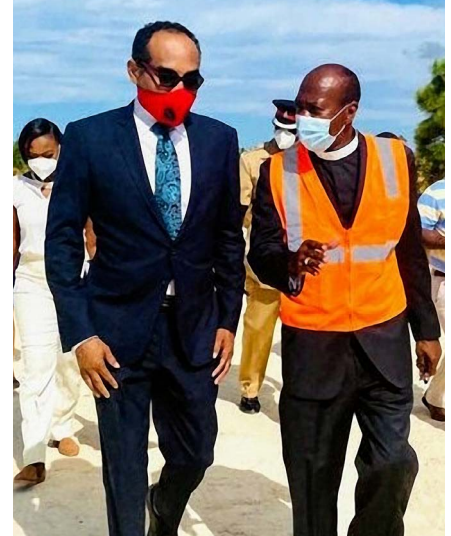
MORE ACCESS TO LAND FOR BAHAMIANS AND EXPANDED HOME OWNERSHIP



Our administration has provided land to Bahamians across the archipelago via serviced lots and Crown Land grants.

We intend to expand this initiative to ensure more Bahamians have access to land for home ownership.

We believe that a primary function of Government should be to work to ensure that more Bahamians can own homes.



IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Launch the Bahamas Homes Initiative, through which there will be the creation of at least one major serviced lot development on all major Family Islands;
- ✓ Make materials for home construction in Government subdivisions VAT free and continue with the duty free and real property tax concessions we have previously implemented;
- ✓ Continuance of Crown Land grants and land regularization exercises for Bahamians;
- ✓ Extend first-time homeowners tax exemptions;
- ✓ Continue creating communities for Young Professionals throughout The Bahamas;
- ✓ Repair all Government-owned rental properties in inner-city communities and sell units for a nominal fee; and
- ✓ Continue to work with the Bahamas Mortgage Corporation to make home ownership available for more Bahamians.

TOURISM



Since the FNM came to office in May 2017, and before the pandemic, The Bahamas experienced unprecedented positive growth in overall visitor arrivals. At the end of 2017 there were 6,135,839 total foreign air and sea arrivals.

By the end of 2018, this number grew to 6,622,145. For the first time in our country's history we exceeded the seven-million visitor mark in 2019 when we welcomed some 7,249,529 visitors to our shores.

This record-shattering 2019 number included a historic 1.8 million stopover visitors and 5.5 million cruise visitors.

This unprecedented number was in spite of Hurricane Dorian. It was clear testimony to the confidence of the global travel community in our tourism product and the effective administration of the Government.

Stopover arrivals represent a significant contribution to our overall economy. At the end of 2017, we welcomed 1,451,831 stopover visitors. This number grew by 12 percent by the end of 2018 when we welcomed 1,632,613 stopover visitors.

By the end of 2019, stopover arrivals had shattered the records by reaching 1,806,994 visitors to The Bahamas.

From January to June 2021, The Bahamas welcomed 413,653 visitors to our shores. Out of this number, some 357,544 represented stopover air arrival visitors, with an increased average length of stay of 7.5 nights in 2021, as compared to 6.4 nights in 2019.



Visitors are staying longer and spending more money. Our plans are working and we are on the right track.

While helping to promote and to support larger tourism properties and resorts on New Providence and Grand Bahama, over the next five years tourism development will also concentrate on a number of core initiatives to expand the participation of Bahamian ownership in tourism.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Ensure that more small- and medium-sized Bahamian service providers and entrepreneurs are incentivized to be engaged as owners of tourism properties and in providing more goods and services for our tourism market;
- ✓ Help and incentivize more Bahamians to return to their ancestral islands and take advantage of their real estate holdings;
- ✓ Infuse more of the history, art, music and culture of The Bahamas into our tourism products and services; and
- ✓ Accelerate the establishment of a world-class hospitality management and training center at the University of The Bahamas for Bahamians and international students.

These initiatives will be manifested in the following ways:

PEER-TO-PEER ACCOMMODATIONS

Our goal is to substantially increase the availability of quality accommodations for visitors through such channels as Airbnb and other peer-to-peer providers. This takes advantage of the natural “People-to-People” charm of Bahamians on a commercial basis.

THE FNM WILL:

- ✓ Assist in providing small loans for the improvement of these facilities throughout The Bahamas and provide the kind of training needed to become world-class hosts. This direct communication between visitor and Bahamians will become increasingly the hallmark of the Bahamian experience.



To ensure that more Bahamians take advantage of the increased need for room capacity now and in the future, the Small Business Development Centre (SBDC) reserved a minimum up to \$2 million in funding to support Bahamians who wish to enter the home rental market.

This new SBDC initiative will have built-in covenants to ensure that successful applicants follow through on preparing these properties for guests and that they list the properties for short-term rental.

The program will also include consultancy assistance to help guide applicants on how to list and manage these properties successfully.

The emergence of the vacation home rental market creates a wonderful and extraordinary opportunity for more and more Bahamians to become owners and direct beneficiaries in the tourism industry. This is diversification within the tourism sector.

Bahamians might wish to convert existing homes to take advantage of this market. Bahamians might refurbish an ancestral home in one of the Family Islands. Bahamians might wish to collaborate with like-minded investors, pooling resources to build and rent accommodations and cottages throughout the country.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Increase the funds available to develop peer-to-peer rentals through the Small Business Development Centre; and
- ✓ Ensure Bahamians in our southern islands are granted a new slate of concessions on the full range of materials they will need to build or renovate a house, or to start or expand a business.

AVIATION

There are too few Bahamian aviation companies engaged in transporting travelers between the islands of The Bahamas and South Florida, in particular.



THE FNM WILL:

- ✓ Facilitate the financing, training and regulations to accelerate this expansion. This initiative becomes essential in order to provide access to accommodations especially to many of our Family Islands as more Bahamians provide more quality accommodations.

The FNM has already announced the intention to improve airports throughout The Bahamas through public private-partnerships. Successful bids for such partnerships to upgrade airports will be announced in 2022.

THE FNM WILL ENSURE:

- ✓ Bahamasair will expand the delivery of visitors to The Bahamas from more overseas markets and become more directly integrated with Bahamas-based private carriers to enable easier reservations and connections for both resident and international travelers. This is critically important for those travelers wishing to make a quick getaway to more destinations in the Islands of The Bahamas; and
- ✓ The Government will continue to work for the ongoing transformation of Bahamasair to suit the needs of Bahamians and visitors, and for the airline to take advantage of new trends and needs in domestic and international aviation.

SEA TRANSPORTATION

As an archipelago, The Bahamas will return to providing more passenger accommodations for interisland travel by marine vessels.

As with improved aviation, this makes two-center vacations and domestic vacations in The Bahamas easier. This is one of the significant competitive advantages of The Bahamas that will expand appreciably over the next five years.



BOATING AND YACHTING

There is a clear need for more marinas with fuel facilities in certain parts of The Bahamas.

- ***The FNM will assist in meeting this need particularly in the southern Bahamas.***



GROUND TOURS AND TRANSPORTATION

THE FNM WILL:

- ✓ Explore returning to the requirement that certain tour packages include a mandatory tour as was the case in the 1970s and 1980s. These broader range and variety of tours will be conducted by qualified tour providers whether with sedans or buses.



These arrangements and income streams will also facilitate the upgrading of vehicles to deliver the kind of quality that our visitors have come to expect.

In addition, the new tours will provide our visitors with a better sense of the proud achievements, history and culture of The Bahamas.

Robust training will be provided to ensure the highest quality of the delivery of these tours.



THE ENVIRONMENT AND RENEWABLE ENERGY



Climate change is an existential threat to small island developing countries such as The Bahamas.

Warmer seas mean tropical cyclones develop faster, get stronger, and sustain increased intensity for longer periods. Sea levels are rising.

In September 2019, Hurricane Dorian was the strongest storm to hit The Bahamas.

To do our part in the fight against climate change, and to transition our economy more toward renewable energy,

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Set an effective minimum SEER rating for importation of air conditioning systems to ensure only energy efficient air conditioners are used in The Bahamas;
- ✓ Lower duty on all home appliances that meet a defined energy efficiency standard;
- ✓ Pass and enact a Renewable Energy Encouragement Act to facilitate activity in a robust Bahamian-led sector;
- ✓ Through various incentivizes, allow independent power producers to start building a selection of renewable energy plants;
- ✓ Continue the installation of solar PV systems on Government buildings;
- ✓ Lower duty on all fully electric vehicles;
- ✓ Make renewable energy 30 percent of electricity needs by 2030;
- ✓ Build solar plants on Family Islands;
- ✓ Expand solar street lighting to more communities across the country;



- ✓ Increase penalties for illegal dumping;
- ✓ Ensure there are proper waste management sites across the Family Islands;
- ✓ Establish an organized national campaign to address the rodent problem;
- ✓ Develop and enact land use management plans on all major islands to create a structure as to how land is developed;
- ✓ Rigorously enforce environmental laws and rules;
- ✓ Invest in further protection of, and upgrades to, our national parks; and
- ✓ Create robust waste-to-energy programs around the country in partnership with the private sector in order to provide electricity to landfill sites and surrounding areas.

We will continue to partner with Bahamian and international environmental agencies in the areas of environmental conservation, protection and education, including the protection and expansion of our National Park System.

GRAND BAHAMA



Restoring the economy of Grand Bahama has been a top priority of our administration since coming to office.

In our second term we intend to intensify our efforts to ensure that significant investments flow to Grand Bahama; that Grand Bahamians have employment; and that the environment is good for Grand Bahamian entrepreneurs to start businesses.



IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

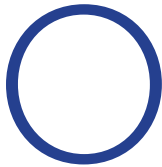
- ✓ Implement a training program for skills required in Grand Bahama, involving ministries responsible for Education, Training and Labor, the University of The Bahamas, BTVI, the National Training Agency, the Grand Bahama Chamber of Commerce, industrial companies, maritime companies, and the Grand Bahama Shipyard;
- ✓ Encourage the Grand Bahama Port Authority (GBPA) to approve and issue business licenses for companies without need for physical spaces, inclusive of license fees of \$100 consistent with the Government's licensing initiative for companies with less than \$100,000 annual turn-over;
- ✓ Work with the GBPA to ensure vendors/peddlers permit is liberalized further to permit a wider range of businesses;

- 
- ✓ Ensure the GBPA and Government create a New Housing Program with qualifying Bahamians as recipients in the initial phase;
 - ✓ Create a Second-home Owners Incentive Program with land provided by GBDEVCO/GBPA, inclusive of automatic resident permits;
 - ✓ Pass legislation to ensure that developers and the GBPA facilitate road paving throughout residential communities within the port area inclusive of enforcement of proper road works development/rehabilitation relative to private subdivisions;
 - ✓ Ensure that developers and GBPA facilitate the implementation of light and water infrastructure throughout residential communities within the port area inclusive of the enforcement of light and water infrastructure development/rehabilitation relative to private subdivisions;
 - ✓ Establish an independent promotion agency that the GBPA and Government jointly fund;
 - ✓ Work with the GBPA to ensure there is allocation of land for the purpose of agriculture and marine resources development;
 - ✓ Ensure the GBPA creates a city-wide clean-up program in conjunction with the Government and local community, including removal of derelict vehicles;
 - ✓ Create Master Development Plan for West End, inclusive of community parks, tourism attractions and a Vendors Market;
 - ✓ Create Master Development Plan for East End including the development of additional Bahamian-owned vacation rental homes and eco-tours increasing wealth opportunities;
 - ✓ Construct micro-grids in the East Grand Bahama Settlements;



- ✓ Complete state-of-the-art, four-story hospital to expand the Rand Memorial Hospital;
- ✓ Enter into a public-private partnership with a qualified and experienced developer to redevelop the Grand Bahama Airport;
- ✓ Extend airport operational hours to facilitate red-eye flights, allowing international connections via Nassau;
- ✓ Seek to provide enhanced marina facilities to accommodate mega yachts on Grand Bahama by incentivizing and attracting qualified investors;
- ✓ Pass the Freeport (Environmental) by-laws. These relate to pollution, natural resources, environmental management, and nuisances;
- ✓ Pass Freeport (Building and Sanitary) by-law amendment to allow for demolition of derelict structures;
- ✓ Execute an annual hurricane/flood response drill and protocols with key stakeholders; and
- ✓ Leverage the University of The Bahamas Northern Campus to accelerate the current plan to establish Grand Bahama as the “Tech Hub” of The Bahamas. Use UB North as catalyst to develop and attract technology incubators, labs and research facilities, as well as start-ups and established technology and logistics companies.

INFRASTRUCTURE



Our administration has led an ambitious and aggressive campaign to upgrade infrastructure across The Bahamas.

Long-neglected bridges, roads, docks, airports and water systems have been upgraded during our term.

We have provided upgrades to infrastructure throughout the Family Islands, including to international airports on various islands.

BPL INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES

We need upgraded infrastructure across the archipelago in order to enhance the quality of life for all Bahamians and to attract broad-based domestic and international investment to our various communities.

During this term, BPL put an end to load shedding. We installed the largest power plant ever built in BPL's history, a 132MW Plant at Clifton Pier. This allowed for the stable generation of power. As a result of a deliberate hedging strategy, we lowered and stabilised power bills, a more than 40% reduction in the price of fuel cost to customers and 20-25% reduction on the consumer's bill. Also, first time in company's history, 25MW battery energy storage system (BESS) is now being installed at the Blue Hills Power Station, which will allow for greater improved grid stability, further reduction in fuel cost, and implementation of larger solar power generation systems on New Providence.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Execute \$50-70million in upgrades to the BPL transmission and distribution infrastructure to further reduce outages.
- ✓ Continue to work with the Inter-American Development Bank on solar generation projects on Abaco, Andros, Eleuthera, and Inagua.
- ✓ Continue implementation of BPL's Strategic Five-Year Plan, to further improve efficiencies and SAIDI, SAIFI and CAIDI numbers.



IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ With the Water and Sewerage Corporation, ensure there is quality potable water on all major Family Islands;
- ✓ Significantly expand the use of public-private partnerships (PPPs) to expand infrastructure developments;
- ✓ Finish airports on Grand Bahama, Exuma, Long Island and Eleuthera;
- ✓ Continue to fund the Disaster Reconstruction Authority (DRA) to continue all restoration efforts in Grand Bahama and Abaco as a result of Hurricane Dorian;
- ✓ Continue to repair bridges, roads and docks across the country;
- ✓ Widen Gladstone Road from two to four lanes;
- ✓ Continue to Upgrade the traffic light system in New Providence;
- ✓ Work to redevelop Fort Charlotte and its environs into a central park with walking trails, facilities for cultural events and other features similar to such parks in other international cities. The central park's recreational features can extend to the waterfront encompassing an upgraded Arawak Cay and Western Esplanade with its boardwalk. Complementing the Fort Charlotte Central Park and Arawak Cay will be a restored Botanical Gardens; and
- ✓ Establish a National Infrastructure Fund to mobilize public assets and private capital. This will help generate hundreds of millions of dollars in infrastructure investments in islands throughout The Bahamas.

In the past four years, the Government has executed an infrastructure construction drive to develop our Family Islands. Hundreds of capital works projects were completed.

The FNM is committed to the Family Islands having the same level of infrastructural development as New Providence.

KEY COMPLETED OR ONGOING PROJECTS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

ABACO

- ✓ Elbow Cay Dune refurbished and the Coast Road stabilized, to prevent it from splitting in half.
- ✓ Modern, resilient Little Abaco Bridge built to replace the causeway built by the prior Administration.
- ✓ Seawall repairs to protect Murphy Town and Dundas Town commenced.

GRAND BAHAMA

- ✓ Smith's Point Seawall completed.
- ✓ Fishing Hole Bridge completed.
- ✓ Refurbishment of Freeport Post Office almost completed.
- ✓ Renovations of the Court House completed.
- ✓ Road works in East and West Grand Bahama and Hudson Estate completed.
- ✓ Holmes Rock School in West Grand Bahama almost completed.
- ✓ Eight Mile Rock Government Administration Building almost completed.
- ✓ Refurbishment to Office of the Prime Minister almost completed.

CAT ISLAND

- ✓ Constructing water mains to provide potable water for the first time in Cat Island's history commenced.



SPANISH WELLS

- ✓ Roderick Newton Higgs Bridge completed and opened connecting Spanish Wells and Russell Island.

LONG ISLAND

- ✓ Newton Cay Bridge completed.
- ✓ Monument Road completed.
- ✓ Asphalt road paving started.

RAGGED ISLAND

- ✓ Phase I of the Ragged Island Multipurpose Centre commenced, the most resilient building in the country, able to withstand winds of 250 miles per hour.
- ✓ Ragged Island Comprehensive School and teachers' quarters commenced as part of the Centre.

INAGUA

- ✓ Contract to commence a new school, Police Station and Roads signed, and the contractor is presently engaging persons to carry out the works.

BIMINI

- ✓ Refurbishment of airport runway underway.

ELEUTHERA

- ✓ Modern deep-water commercial Rock Sound Dock completed and opened, which allows the Mail Boat to call for the first time in 20 years.
- ✓ Asphalt paving of the highway commenced and almost completed.

EXUMA

- ✓ Barreterre Docks & boat ramps completed and opened.
- ✓ First asphalt roads on Exuma almost completed.
- ✓ Broke ground on the New Exuma International Airport.
- ✓ Staniel Cay Comprehensive School commenced.

BERRY ISLANDS

- ✓ Repairs to the airport almost completed.

ANDROS

- ✓ London Creek Bridge constructed.
- ✓ Staniard Creek Bridge constructed.
- ✓ Road works from Fresh Creek to Cargill Creek and Behring Point commenced.
- ✓ South Andros All Purpose Gymnasium commenced, which will also serve as a hurricane shelter.



FUTURE KEY FAMILY ISLAND INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS:

- ✓ Seawall construction at High Rock Grand Bahama and completion of seawalls for Dundas Town and Murphy Town, Abaco;
- ✓ Airport completion on Exuma, Bimini, Berry Islands, and commencement on North Eleuthera, Long Island and Grand Bahama (via PPP);
- ✓ Bridge completions on Eleuthera (two), Long Island (replacement of culvert), Exuma;
- ✓ Water mains completion on Cat Island;
- ✓ Comprehensive School construction in East End Grand Bahama, on Inagua, and Ragged Island;
- ✓ Microgrid construction in East End Grand Bahama;
- ✓ 4 story expansion of the Rand Memorial hospital;
- ✓ High Rock Administrative Building; and
- ✓ Road paving completions on Andros, Exuma, Long Island, Eleuthera mainland, Harbour Island, and Grand Bahama.



ONGOING TRANSFORMATION OF DOWNTOWN NASSAU



Downtown Nassau has the potential to be the economic hub of The Bahamas. Hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of investments were made in the City of Nassau during our term.

Our goal is to create a vibrant city for people to work in, live in, to visit, and to raise families.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Complete the world-class Nassau Cruise Port;
- ✓ Through legislation and other legal means demolish or cause to be refurbished derelict Government and commercial buildings in the City of Nassau;
- ✓ Finish and open the Nassau Waterfront Boardwalk;
- ✓ Beautify Downtown Nassau;
- ✓ Extend tax concessions for development in the City of Nassau
- ✓ Construct a new Cabinet Office in the City of Nassau;
- ✓ Bring Local Government to the City of Nassau;
- ✓ Through Local Government, create council to manage City of Nassau along with a city manager;
- ✓ Commission a series of historical sculptures and public arts projects in the City of Nassau to tell our story and history to Bahamians and visitors; and
- ✓ Complete the new Central Bank in Downtown Nassau.



SECTION THREE

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



The FNM has always prioritized youth development as a key part of our national development strategy.

It is critical that we mobilize, inspire and provide opportunity for the next generation.

The FNM administration, for example, over the last four years has supported the expansion of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force's Rangers Program, which operates on seven islands with 30 participating schools and more than 1,500 students.



The program partners with the Governor General's Youth Award (GGYA), the Bahamas National Trust and Program SURE.

Under an FNM administration we will continue to make youth development a focus in order to ensure their substantial participation and integration into the wider society as our next generation of leaders.



IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Continue free education for qualifying students at the University of The Bahamas and the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute;
- ✓ Establish a National Youth Service and Volunteerism Program in conjunction with the Ministries of National Security, Education and Youth;
- ✓ Create a Universal Afterschool Program. The Government would provide resources to approved afterschool initiatives around the country to ensure more children may enroll free of cost;
- ✓ Create a Youth Exposure Program in which selected young people would be able to have a two-week internship. They would spend the time shadowing the Prime Minister or other Cabinet ministers;
- ✓ Transform designated unoccupied Government buildings into Youth Business Incubators. Young Bahamian entrepreneurs could have office/ business space to use for low cost to help them start businesses;
- ✓ Through a partnership with the private sector, the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute and the Ministry of Education, create and fund a Youth Pre-apprenticeship Program for students in the 10th to 12th grades. It would offer on-the-job experience and the opportunity to attain various qualifications; and
- ✓ Through the National Training Agency, launch a National Skills Development Apprenticeship Program to provide unemployed youth and adults between the ages of 16 and 40 with the skills necessary for available jobs in the workplace.

NEW GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS STRUCTURE



The Free National Movement administration opened up the broadcast airwaves in the 1990s. There has been significant growth in media as a result.

The advent of digital media means that significant structural upgrades are needed to the Government's communications structure.

The approach to how the Government communicates with Bahamians across the country and around the world needs to be updated to meet the circumstances of the 21st century.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Transform Bahamas Information Services (BIS) to a modern, digital Government information service, including a new legislative and management framework for BIS;
- ✓ Transform the Parliamentary Channel into a comprehensive parliamentary broadcaster with a full scope of programming related to Parliament, our system of Government, Bahamian history and culture and other public information and education programming; and
- ✓ Ensure each ministry has a fully staffed and resourced communications unit.

PRODUCING FOOD AND EXPANDED FISHERIES



The Bahamas is a high-cost production area with a variety of challenges, but also numerous opportunities.

Significant opportunities are realizable in the agricultural sector and can be utilized to increase food and farm production.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Continue the ongoing redevelopment and enhancement of BAMSI and the Bahamas Agricultural and Industrial Corporation;
- ✓ Continue the promotion and development of farmers' markets throughout the country;
- ✓ Accelerate the grant and lease of Crown Land to ensure stable rights of tenure on land for farmers, and accelerate the availability of production credit to facilitate land preparation, input supplies, transport and marketing access to the private sector;
- ✓ Provide more opportunities for hydroponic farming;
- ✓ Continue the development of urban and community gardens and farming;
- ✓ Create a Native Food Market on New Providence for the distribution of fruit, vegetables, herbs and spices, including food products;
- ✓ Establish feed milling to help to make the cost of pork and poultry production more efficient with a modern feed mill to produce and distribute proper rations for feed, especially to small farmers;
- ✓ Custom packing for a range of farm produce for wholesale and retail sales which may greatly enhance overall sales, including bagged onions, cassava, boxed cabbage, ready-mixed cabbage, carrots and onions for restaurant sales;

- ✓ Expand production of native and tropical fruit such as avocados, soursop, mangoes, guavas and a range of other fruit, to accommodate a true taste of the islands and to expand the production of foodstuff made from locally grown fruit;
- ✓ Expand production of staples such as sweet potatoes, eddoes and cassava to increase the food security of the country while creating an abundance that can be leveraged into more efficient livestock feeds and value-added products;
- ✓ Introduce organic certification to tap into the lucrative market for lettuce, herbs, spices and other goods;
- ✓ Continue support to provide farmland, tractors, refrigerated trailers, computers and business services to Bahamian farmers to support agriculture; and
- ✓ Improve product development, research, and technology to expand the country's processing capacity.

THE BLUE ECONOMY & FISHERIES

The FNM will:

- *Work with Bahamian stakeholders, fishers and the environmental community to create a long-term plan for the Blue Economy;*
- *Adopt various recommendations from the Economic Recovery Committee and the National Fisheries Association on enhancing fisheries in a sustainable manner;*
- *Promote training and skills development in conservation, identification, and exploitation of marine resources;*
- *Continue to promote investment in aquaculture, mariculture, and modern sea farming ventures;*
- *Continue to promote the study of the country's marine resources to create opportunities for the artificial propagation and enhancement of local fishing stocks;*
- *Continue to work with international organizations to provide ongoing technical and financial support to ensure the growth, protection, viability, and sustainability of our marine resources;*
- *Continue to promote and develop maritime industries;*
- *Continue to work with the Bahamas Maritime Authority to “promote, facilitate and encourage the development of ship registration and maritime administration of The Bahamas”; and*
- *Continue to promote and to enhance maritime education and employment.*

CULTURE, HERITAGE AND THE ARTS



The FNM will continue to conserve and promote Bahamian culture as a central part of national development.

We have a rich cultural heritage that is a blend of the historical experiences of the peoples of the Americas, Africa, Europe and Asia over the centuries across our diverse chain of islands.

We must guard our cultural heritage. We must teach our history. We must support our cultural industries.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Create a Ministry of Culture, Heritage and the Arts;
- ✓ Create a commission called Jubilee Bahamas to prepare for the 50th anniversary of independence;
- ✓ Adopt various recommendations from the Economic Recovery Committee on the Orange Economy;
- ✓ Upgrade the National Centre for the Performing Arts;
- ✓ Continue to support the ongoing development of the National Art Gallery of The Bahamas;
- ✓ Continue to work toward the development of the National Museum of The Bahamas;
- ✓ Continue to work with the Antiquities, Monuments and Museums Corporation to protect, secure and showcase Bahamian heritage;
- ✓ Create a Junkanoo Village;



IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Develop a national mural and public arts project;
- ✓ As a part of the construction of the new Glass Windows Bridge on Eleuthera, develop an iconic cultural site inclusive of an outdoor cultural area;
- ✓ Promote heritage tourism as an integral part of tourism promotion and development throughout our archipelago;
- ✓ Create an advisory board for the development and promotion of Bahamian music and entertainment;
- ✓ Enhance heritage sites and infrastructure, including amenities, signage and heritage plaques;
- ✓ Continue to promote heritage and cultural tours and programs for Bahamians and visitors;
- ✓ Continue to support creative arts programs and the creative economy;
- ✓ Continue to ensure that Heads of Agreement with hotel and cruise industry partners contain provisions to promote opportunities for the creative economy, artisans and cultural entrepreneurs;
- ✓ Continue to encourage the development of the cultural sector to encompass music, film production, visual, performing and literary arts; and
- ✓ The FNM will incentivize more cottage industries in the production of quality souvenirs.



SECTION FOUR



CRIME AND SECURITY



The Free National Movement understands that the people of The Bahamas are its most valuable resource.

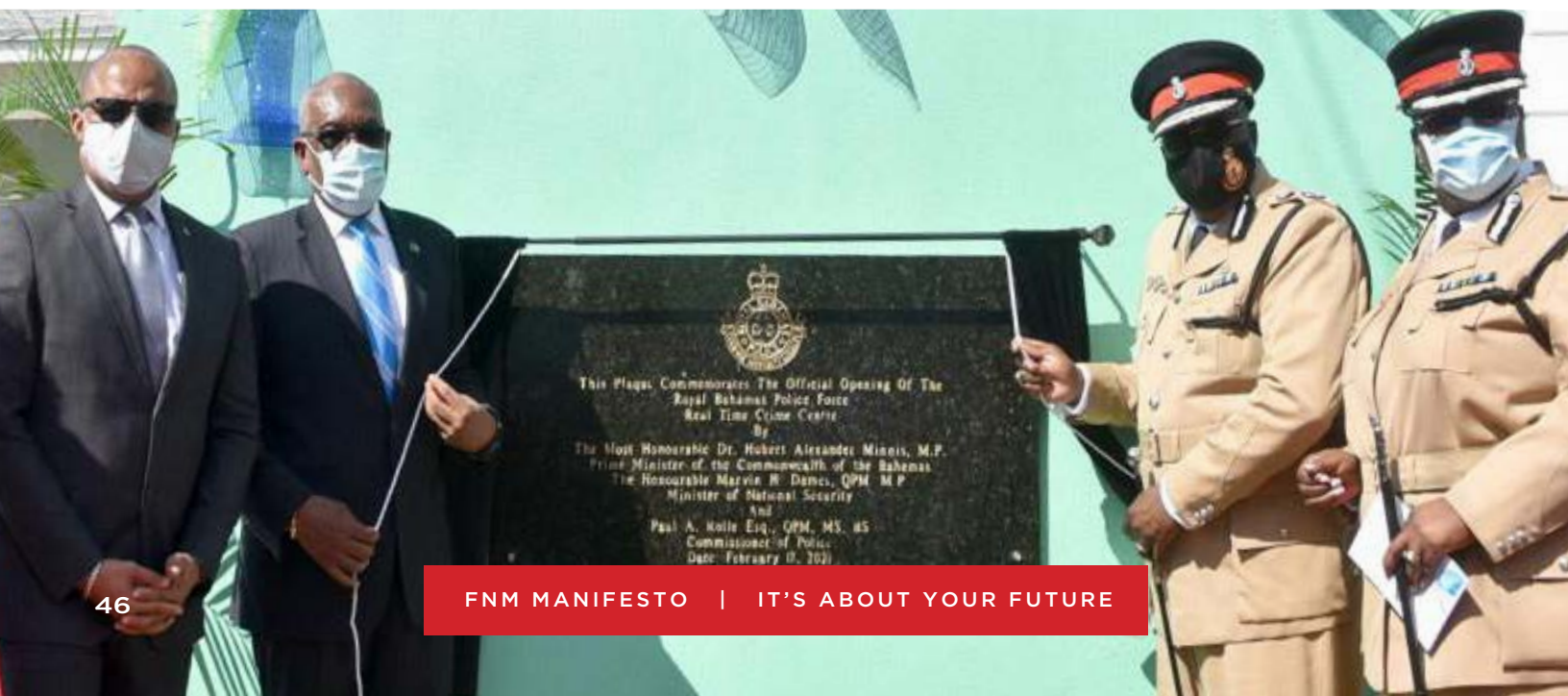
A human-centered approach with emphasis on safety and security undergirds national development.

Safety and security during our first term were viewed via a holistic framework across multiple disciplines.

Over the last four years, we have been able to consistently reduce serious crimes such as murder, armed robberies and sexual offenses by strengthening the legislative framework; incorporating advanced technologies; helping modernize the judicial system; reforming rehabilitative programming for our incarcerated population; creating the appropriate infrastructural bases; and promoting an integrated national platform among law enforcement agencies for effective and efficient responses to crime.

After careful assessment of our concrete actions to improve and advance safety and security beginning in 2017, we now propose new objectives to strengthen the security for our citizens, residents and visitors.

Our continued approach to safety and security will be rooted within four interrelated domains inclusive of physical and institutional, digital, economic and social security.



LAW ENFORCEMENT ORGANIZATIONAL REALIGNMENT

We will seek to align the management, structures, personnel and the information systems in our nation to support our law enforcement agencies, improve community partnerships and foster proactive and feasible problem solving to the nation's safety concerns.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Establish an independent Fire Department;
- ✓ Introduce a modern Fleet Management System in the Force Garage;
- ✓ Establish a Special Investigations Unit (SIU) for the purpose of investigating serious complaints against law enforcement officers.

MODERNIZATION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT FACILITIES

As the role of law enforcement continues to evolve in The Bahamas, so should the facilities for officers and marines.

The FNM has begun the refurbishment of the McQueen's Town (Grand Bahama) police station, Internal Security Division (ISD) and Western Division; while Defence Force outposts have been upgraded/constructed on New Providence, Inagua, and Ragged Island. There have also been renovations in Maximum and Medium Security and the Remand Center in the Department of Corrections.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Adhere to recommendations from the Forensic Lab Committee to build a 21st century scientific lab through a public-private partnership;
- ✓ Renovate and upgrade law enforcement facilities throughout The Bahamas;
- ✓ Introduce legislation to create a national DNA database to compare perpetrator profile samples in sexual offenses;



- ✓ Support global initiatives to eradicate human trafficking in The Bahamas and around the world;
- ✓ Work in partnership with the National Crime Council to address the root causes of domestic and sexual violence in our society;
- ✓ Invest more in public awareness and socio-economic support for victims and agencies rendering aid;
- ✓ Foster greater partnership between the Police Force and the National Neighborhood Watch Council to create safer communities for victims of domestic violence and/or sexual offenses;
- ✓ Continue decentralization of the Defence Force's outposts throughout The Bahamas; and
- ✓ Continue to upgrade and modernize the Bahamas Department of Correctional Services for officers and inmates.

REDUCE THE USE OF ILLEGAL GUNS/ WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION

According to the United Nations, youth violence is the fourth leading cause of death for persons between ages 10 and 29 years. Globally, 83 percent of youth homicide victims are males. They also are the majority of perpetrators of these crimes.

For the period 2017-2020, the rate of youth homicide steadily decreased in The Bahamas.

The FNM administration has adopted a multi-disciplinary approach to gun violence and associated crime. We aggressively implemented new policing methodologies, and engaged in joint operations with our national and regional partners to rid our streets of illegal guns and ammunition.

We also engaged the National Neighborhood Watch Council to address the gun violence in communities throughout The Bahamas; engaged the National Crime Council to address underlying issues in victims and perpetrators of crime to foster healing; and equipped our law enforcement agencies with new technologies such as ShotSpotter, CCTVs and training to increase response times to gun violence.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Install more ShotSpotter gunshot sensors to detect, locate and alert police to gunfire;
- ✓ Introduce drone technology to complement ShotSpotter to identify perpetrators quickly;
- ✓ Improve multi-agency partnership between HONLEA members and international border patrol agencies to interdict guns and ammunition before they enter our borders;
- ✓ Build greater capacity in NCIA to gather intelligence and disseminate to HONLEA to reduce the number of illicit firearms and ammunition on our streets;
- ✓ Partner with the NNWC to develop more youth and mentorship programs for our at-risk youth; and
- ✓ Continue to construct youth centers in urban areas to offer conflict resolution programs and educational training for youth development.

CORRECTIONAL SERVICES REFORM

Many individuals upon release from correctional facilities face an array of challenges reintegrating into their communities.

During this term, our administration aggressively expanded education and technical and vocational training for inmates at the Bahamas Department of Correctional Services (BDOCS).

In conjunction with the Citizen Security and Justice Program, educational training was offered to inmates and officers.

To date, the BDOCS is getting closer to achieving its target of training 600 inmates, as 466, or 77 percent, have already completed training at the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institution (BTVI). They were collectively awarded 363 certificates in various disciplines.

Meanwhile, 240 personnel received training, which included seven officers being certified as adjunct professors.

The FNM will work on more correctional reform to improve the working conditions for officers and the living and educational opportunities for inmates.



IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Establish a Correctional Services Commission to regulate administrative and operational procedures for officers at the BDOCS;
- ✓ Strengthen all academic and vocational programs at the BDOCS with the option for inmates attaining a high school diploma in conjunction with the Ministry of Education;
- ✓ Through partnership with the Citizen Security and Justice Program and BTVI, offer more educational opportunities and professional development for inmates and officers; and
- ✓ Continue capital developments to improve the working, living and educational environments for both officers and inmates.

BAHAMAS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES' FOOD INDEPENDENCE

It is expensive to feed inmates at the prison. During the 2020-2021 fiscal year, it was estimated that \$1,968,000 was spent on food costs.

The FNM administration has sought to advance food independence at the BDOCS by engaging with the University of The Bahamas. The effort has been to assist in reorganizing the inmates' kitchen, healthy meal preparations, and providing bread at reduced costs.

In conjunction with BTVI and the Citizen Security and Justice Program, our administration has provided instructional training for officers and inmates in various disciplines.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Develop a portion of the BDOCS's 60 acres of available land to move toward food independence;
- ✓ Partner with industry experts to provide agricultural technical support to the BDOCS;
- ✓ Partner with the Ministry of Agriculture to enhance food production and livestock rearing;
- ✓ Contribute to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2, which seeks to end all forms of hunger and malnutrition, achieve food security and promote sustainable agriculture by 2030; and
- ✓ Reduce the dependence of the BDOCS on the public purse to fund food sufficiency.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP FOR NEW MEDIUM SECURITY FACILITY AT BDOCS

During this term the FNM administration made significant investments in the Department of Corrections.

We tackled some of the most pressing issues at the facility, consisting of upgrades to deteriorating infrastructure at the Maximum Security and the Annex Housing Facilities; replaced the antiquated security systems throughout the facility; and restored the water system at the Remand Center Facility.

Public-private partnerships form a key component in national development. They bring together the expertise and resources from Government and the private sector.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Build a 21st century Medium Security Facility at the Department of Corrections;
- ✓ Foster greater public-private partnership in the management of the new security wing at the Department of Corrections;
- ✓ Provide a more humane rehabilitative environment that fosters a new perspective for inmates, while assisting as a deterrent variable and as punishment for deviant behavior; and
- ✓ Increase and improve the mental, physical and psychological services for officers and inmates at the Department of Corrections.

STRENGTHEN OVERSIGHT OF POLICE-CITIZEN INTERACTIONS

In the wake of citizen concerns regarding the use of force, globally, police forces have come under much scrutiny and criticism.

The Royal Bahamas Police Force has a policy on justifiable force and harm that outlines the appropriate actions to be exercised if a situation arises requiring the use of force.

During this term, our administration increased professional development for officers and introduced 200 dash and body cameras.

The FNM in the next term will refocus on deliberate, well-disciplined multiagency collaboration supported by active community engagement to assist in redefining police-citizen interaction.

The goal is to strengthen oversight of law enforcement to foster greater transparency.



IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Improve police-citizen interaction through a shared understanding of safety and security;
- ✓ Propose legislation to strengthen civilian oversight of law enforcement to foster greater transparency; and
- ✓ Establish a Special Investigation Unit (SIU) under the purview of Public Prosecution to investigate police-citizen complaints.

**TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR
LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL**

Our administration has established formal memoranda of understanding with the University of The Bahamas, the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Georgia, and the Georgia International Law Enforcement Exchange Program.

Under the umbrella of these organizations, more than 800 law enforcement personnel from the Police and Defence Forces, the Department of Correctional Services, Customs and Immigration Departments, and numerous safety and security personnel benefited from training.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Establish the Bahamas National Law Enforcement Training Center;
- ✓ Develop training manuals inclusive of required knowledge and skills for all law enforcement agencies;
- ✓ Increase memoranda of understanding with national and international tertiary institutions; and
- ✓ Improve transparency and accountability in law enforcement practices.

WELFARE CONSIDERATION FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL

The occupational health, safety and welfare of law enforcement personnel in The Bahamas are critical to advancing safety and security.

Our administration began to address some of the complaints by law enforcement personnel because we strongly believe that their welfare and well-being should be supported throughout their careers.

We successfully put forth a compendium of legislation to bring parity among all law enforcement agencies under the Ministry of National Security.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Reform conditions of service for career and reserve law enforcement personnel;
- ✓ Increase and improve mental, physical and financial services for all law enforcement personnel; and
- ✓ Realign law enforcement salary scales based on qualifications and with global standards.



JUDICIAL AND LEGAL REFORM



The Bahamas has an independent judicial system. The FNM strongly believes in the rule of law.

We also strongly believe in ensuring the various parts of the judicial and legal system have the resources needed to carry out their independent functions that underpin our democratic society. A fair, efficient and independent judicial system is essential to ensuring individuals, businesses and organizations can function freely.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Build a New Supreme Court complex on the site of the old Post Office Building at East Hill Street;
- ✓ Complete the construction of the new Administrative Complex and Magistrates Court in Eight Mile Rock;
- ✓ Grant additional powers to the Industrial Tribunal to enforce its rulings;
- ✓ Implement a comprehensive system of digital case management throughout the legal system in consultation with the Chief Justice, which will lead to virtually paperless court filings and court services;
- ✓ Implement new Rules of Court to modernize legal practice in The Bahamas;
- ✓ Complete the implementation of a digital system for receiving child-support and maintenance payments through the Magistrates Courts;
- ✓ Create a stand-alone Juvenile Court with a dedicated magistrate and social services officers as permanent panelists;
- ✓ Create a separate Sexual Offences Court in the Hansard Building for all civil domestic and family matters, and dedicated to the speedy trial of all sexual offenses and domestic violence cases; and
- ✓ In collaboration with the IDB, build the technical infrastructure to undergird the work of the Information Commissioner already appointed by this FNM Administration under the Freedom of Information Act.

CANNABIS POLICY



In recent years attitudes toward cannabis have changed around the world. The old view that use of the plant was dangerous has given way to widespread acceptance of its various medicinal and industrial uses.

Our cannabis laws are antiquated. They have unfairly punished too many Bahamians who used the plant for various personal, medical and religious reasons.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

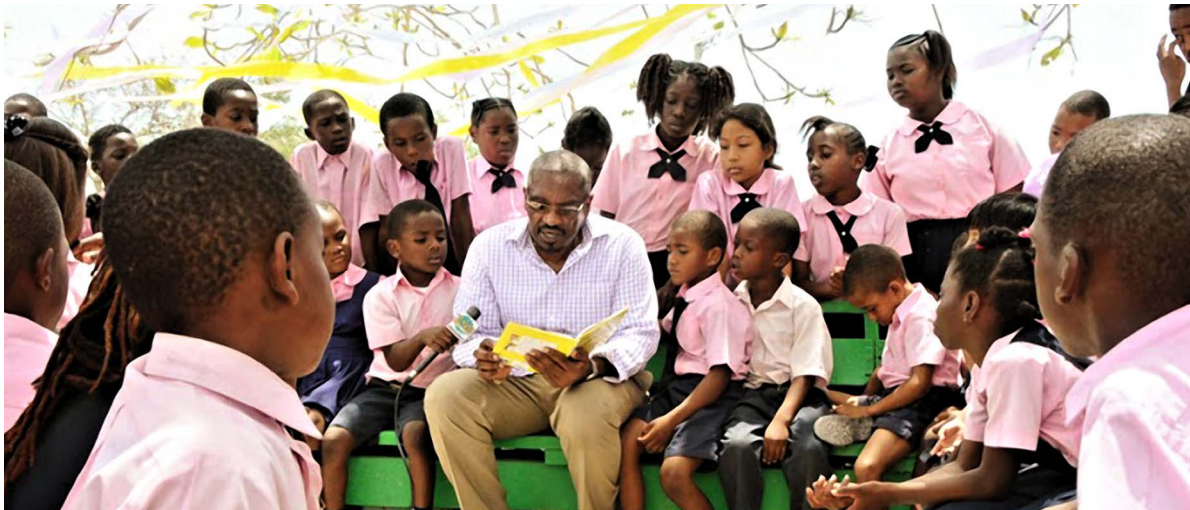
- ✓ Decriminalize possession of small amounts of marijuana for personal use;
- ✓ Legalize medicinal marijuana;
- ✓ Expunge the records of Bahamians who have convictions for possession of small amounts of marijuana;
- ✓ Establish a Cannabis Licensing Authority to oversee the new cannabis industry in The Bahamas. This will include regulation of issuance of licenses and other matters related to the sector;
- ✓ All companies in new cannabis industry would be at least 51 percent Bahamian-owned; and
- ✓ Make Crown Land available for Bahamians to grow legal cannabis.

EDUCATION



Education is one of the primary means of national development, and enhancing equality and opportunity for all Bahamians regardless of circumstance of birth.

The FNM has accomplished much in this term in education, including: free tuition for qualifying students at the University of The Bahamas and BTVI; expanded preschool opportunities; an improvement in educational outcomes; school digitization; new schools and extensive repairs and refurbishment.



IN OUR NEXT TERM THE FNM WILL:

- ✓ Expand preschool grant program and funding for support to preschools so that within five years all Bahamian children will have access to preschool education;
- ✓ Ensure that every Bahamian student in Government-operated schools has a tablet or computing device to aid their study and research;
- ✓ Expand tele-education so that students across The Bahamas have access to the full range of technical and vocational programs;
- ✓ Revamp and expand the Information and Communications Technology curriculum to permit more high school and tertiary technical students to obtain certifications in computer coding, website and app development and networking.

- ✓ Provide capital grants to eligible private schools to aid in the upgrade of their information technology and technology programs;
- ✓ Provide opportunities for public servants and employees of state-owned enterprises to attend UB and BTVI on a part-time basis for approved fields of study;
- ✓ Ensure that BTVI implements and expands green technology programs for instruction on the design and installation of solar and other renewal energy technologies;
- ✓ Provide scholarships and stipends for top level students who commit to joining the uniformed branches for a five-year period after graduation; and
- ✓ Expand “Life Skills” programs in primary and high schools, emphasizing conflict resolution, financial literacy, the basics of entrepreneurship and investing, community and civic engagement, preserving mental and emotional health and other life skills.

During the past four-plus years, five general goals were set for the Ministry of Education (MOE) by the FNM to attain compliance with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal of Quality Education.

The full achievement of these goals will continue to remain the top priority for the FNM in the next term.

UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL

In pursuit of achieving the UN goal of attaining universal pre-school access by 2030, the MOE has set a goal of enrolling 4,612 two and three year olds in a pre-primary program, with a view to achieving universal pre-primary access by 2025.

As at October 2020, 3,044 students had been enrolled. This was accomplished via the distribution of vouchers valued at \$2,000 per child to approved private pre-schools, to permit them to partner with the MOE in the provision of pre-school education.

Up to the end of 2020, the MOE had partnered with 108 private pre-schools throughout The Bahamas to distribute a total of 1,500 vouchers to preschoolers.

It is anticipated that the MOE will achieve its objective of attaining universal pre-school access five years ahead of the UN established goal.

THIRD GRADE LITERACY

The goal is to ensure that 65 percent of third graders attain grades of A to D on the Grade Level Assessment Tests (GLAT) in Language Arts.

In June 2019, the MOE celebrated Language Arts GLAT results that revealed that 63 percent of students received grades of A to D across The Bahamas.

This was a five percent improvement over the 2018 Language Arts outcomes.

UNDER THE FNM:

- ✓ In continued pursuit of its objective of the 65 percent ratio, the Ministry's literacy team will continue to work towards improving student learning outcomes in lower primary literacy;
- ✓ The MOE will continue to provide opportunities for professional development for teachers;
- ✓ It will continue to host focus groups for teachers who have less than 50 percent of their students achieving grades of A to D on the 2019 GLAT Exam;
- ✓ It will continue the use of pacing guides to provide guidance for teachers on the scheduled delivery of pre-determined content; and
- ✓ It will continue the development of lesson kits for teachers, and intensify support for the more challenged schools in the government-operated education system.

BAHAMAS HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA/GRADUATION

The FNM has set a critical goal of increasing the graduation rate from 50 percent to 85 percent by 2030.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on reporting on the graduation rate for the Class of 2020.

However, since 2017, the rate was improving each year. It was estimated that it was on target to reach 65 percent by the 2022/2023 school year.

In an effort to respond to the learning deficit experienced by many students during the pandemic, under the FNM the MOE will continue to encourage the attainment of BJs by all students before they leave junior high school.



IN THE NEXT TERM, UNDER THE FNM, THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION WILL:

- ✓ Expand the intervention program, using the virtual platform, including reaching more students throughout the Family Islands;
- ✓ Continue to identify and pilot key content areas for core subjects;
- ✓ Continue to implement the Team Teaching Strategy at the senior high level;
- ✓ Continue to standardize intervention and content strategies across the country to improve reporting and analysis;
- ✓ Approve content/strategies for distribution to district superintendents for implementation;
- ✓ Monitor and evaluate performance for improvement; and
- ✓ Provide instructional packages for students unable to access the virtual platform, and provide marking of the material by teachers.

DIGITAL EVOLUTION

The MOE has set a goal of digitizing the entire Government-operated school system, putting a tablet or other device in the hands of every public school student unable to obtain one on his or her own, and providing a laptop and projector for every teacher to promote the teaching and learning process.

Despite the devastation from Hurricane Dorian, the MOE launched its Virtual Learning portal in September 2019.

The Department of Education will continue the provision of services via its Virtual Learning Network.

The network consists of the Education Management Information System (EMIS), which provides a centralized system for school management and data collection using information on students and staff, and the Learning Management System (LMS), which houses educational resources inclusive of digital resources designed for subjects and levels.

Under the FNM, the MOE will continue to ensure that students log on to and remain on the learning platform. As at October 2020, approximately 50,000 students were logging on consistently.

The MOE will also continue to monitor the operation of the system to ensure that needed upgrades and interventions are carried out.

In pursuit of upgrades and Wi-Fi connectivity in schools and administrative offices countrywide, in excess of \$10 million is being spent.

The islands of New Providence, Grand Bahama, and Eleuthera are complete. Works are underway and are soon to be completed in the remaining Family Islands by the end of 2021 – i.e., in Andros, Exuma, Long Island, Abaco, and in the South-Central Bahamas.

With the assistance of corporate and civic partners, and Government funding, approximately 45,000 devices have been provided for students in Government-operated schools.

It is estimated that the Government of The Bahamas will spend more than \$17 million on technology upgrades.

SCHOOL MODERNIZATION

The School Modernization Project includes the repair of existing buildings as required, the construction of new schools, and the amalgamation of Family Island schools with a view to achieving economies of scale, maximizing productivity, reducing teacher shortages, and enhancing the delivery of quality education at Family Island schools.

Repairs have thus far been carried out at Maurice Moore Primary School, Hugh Campbell Primary School, Jack Hayward High School, St. George's High School, and Sister Mary Patricia Russell Jr. High School in Grand Bahama.

Repairs have also begun on schools in Abaco with Patrick Bethel High School and Fox Town Primary School, and repairs are underway at all schools in New Providence.

Shortly, works will be completed on schools in Abaco and on Holmes Rock Junior High School in Grand Bahama.

With the assistance of the Ministry of Works, 19 public schools will be repaired in Grand Bahama and 15 in Abaco.

San Salvador High School works are completed. There is the completion of works at Lowe Sound Primary School, and Staniel Cay Comprehensive School. Construction of a new Grand Bahama Comprehensive School will begin shortly.

Under the FNM, the Ministry of Education is also in the process of finalizing policy documents in five critical areas: curriculum reform; pre-primary education; special education; technology upgrades and technical and vocational education and training.

Other initiatives underway include amendments to the Education Act, which will improve and streamline the operations of the MOE and affiliated agencies, promote further modernization, and improve the capacity of the ministry to be more responsive to its core clients.



HEALTH



The health of a nation is truly the wealth of a nation.

The FNM made significant investments in healthcare over the last four years, including significant sums to respond to the pandemic.



THE FNM WILL MAKE ONGOING INVESTMENTS IN:

- ✓ Health infrastructure;
- ✓ The expansion of telemedicine; and
- ✓ Expansion of Universal Health Insurance via National Health Insurance.

A photograph of the Princess Margaret Hospital entrance. In the foreground, a large black sign with white text reads "PRINCESS MARGARET HOSPITAL" and "HOSPITAL ENTRANCE". In the background, a yellow building with white columns and windows is visible under a blue sky with clouds.

PRINCESS MARGARET HOSPITAL HOSPITAL ENTRANCE

TO PROVIDE FOR IMPROVED HEALTHCARE, IN THE NEXT TERM WE WILL:

- ✓ Construct a new six-story, 96,000 square-foot tower at the Princess Margaret Hospital to increase capacity and enhance the medical service delivery system. The multi-story medical, surgical, maternal and child health facility will cost \$55 million. The tower will also provide easy access and flow of patients on the in-patient wards that accommodate primary users of the intensive care, neonatal intensive care units and operating theaters;
- ✓ Complete the expansion and modernization of the Rand Memorial Hospital in Freeport, Grand Bahama by constructing a new four-story tower;
- ✓ Ensure the availability of doctors on every Family Island;
- ✓ Ensure that the National Health Insurance Authority continues to expand access and progress toward Universal Health Coverage for all Bahamians and legal residents in our archipelago;
- ✓ Complete phase two of the Urgent and Emergency Care project at PMH;
- ✓ Continue renovations at: the Eye Ward, Female Medical II, the former Physiotherapy Unit, the former Female Surgical II, the Children's Ward; Male Medical II; and the decommissioned Intensive Care Unit;
- ✓ Acquire new radiology equipment for enhanced clinical care, and support delivery of new modalities of care at PMH;
- ✓ Construct a new Infectious Disease Unit at PMH;



- ✓ Continue the modernization of the Sandilands Rehabilitation Centre;
- ✓ Continue our ambitious and comprehensive program to restore, refurbish and retrofit clinics throughout New Providence, Grand Bahama and the Family Islands;
- ✓ Significantly enhance and upgrade the telemedicine infrastructure and technology;
- ✓ Work with domestic and international private sectors to create a modern healthcare infrastructure program to provide new and refurbished healthcare facilities on New Providence, Grand Bahama and throughout the Family Islands;
- ✓ Incorporate the latest use of smart and green technology to provide for safe delivery of routine medical services;
- ✓ Transform the face of the healthcare sector to modernize its facilities to reflect Universal Healthcare in the Public Hospitals Authority, the Department of Public Health, the National Health Insurance Authority and the Ministry of Health;
- ✓ Review and create new wellness programs, including in the areas of mental health, tackling obesity and chronic non-communicable diseases, and alcohol and drug addiction;
- ✓ Modernize the Health Information System; and
- ✓ Continue to upgrade accommodations on Family Islands for medical professionals.

OVER-THE-HILL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



The Over-the-Hill community development initiative's clear objectives are: to renew communities through social empowerment, economic empowerment, rejuvenation, smart technology, green and sustainable technology, and programs for the youth and elderly.

THE INITIATIVE:

- ✓ Completed Phase I of the refurbishment of Southern Recreation Grounds;
- ✓ Engages in clean-up campaigns for the environment;
- ✓ Carries out ongoing bulk waste removal exercises and removal of derelict vehicles;
- ✓ Installs water mains/repairs on various streets within the community; and
- ✓ Provided over \$4 million in concessions under the Economic Empowerment Act.

The FNM will continue all of these and in the next term we intend to:

- ***Expand the economic empowerment zones to encompass more of the Over-the-Hill community;***
- ***Continue to pursue water and sanitation for all;***
- ***Complete Phase 2 of Southern Recreation Grounds;***
- ***Demolish abandoned buildings;***
- ***Repurpose abandoned lots;***
- ***Establish an at-risk center for young boys and girls; and***
- ***Focus on economic empowerment for Zone 2 (once passed).***



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND IMMIGRATION



The Bahamas must maintain strong international partnerships with other governments and international and regional groupings and agencies.

Good international relations are essential for national and economic development, national security, public health, and environmental cooperation to address the global climate emergency, including its effects on small island developing states such as The Bahamas.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Expand and enhance our national security, political, economic and cultural relations with other countries by reviewing the expansion of the number of Bahamas embassies and by enhancing staff at existing missions;
- ✓ Continue to strengthen collaboration with regional and hemispheric partners to protect our sovereignty and borders, and to counter drug, arms and human trafficking;
- ✓ Increase our diplomatic outreach, economic cooperation and trade and cultural exchanges with the Caribbean, Latin America, Asia and Africa;
- ✓ Work with regional and international partners to address climate change;
- ✓ Enhance The Bahamas' participation in regional, hemispheric and international organizations such as CARICOM, the Organization of American States (OAS), the United Nations (UN) and the Commonwealth of Nations; and
- ✓ Continue the professional development of Foreign Service officers.



IMMIGRATION

The FNM believes in protecting our borders.

We also believe in ensuring that those who reside in our country have the legal authority to do so.

Additionally, we believe in an efficient, orderly and fair process for those who require permits and residency documents.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Continue to enhance national security measures to address illegal migration, including the ongoing upgrade of national security infrastructure and assets;
- ✓ Continue the transformation of the Department of Immigration to make it more efficient and accountable;
- ✓ Continue to strengthen coordination between Immigration and Customs to enhance surveillance and security agencies at ports of entry and at private marinas;
- ✓ Review and enhance the capacity for the Department of Immigration to expedite applications for permanent residency, annual residency and work permits; and
- ✓ Continue to regularize the status of long-term residents and of those born and raised in The Bahamas to non-Bahamian parents.

LABOR AND PUBLIC SERVICE



The promotion of the dignity of all labor and workers is at the heart of the FNM's commitment to economic and social justice.

The FNM believes that all productive and honest work is dignified because of the dignity of the person doing the work.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Review an increase in the minimum wage;
- ✓ Continue to improve health and safety standards for workers;
- ✓ Promote policies that support working families, including programs in healthcare, home ownership, access to Crow Land, education and training;
- ✓ Enhance training and access to programs at BTVI and other institutions for workers, including in technical and vocational training;
- ✓ Continue to ensure that all Heads of Agreement recognize workers' rights;
- ✓ Continue to facilitate dialogue with trade unions to promote and implement training and worker education programs;
- ✓ Continue ongoing dialogue and collaboration with unions for economic and social development;
- ✓ The FNM will ensure that the National Insurance Board (NIB) is properly funded to carry out its mandate to assist Bahamians in their times of need;
- ✓ The FNM will develop a comprehensive public service training institute at the University of The Bahamas for the ongoing professional development and training of public officers at all levels; and
- ✓ The FNM will continue to work with public service unions for the benefit of public officers.

FISCAL AFFAIRS, ACCOUNTABILITY AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION



As a number of international commentators have stated, the last four years in The Bahamas have been marked by exemplary economic and fiscal performance and initiative even in the midst of historic calamities and setbacks.

“I believe that the commitment to fiscal responsibility articulated in this budget and demonstrated by this administration is commendable and unique. I am not aware of any independent country in the Caribbean, which has legislated and implemented any such fiscal responsibility framework/fiscal rules, without the commitment to do so under an IMF-supported program.”

—Marla Dukharan, Trinidadian Economist, June 2021

The FNM Government has:

- ***Taken the country from a decade of no growth/negative growth to a period of consecutive years of economic growth prior to Hurricane Dorian and the pandemic;***
- ***Ensured a strong pipeline of strong inward investments to fuel sustained economic growth, equal in 2020 to \$500 million more than the next closest small island development state;***
- ***Introduced and passed the historic Fiscal Responsibility Act 2018 which laid the way to a 60 percent reduction in annual fiscal deficits before Hurricane Dorian and the pandemic;***
- ***Introduced and passed a new Public Financial Management Act 2021 and a Public Debt Management Act 2021 to replace the 45-year-old Financial Administration and Audit Act and modernized the administration of the country’s debt and financial management;***
- ***Implemented the region’s most progressive procurement reform through the Public Procurement Act 2021;***
- ***Introduced Quarterly Budgetary Reporting so that Bahamians are consistently informed of the state of the country’s finances;***
- ***Established the country’s first dedicated public budgetary website (www.bahamasbudget.gov.bs) so that citizens and residents have full-time and unimpeded access to what is happening with their tax dollars;***



- *Facilitated the introduction of new regulations to allow for ‘crowd funding’ platforms so that Bahamian entrepreneurs can raise capital for new ventures and that ordinary Bahamians can invest small amounts into promising businesses;*
- *Implemented duty and excise tax exemptions for ALL Bahamian entrepreneurs and small businesses to ensure they have the same exemptions as large businesses and resort developments;*
- *Eliminated the VAT on breadbasket items and medicine;*
- *Introduced the Back-to-School VAT Holiday and the Hurricane Preparation VAT Holiday;*
- *Eliminated the \$100 annual business license fee for Bahamian small businesses and made it free for such businesses to register;*
- *Created an online single portal for those signing up for a business license;*
- *Introduced provisional business licenses to allow low-risk small businesses to start up immediately while waiting for formal regulatory approval;*
- *Ensured the highest sustained level of foreign reserves in the history of the country - over \$2 billion - to ensure the enduring strength and viability of the Bahamian dollar even in the midst of the country’s worst economic crisis;*
- *Introduced the fully online Customs ‘Click2Clear’ platform to streamline clearing of goods and to mitigate against Customs fraud; and*
- *Transformed the Department of Statistics into the Bahamas National Statistical Institute through the passage of the Statistics Act 2021. This allows for a nimble and independent statistics entity that will meet the critical data needs of the Bahamian public and private sectors.*
- *Established the Prime Minister’s Delivery Unit as a centre of government approach to performance management and public administration, fostering data-driven decision making.*



To keep the pace of critical structural reform going, the incoming FNM administration will build on the historic and innovative policies and legislation to ensure that the country's economic recovery is accelerated and sustained.

MOVING FORWARD, THE FNM ADMINISTRATION WILL:

- ✓ Further streamline business registration and company registration processes so that both can be done simply online and without need for third-party support;
- ✓ Further streamline banking regulations including the introduction of an electronic KYC platform that will make it easier for residents and businesses to open bank accounts and change banking relationships;
- ✓ Divest the Government of its shareholdings in Bank of The Bahamas to a qualifying entity through an open and transparent process;
- ✓ Facilitate the introduction of a National Real Estate Investment Trust with public and private sector investment capital to address the many distressed properties and to provide opportunities for initiatives such as "Rent to Own" for qualifying individuals and businesses; and
- ✓ Continue the modernization of all accounting and Treasury processes to ensure accountability for public expenditure and timely settlement of vendor payables.

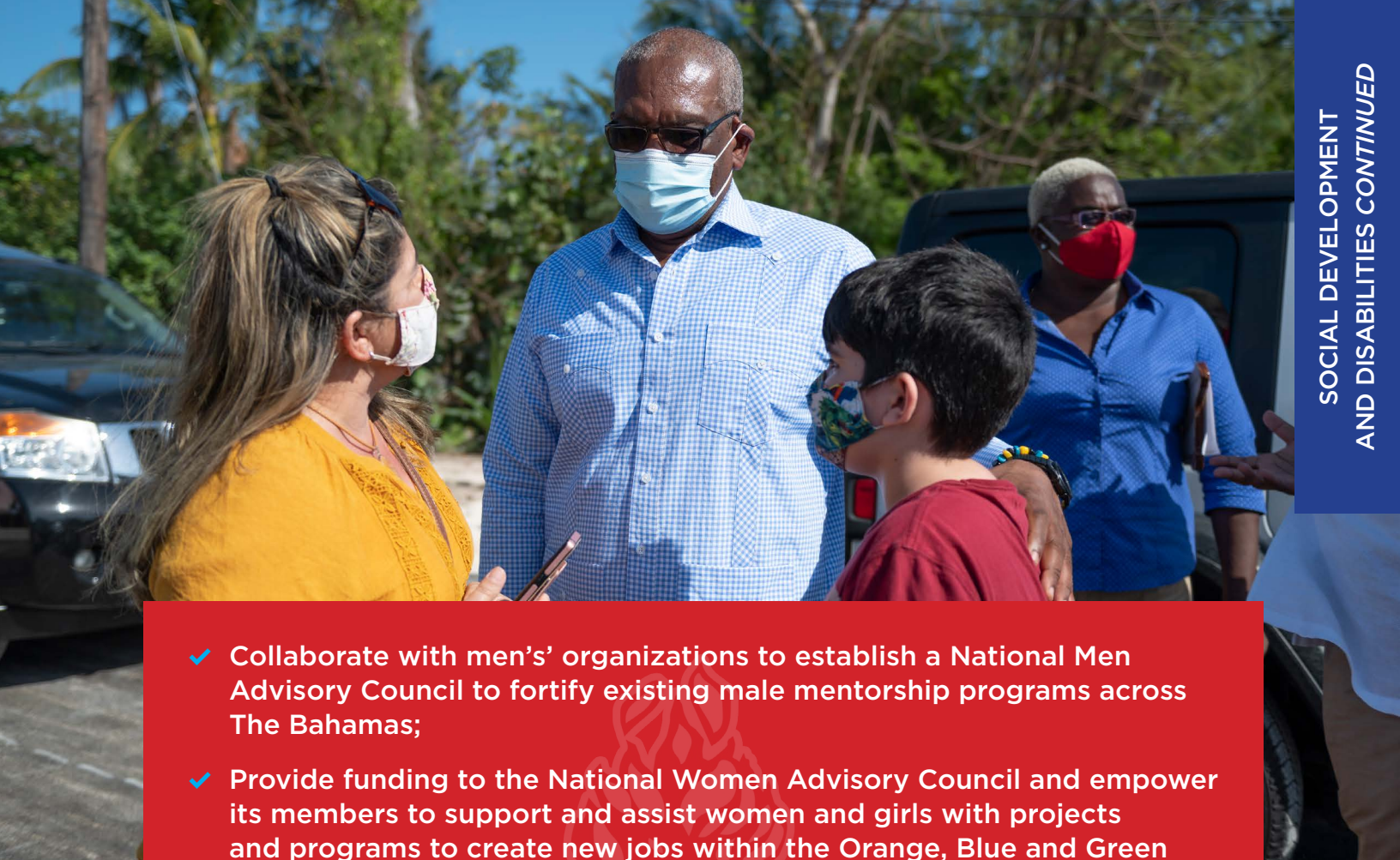
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND DISABILITIES



The FNM is committed to preserving and protecting the dignity of families and individuals by strengthening partnerships with civil society and all NGOs to provide support, relief and assistance to the most vulnerable and marginalized.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Work with churches and religious communities for the holistic social development of The Bahamas, including programs for children, youth and families;
- ✓ Create a partnership with the Department of Social Services, civil society and NGOs to establish a Rental Assistance National Network to assist families in urgent need of rent aid;
- ✓ Collaborate with NGOs to establish four transitional shelters in New Providence, one in Grand Bahama and one in Abaco to accommodate the homeless population using existing grants;
- ✓ Strengthen the national digital system to account for fair distribution of food, uniform, rental and utility assistance for families in need;
- ✓ Create a statutory National Safe Bahamas Agency to comprise of Government technical officers, civil society representatives, private enterprises and others to address crime and reduce violence throughout The Bahamas;
- ✓ Partner with the business community and the National Training Agency to establish satellite training centers to offer courses in communities for unemployed individuals;
- ✓ Establish a Fund to Alleviate COVID Economy (FACE) program to receive regional and international grants for nonprofit organizations to promote relief for assistance and aid for people with disabilities, the elderly, the homeless, the indigent and survivors of abuse;



- ✓ Collaborate with men's' organizations to establish a National Men Advisory Council to fortify existing male mentorship programs across The Bahamas;
- ✓ Provide funding to the National Women Advisory Council and empower its members to support and assist women and girls with projects and programs to create new jobs within the Orange, Blue and Green Economies;
- ✓ Strengthen the Unemployment Apprenticeship Programs by providing twenty-one Urban Renewal Centers with sewing machines, computers, supplies and materials across The Bahamas, targeting young women; and
- ✓ Provide grants to non-profit organizations to establish safe homes for women and families experiencing domestic violence.

UNIVERSAL SCHOOL MEALS PROGRAM

International studies have shown that students with access to free breakfast have improved attendance rates and perform better in school.

Free and accessible school meals have also shown to reduce financial stress for students and families, improve health outcomes in students, reduce stigma associated with the programs, and lead to fewer behavioral incidents and lower suspension rates.

Every student in The Bahamas should have the opportunity to learn, focus and grow without worrying where their next meal will come from.

Every child deserves a quality education free of hunger.

A universal program eliminates the stigma attached to initiatives that single out children from lower income homes and ensures that all children have the nutrition they need to succeed.

This program will ensure that all children have a reliable source of meals and that schools have the resources to administer these critical programs.

THE FNM WILL:

- ✓ Enact a Universal School Meals Program that will provide nutritionally balanced, free breakfast, lunch and snacks to all school children in the Government-operated education system regardless of income.

DISABILITIES

We must ensure that people with disabilities have greater access to opportunities and the flourishing of their talents and abilities. We believe in an inclusive society in which all Bahamians should be offered the opportunity to live to their fullest potential.

In the next term the FNM will:

- *Continue working to create daytime care facilities for people with disabilities. This would help provide holistic care environments and assist families during the daytime hours;*
- *Follow global best practices to work toward equality of opportunity for all people with disabilities;*
- *Focus on assessments and strategies to ensure early detection and support therapies exist to determine potential cases of disability in order to maximize early interventions and inclusion in society;*
- *Continue to support those on the autism spectrum and their families;*
- *Continue to work toward provision of specialized equipment, orthotics, etc., up to a certain age;*
- *Organize a robust utilities assistance voucher system to assist people with disabilities who are in need;*
- *Increase job training for persons with disabilities; and*
- *Focus on creating a system of tax relief for people with disabilities and their families/guardians.*
- *Continue our initiative of allocating a percentage of all the Government's special programmes (e.g. land ownership) for persons with disabilities.*

SPORTS



The Free National Movement believes in the holistic development of sports across our archipelago.

Our young athletes should have the best facilities and support possible so they are able to fulfill their potential.

Sports and sporting facilities are also important to encourage lifelong healthy practices among the general population.

IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Bring back the Bahamas Games;
- ✓ Host the basketball component of the Bahamas Games in South Andros;
- ✓ Refurbish the Thomas A. Robinson Stadium;
- ✓ Create sporting facilities in the Family Islands;
- ✓ Complete the Andre Rodgers Baseball Stadium;
- ✓ Complete 10-year sports infrastructure plan;
- ✓ Ensure there are well-maintained and resourced parks on all major Family Islands;
- ✓ Complete the state-of-the-art gymnasium in South Andros; and
- ✓ Continue to promote Sports Tourism.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT



The FNM first introduced Local Government in The Bahamas.

We remain committed to the ongoing development and evolution of Local Government.



IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Continue to promote improvements and the modernization of Local Government on the Family Islands;
- ✓ Enhance the training and skills of Family Island administrators and their staffs;
- ✓ Enhance access to digital technology in Local Government administration; and
- ✓ Continue to work with Family Island communities in the drafting and reviewing of development plans and projects for their islands and communities, including public and private sector investments.

PARLIAMENTARY REGISTRATION DEPARTMENT REFORM



After extensive stakeholder engagement, we put forth and successfully passed legislation to establish a permanent voters' register in The Bahamas.

The FNM will continue to strengthen the Parliamentary Registration Department's capacity to conduct elections. Voting is a fundamental right of all eligible citizens.



IN THE NEXT TERM WE INTEND TO:

- ✓ Establish a new and independent Parliamentary Registration Department to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of election administration throughout The Bahamas;
- ✓ Continue the digitization of the electoral process in The Bahamas; and
- ✓ Create opportunities for greater participation, accountability and transparency regarding the electoral process.

CLOSING NOTE FROM PRIME MINISTER

During our term in office The Bahamas endured the worst crises in our modern history.

The resiliency and determination of the Bahamian people have come through during these struggles.

You helped your brothers and sisters in the north in their time of need during Hurricane Dorian. You have abided by the public health measures to push back against this virus.

The pandemic is not over. Yet, there are signs we are coming back.

Our visitors are returning. Investors are returning.

Your FNM is ready to continue leading this economic recovery.

Your FNM is ready to fund even more small businesses.

Your FNM is ready to put more land in the hands of Bahamians.

Let us continue the revival of our country together!

Let us seize and embrace a better future for all!



Dr. Hubert A. Minnis

A stylized, handwritten signature of Hubert Minnis in dark blue ink.

Prime Minister and Leader of the Free National Movement

