

Chief Minister's Opening Remarks
Industry Day – “Vision Critical”
Coba Restaurant
20th February 2014

Thank you, Mr. Bell for that gracious introduction.

Good Morning Ladies and Gentlemen and I would like to adopt the protocol established.

However, I would personally like to welcome Mr. Robert Mathavious of the Financial Services Commission of the BVI; please give my regards to your Premier, Dr. Smith. I'd also like to welcome Mr. Vega of Artex Tribeca. Thank you for taking the time to visit and share with us and I do hope that you enjoy our Anguillian hospitality; we have the finest beaches, great food and hospitality amenities and even better people.

This industry day will provide us not only essential knowledge but also a great opportunity to share experiences both technical and regulatory issues that we have to deal with in this new era. I'm very pleased to be bringing you these brief remarks on behalf of the Government of Anguilla.

- You will recall that it was under my administration in 1994 when the first batch financial services legislation was passed in to law. Again under my administration, my Government launched the ACORN system, which at time was the most advanced electronic registry in the world

and a source of pride for Anguilla and our major competitive advantage. As the industry grows so will the contribution to our GDP and the overall economic development of Anguilla. To do this, each and every stakeholder must play their part. We will endeavor to create an environment where innovation and creativity is rewarded.

- More recently, you *know* that my Government has been serious about Financial services. In my plan called, the Blueprint for Anguilla's development; I pledged to place emphasis on the financial services industry and I have done so. We have invested two hundred and seventy-seven thousand US dollars (US\$277,000) for marketing and promotion with the establishment of Anguilla Finance Ltd – a first for Anguilla!
- I personally feel that we have to compete on expertise and talent now; the tide is swiftly turning against secrecy and minimal disclosure. You are more familiar than I with recent initiatives by the G8, OECD, and CFATF on transparency and also the American driven, FATCA. I am still not happy with the pressure that is brought to bare on these jurisdictions when Wyoming, Delaware and even London to some extent have escaped. In the end, the business will go where talent is and we have to make sure that Anguilla is where that talent is. Despite the challenges, I believe that Anguilla has cadre of well trained and competent practioneers. Two of whom you will hear from today in the person of Mr. Carlyle Rogers and Mr. Keithly Lake.

- There is no doubt that the global financial difficulties have caused us some challenges over the last six years. It has been quite a difficult time for our young people; the high cost of living, and high youth unemployment. Now more than ever, the efforts of us all are incredibly important for the future of our people, our young people in particular. I would encourage you to offer internships to young persons coming out of high school. Support Ms. Dyer and the team at the Bar Association by being a mentor. Get them to see Financial Services as a viable career alternative. I would like to recognize the work of the Anguilla Community College in this regard. I was pleased to hear of the record number students who are now pursuing Associates in Captive Insurance (ACI) designation.
- In the near future, my Government will be conducting a public consultation on the question of establishing a central registry and whether or not the information contained in this registry should be publicly available. I hope that we can engage in robust discussion on this matter and I look forward to the same. I've asked Perin Bradley to lead this consultation and I ask that you give him your cooperation.
- Similarly, we are also considering Insolvency Legislation. The draft bill has been circulated for your comments and I'm anxious to hear from you. We take for granted that some businesses will inevitably fail, but modern insolvency legislation would minimize the number of failed businesses and the costs associated with restructuring or winding up. It would give businesses access to a legal mechanism to restructure,

survive and thrive. Further, foreign direct investment and economic development would be more likely to locate in Anguilla if there were clear, modern and harmonized rules governing these matters. In addition to encouraging entrepreneurship, a robust insolvency regime would penalize recklessness and irresponsibility on the part of individuals.

- I'm more than sure that each and every person in here recognizes the need and importance of sound regulation. However, that regulation must be done in a pragmatic and sensible way, with an emphasis on addressing the underlying issues that create problems rather than treating the *symptom* of the problem. In most cases, things have gone too far by that point. Given the inherent risk involved in business, it is imperative there should be a sound legal framework which encourages growth, entrepreneurship and responsible risk taking.
- Similarly, I call on you, the industry partners to respect the regulators and give them your fullest cooperation. We should want our Financial Services Commission to meet international standards and provide a robust legal and business infrastructure for those doing business in or from the Anguilla.
- While I'm on the subject of the Financial Services Commission, I notice that there is a position on the board that will be vacant this June. I would encourage Her Excellency the Governor to use this opportunity to infuse the Financial Services Commission with new blood. I suggest that you appoint someone young; someone dynamic; somebody with some

regulatory experience as well as private sector experience. I think that sort of perspective would be beneficial.

- On that note, I would like to thank Her Excellency the Governor for her support. Anyone who followed our assent to office on February of 2010 can recall the difficulties her predecessor gave to Anguilla through your elected Government. Ms. Scott is a breath of fresh air compared to her predecessor who was misinformed about the viability of this industry.
- Before I go, I would like to thank Management and Staff of FSC for putting together an exciting program. Ms. Hatton, it's always a pleasure having you with us and I hope that our views will always be seriously considered. To Mr. Bell, I wish you all the best in your future endeavors.
- To you industry partners, and to all stakeholders, it is my high hope that this day will be of great benefit to us all. Thank you and have a pleasant day.