



## Opening Remarks by Governor John Rolle 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Bahamas Research Conference on Financial Crime

Margaritaville Beach Resort, Nassau Bahamas  
22 January 2026

Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen, and welcome to the Seventh Annual Bahamas Research Conference on Financial Crime.

I would like to begin by thanking Professor Jason Sharman for his leadership as Chairman in organizing this conference. I am once again impressed by the remarkable selection of papers which will be presented at this year's conference. I wish to express gratitude to my colleagues at the Central Bank of The Bahamas for their time and commitment in making this conference possible.

I am delighted to extend a warm Bahamian welcome to all of our scholars and guests: those who travelled to be here to participate in-person, and those who have joined us virtually.

I wish to acknowledge some of our distinguished guests amongst us today, including Ms. Elisa de Anda Madrazo, President of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) who is with us virtually; Ms. Dawne Spicer, Executive Director of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF) who is also participating virtually; Senator, The Honourable L. Ryan Pinder, Attorney General of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas; the Honourable Lorna G. Smith, OBE, Minister of Financial Services, Economic Development and Digital Transformation for the British Virgin Islands; Mr. Esteban Fullin, the Executive Secretary of El Grupo de Acción Financiera de Latinoamérica (Financial Action Task Force of Latin America (GAFILAT)); representatives from the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB); representatives from the Attorney General's Office of The Bahamas; colleagues from The Bahamas Group of Financial Services Regulators (GFSR); and industry leaders present with us today.

We are grateful to the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) for its ongoing commitment as a co-sponsor by providing translation services.

The Central Bank of The Bahamas continues to find tremendous value in this annual research event. Namely:

- i. It encourages data driven enquiries into how, at the international level, the fight against financial crime can become more effective;
- ii. It places a focus on how the cost and resourcing of our efforts, can be more effectively tailored across all jurisdictions regardless of size;



- iii. It continues to emphasise the importance of access to data across the regulatory and enforcement landscapes; and
- iv. It reinforces the value of cross-border cooperation in strengthening access to data.

For the cross-section of Bahamian public and private sector representatives who are participating or exposed to these conference proceedings, we are also boosting our jurisdictional capacity to counter money laundering and other illicit financial transactions.

Consistent with how we view this conference, as a part of, and alongside other members of the Bahamas' GFSR, the Central Bank of The Bahamas remains committed to developing and enhancing its regulatory and supervisory frameworks, ensuring they remain aligned with global best practices and standards.

Beyond our international commitment, it is about safeguarding the stability of our financial sector, enhancing resilience of the sector, and ensuring that legitimate commerce continues to thrive on a cross-border basis. These outcomes rest collectively on the confidence and trust that our international correspondent banks maintain in us. Moreover, our success also allows us to confidently adopt, and continuously refine risk-based systems that promote greater economic and financial inclusion, from which social cohesion and stability of our country is strengthened.

Having this perspective also explains why we are steadfastly committed to achieving robust and compliant outcomes for effectiveness against the FATF's standards in the upcoming fifth round in the CFATF, mutual evaluations.

It is my hope that this research conference continues to stimulate policy discussions that drive improvements in the formulation and implementation of international standards; particularly, where the risk-based ideals are concerned, and where proportionality and tailoring becomes more prominent in how smaller jurisdictions are able to demonstrate effectiveness.

As I close, I trust that over the next two days, you will seize the opportunity to engage, network and forge meaningful connections with academics, compliance professionals, regulators, and industry experts. It is also my hope that the relationships formed during this conference continue to inspire collaboration and innovation in our fight against financial crime.

Thank you for your participation and contributions. I wish you a rewarding conference and look forward to seeing you at the conference in 2027.

Thank You.