

ARRIVAL Speech – Andrew Murdoch

23 January 2025

Thank you Premier for your welcome. I am delighted to be here.

As I stand in the magnificent Cabinet Office grounds, I feel a palpable sense of the history of this beautiful archipelago, its institutions and, above all, its People.

It is a great honour to be appointed as His Majesty The King's representative, and to serve as Governor, Your Governor.

I am deeply proud and delighted to be sworn in today. It is wonderful that I can share this moment with some of my family who are here with me today. They are already making plans to visit again perhaps when the weather is a little warmer.

While I am new to this place, being surrounded by the Ocean feels so familiar. I grew up by the coast, was a sea cadet, worked on commercial fishing boats as a teenager, and then served in the Royal Navy for two decades. I have a great affinity for the sea and island life and a high regard for those Bermudians that serve at sea to ensure our safety and security.

This historic office, dating back in one form or another to the earliest days of settlement, has rightly changed over the years. The Constitution sets out my legal responsibilities and I commit to faithfully carry out the functions of Governor. I am here to do my very best for Bermuda.

In doing so, I look forward to working in partnership, and in a spirit of collaboration and mutual respect, with the elected Government. Indeed, I arrive at a particularly important time given the recent dissolution of the Legislature and election on 18 February.

Given the turmoil around the world, we must celebrate and fiercely protect the strong democracy in Bermuda, and the ability of its people to peacefully and freely express their will at the ballot box.

The rule of law under the Constitution is the foundation on which so much else rests. I know, having served the Crown as a lawyer for over twenty years, that ensuring adherence to the law is essential for good governance. As such, ensuring lawful decision making will always be my priority in carrying out my responsibilities, including through supporting a strong and independent judiciary.

Bermuda has an enviable international reputation as a safe and secure place to live and work. Generations of Bermudians have worked tirelessly to create a stable and well-regulated environment to do business, especially in financial service. Economic growth is rightly acknowledged as key to building prosperity and wellbeing for the peoples of the UK and Bermuda. It is underpinned by confidence in our institutions, maintenance of standards and accountability. Promoting and strengthening these elements under the Constitution, as well as contributing to the maintenance of the highest standards of conduct in the Bermuda Police Service, will also be an important priority for my time.

Bermuda, like many small islands, is on the frontline of the climate and nature crisis. Given this, Bermudian stewardship of internationally important and unique ecosystems remains essential. I am passionate about supporting the work of those that help to protect the natural environment on which we all depend.

Climate related and other crisis can have immediate and profound impacts to small territories. I will therefore also be prioritising my time to work with all the emergency and other services in their disaster readiness and resilience work.

Those services include the Royal Bermuda Regiment. I am humbled and proud to be their Commander in Chief, including in this their 60th anniversary year. It is a privilege to be back in uniform today, albeit with more feathers than I have been used to.

In a world that so often feels divided, I will use my time and energy to get to know and support all the communities in Bermuda, championing diversity, inclusion, and the under-represented. Historically The Governor has been fortunate to be Patron to some wonderful charities and organisations. It will be a tremendous privilege to meet those that work tirelessly to help others, or use their free time to support sporting, cultural or other good causes. If you feel I can do something to help your organisation, please reach out to me. I aim to be a Governor that you find approachable and accessible.

I look forward to becoming part of Bermudian life and taking pride in its culture and unique traditions. If you see me, please introduce yourself, and help me get to know you and this Island.

Today as I start my time of office I do so with gratitude. Gratitude for the warm welcome from you, Mr Premier, gratitude for the support of those assembled, and gratitude to those that have worked so hard to make this ceremony possible.