



**Ministerial Statement**  
The Hon. Alexa Lightbourne, JP, MP  
Minister of Home Affairs

**Second Africa – CARICOM Summit**

12<sup>th</sup> September 2025

**Good morning Madam Acting Speaker,**

I rise today to report on Bermuda's participation in the Second Africa-CARICOM Summit, which took place from 6 to 8 September in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, under the auspices of the African Union Commission.

The Summit convened Heads of Government and senior delegates from across Africa and the Caribbean, joined by the United Nations Secretary-General and the Chair of the African Union - the President of Angola.

**Madam Acting Speaker,** the Summit carried deep symbolic weight.

A gathering of the Caribbean community... descendants of Africa, who returned to the cradle of civilization as kin with the deeply etched memory of the violence of slavery and division established by Colonial exploitation.

As a Bermudian, recognizing that our African-descended community dates back to 1617, it was a moment of profound reclamation.

The Summit was our opportunity to rediscover and to reconnect.

We met as one people and, we affirmed that there is more that unites us than the false narratives imposed upon us through slavery, colonialism, and exploitation.

These very forces that stripped us of dignity and who are responsible for distorted identities - who sought to - and still seek to undermine the value of our collective progress.

As Bermuda's Minister of Home Affairs, I embraced the proceedings as an agent of ideological progress. Reaffirming our identity, oneness and as proxy to reclaim the dignity denied to our ancestors.

At the Summit, Africans and Caribbeans, declared our commitment to repatriating our minds and to rediscover one another. There was undoubted recognition that to see each other was to see ourselves.

As the Minister responsible for CARICOM Affairs, it gave me great pleasure stand in solidarity with the island community.

We were welcomed home. We stood on never colonized Ethiopian soil, and affirmed a commitment to shared economic prosperity and to justice for the true African diaspora that we represent among our islands.

**Madam Acting Speaker,** one of the most significant engagements arranged on the margins of the Summit was the official visit of the delegation to Shashemene.

Honourable members would note is the land that Emperor Haile Selassie set aside nearly six decades ago and invited any member of the diaspora to return home.

While there, I had the pleasure of reconnecting with Bermudians who had answered the call. I was particularly moved to be connected with brother Danny Rogers.

**Madam Acting Speaker,** as we chatted and we bonded over our shared history that intertwined in Bermuda and, as we connected and exchanged our stories, it revealed that not only was he my constituent but fondly recalled my grandfather who cut his hair as a young boy, in a rich moment of alignment and connectivity.

**Madam Acting Speaker,** I was moved to learn that many Bermudians had decided to make their lives there and express a willingness to work with our Government to advance trade opportunities that extend to support Bermuda's economy, reduce costs, and align with the Government's agenda.

The promise they offered represented practical pathways to strengthen food security, diversify imports, and expand opportunities for Bermudians, all of which support our Government's mission.

**Madam Acting Speaker,** our Government's mandate rests on unity, equity, and tangible progress. Bermuda's presence at the Africa-CARICOM Summit advanced each of these priorities. Unity was strengthened through connection with our Caribbean family and with the African Union. Equity was advanced through engagement on economic justice and opportunity.

In Addis Ababa and in Shashemene, I carried the voices of Bermuda's people, the workers confronting high prices, the seniors requiring dignity in retirement, and the families seeking stability. I was honoured to represent the voices of our community and to affirm that Bermuda and its history is inextricably linked to the Caribbean and to Africa

**Madam Acting Speaker,** the Summit evidenced that connection is our greatest strength. Connection between Bermuda and the Caribbean. Connection between the Caribbean and Africa. And connection across all diaspora communities who continue to keep alive the memory of our struggle and the hope of our shared prosperous future.

Bermuda will continue to foster strengthen relations with the CARICOM membership and bring the electorate along the journey recognizing that the silence of our historical bond has been the greatest weapon on our undeniable identity. We will do so as part of a diaspora reclaiming its place in history, determined to shape a fairer and more sustainable future for all our people alongside our brothers and sisters.

In Bermuda, as across much of the diaspora, we may not know the names of our ancestors or the exact lands from which they were taken, yet we should know and always remember that without question we are African.

This truth is our bond. It will be the catalyst that brings us together as people across oceans and across centuries.

**Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker.**