Ministerial Statement

By

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Update on Policing Operations and Community Safety

September 29th, 2025

Madam President, recent violent incidents have caused understandable concern across our community. People are asking what is being done, and they deserve clear answers. I rise today to provide an update on the actions being taken by the Bermuda Police Service. The Police have responded swiftly, targeting those responsible for the violence and increasing their presence in affected areas. Progress is being made, but lasting safety will only be achieved when the community and the Police stand together to combat this blight on our community.

Madam President, the Bermuda Police Service has acted decisively to address heightened tensions in certain areas of the island. Officers are deploying every lawful tool available to disrupt gang activity and bring offenders to justice. This includes targeted stop and search operations, the execution of drug and firearms warrants, and focused beat patrols in North Hamilton. The Gang Targeting Team has been expanded to respond immediately to intelligence leads, while work continues with the Director

of Public Prosecutions to review legislation that can strengthen enforcement powers. As part of that review, there will be a focus on strengthening existing provisions that allow for increased penalties where offences are committed with a bladed article or a firearm.

Madam President, technology is also playing an essential role. The Police continue to rely on our CCTV network as a critical tool in both daily operations and criminal investigations. Approximately 400 camera views are now available to officers, and the system has already provided crucial evidence in recent cases. Its effectiveness was demonstrated when officers secured evidence from 10 government CCTV sites following the recent Court Street tragedies. To build on this success, Cabinet will shortly consider the business case for the next phase of CCTV expansion, ensuring that the Police are further supported in their work.

Madam President, recruitment and training remain equally important. At present, 15 recruits are completing their training and will graduate in October, with another course of 15 recruits beginning in November. To maintain our momentum to bolster the ranks, another series of advertisements has been placed recently for us to begin an additional round of recruitment. The Service acknowledges that attracting officers remains a challenge in Bermuda's tight labour market, but efforts are underway to widen the net. Both local and international recruitment has been launched for approximately 22 additional officers arriving early in

2026. These steps will strengthen frontline capacity and ensure a sustained police presence in our neighbourhoods.

Madam President, I turn now to the most serious investigations before the Police. Arrests have been made in relation to violent incidents in North Hamilton, though no charges have yet been filed. The Police are working diligently, but they have raised deep concern about the limited number of witness statements received, despite these crimes occurring in broad daylight.

No policing strategy can succeed without the support of the community. Too often, those who hold the answers remain silent, and offenders are left free to continue their violence. The Police have the tools, the investigators, and the determination to bring perpetrators before the courts, but they cannot do it alone. Every statement matters. Every detail matters. The safety of our neighbourhoods depends on the willingness of law-abiding citizens to be brave enough to step forward to help put an end to this madness in our community.

Madam President, I therefore appeal directly to the families, the friends, the co-workers, and the neighbours who may have seen or heard something: do your part! Silence protects only the criminal. Speaking up protects the community, protects our children, and restores peace to our streets.

Madam President, to support this effort, Government has guaranteed rewards of up to fifty thousand dollars for information that leads to the

arrest and charge of individuals responsible for violent crime. This represents a significant increase from the previous maximum reward of five thousand dollars. Through our partnership with Crimestoppers, the public continues to have a safe and anonymous avenue to share what they know. This guarantee ensures that anyone with information can come forward anonymously. The Police need your information, and Crimestoppers ensures it can be provided confidentially and with real impact.

Madam President, the Bermuda Police Service is also drawing on international expertise to strengthen its capabilities. Through arrangements secured with the United Kingdom, overseas specialist officers will be deployed for a period of up to six months to provide targeted support in investigations, and capacity building. Funding is also being provided for advanced surveillance tools, which can be deployed as needed. These measures are interim, designed to bolster our capability while the Service continues its own recruitment and long-term capacity building. This is about making smart use of global resources to strengthen policing here at home.

Madam President, alongside these measures, the Bermuda Police Service, in partnership with Government House and the Ministry of National Security, will host a community town hall on gun and gang violence today, Monday, 29th September 2025, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the St. Paul A.M.E. Church Centennial Hall, 59 Victoria Street,

Hamilton. At this meeting, His Excellency the Governor, Andrew Murdoch, CMG, the Hon. Michael A. Weeks, JP, MP, Minister of National Security, and the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Darin Simons will provide further detail on the actions under way and planned, and members of the public will have the chance to ask questions and share their views.

I encourage all residents to attend and to take part in this important national conversation.

Madam President, I close by reaffirming that the Bermuda Police Service remains steadfast in its mission of making Bermuda safer. Through proactive enforcement, strategic use of technology, ongoing recruitment and training, international collaboration, and, most importantly, partnership with the community, the Police are working to protect this Country. The Government will continue to support them with the resources and legislative backing they require. But success depends on us all. I therefore call on every member of this community to play their part, to support the Police, and to ensure that those who choose violence are held accountable so that Bermuda remains a safe and secure place for all.

Thank you, **Madam President.**