



Ministerial Statement

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

Second Africa – CARICOM Summit
12th September 2025

Mr. 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 President of Angola and Chairperson of the African Union.

Mr. Speaker,

The Summit carried deep symbolic weight. To have stood on Ethiopian soil, was to have stood on history itself. 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.

For Bermuda, whose African-descended community dates to 1617, it was a moment of profound reclamation.

The Summit was our opportunity to rediscover and to reconnect. We met as one people, not as strangers. We affirmed that there is more that unites us than the false narratives imposed upon us through slavery, colonialism, and exploitation. The very forces that stripped us of dignity and who are responsible for our distorted identities and sought then and still seek to fracture our collective progress.



As Bermuda's Minister of Home Affairs, I embraced the proceedings as an agent of progress. To reaffirm our identity, oneness and to represent the commitment to reclaim the dignity denied to our ancestors.

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

It was my greatest pride, as the Minister responsible for CARICOM Affairs, to stand in solidarity with the community of islands. We stood on never colonized Ethiopian soil and reaffirmed the commitment to shared economic prosperity and to justice for the true African diaspora that we represent among our islands.

Mr. Speaker,

One of the most significant engagements of the Summit was the official visit of the AU-CARICOM delegation to Shashemene. This is the land Emperor Haile Selassie I set aside nearly six decades ago for members of the diaspora to return home. There, I had the pleasure of reconnecting with Danny Rogers who is a Bermudian who answered the call. In the moment the alignment of our shared journey bonded us, but as we began to chat further, he shared how he both remembered my grandfather, mother and even remembered me from my younger years. I left a small part of Bermuda with him and committed to return with a Bermuda delegation.

Mr. Speaker,

I was moved to learn that so many Bermudians had made their lives there and had expressed a willingness to work with our government to advance trade opportunities that could support Bermuda's economy, reduce costs, and align with our domestic sustainability agenda. The promise they offered represented practical pathways to strengthen food security, diversify imports, and expand opportunities for Bermudians, all of which connect directly to our government's mission to manage the cost of living.

Mr. 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 for the families seeking stability. I was honoured to have represented the voices of our community and to have affirmed that Bermuda is both African and Caribbean.

Mr. 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 CARICOM 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 have not always known the names of our ancestors or the exact lands from which they came. Yet we should know and always remember that without question we are African.

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

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.