

**Ministerial Statement**  
to the Senate

BY

**Senator the Hon Kim Wilkerson JP**  
Attorney-General and Minister of Justice

**Joint Ministerial Council 2025**

**Wednesday December 10, 2025**

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**Madam President,**

I rise today to report to this Honourable House on my recent participation in the Joint Ministerial Council (JMC) in London, where I had the privilege of forming part of the delegation in engagements central to Bermuda's constitutional development, legal responsibilities and our evolving relationship with the United Kingdom.

The JMC remains the highest political forum between the UK Government and the Governments of the Overseas Territories and this year's discussions were particularly focused on strengthening democratic governance and defining the next chapter of the UK–OT partnership. Our work was ably supported by the Bermuda London Office team.

Madam President,

Leaders across the Overseas Territories collectively acknowledged that the framework established under the 2012 White Paper "*The Overseas Territories: Security, Success and Sustainability*" no longer reflects the global, political or democratic realities of today.

A central outcome of this year's JMC was the agreement that the UK will work with each Territory to develop bespoke Compacts; arrangements tailored to the constitutional structure, governance needs and democratic aspirations of each jurisdiction.

As the Government's principal legal advisor, I supported the Premier in discussions with the UK Minister for the Overseas Territories, Stephen Doughty, on Bermuda's approach to this process. The Compact will articulate:

- the respective responsibilities of the UK,
- the elected Government of Bermuda, and
- the Governor,

all within the parameters of the Bermuda Constitution Order. This will ultimately take the form of a Memorandum of Understanding and, once concluded, will be brought before this Honourable House.

Madam President,

Constitutional modernisation remains a priority for this Government and I was pleased to brief the House of Lords Constitution Committee, led by Lord Strathclyde, on the considerable work undertaken to prepare the forthcoming report on Bermuda's constitutional reform pathway, following Cabinet's recent approval.

The UK reaffirmed its commitment to work constructively with Territories whose democratic will supports constitutional revision. Bermuda remains firm in its intention to engage fully, transparently and responsibly in this process.

Madam President,

A key element of my engagement at the JMC related to Bermuda's continued leadership in global financial integrity. I reiterated Bermuda's strong commitment to ensuring responsible transparency. Bermuda has introduced the Beneficial Ownership Act 2025, consolidating all relevant provisions into one modern legislative framework aligned with updated Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommendations.

Madam President,

During our time in London, I also participated in several engagements relevant to democratic governance, constitutional law and the evolving role of small jurisdictions in a rapidly shifting global environment. I had the privilege of speaking on a panel discussion on "*Modern Democracies*", alongside the Premiers of the Turks and Caicos Islands and Anguilla. During that discussion, we examined how Overseas Territories can modernise democratic institutions while preserving constitutional stability and responding to rising public expectations for transparency, accountability and inclusion.

The week ended with a Constitutional Roundtable hosted by Blackstone Chambers. This session brought together legal experts to explore challenges related to judicial independence, digital governance and the regulatory environment affecting Overseas Territories and British Crown Dependencies.

Madam President,

The JMC reinforced the collective determination of the Overseas Territories to safeguard our democratic institutions, strengthen our governance frameworks and advance constitutional clarity.

Our engagements demonstrated that more unites us than divides us. I am convinced that the shared issues we confront are best addressed through cooperation and mutual support.

I am pleased to advise that work has already commenced to turn the commitments made at the JMC into tangible outcomes that will benefit the people of Bermuda.

**Thank you, Madam President.**