



SENATE

**MINISTRY OF
TOURISM, TRANSPORT
& MUNICIPALITIES**

SENATOR THE HON. M. FAHY, JP

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

**Subject: Bermuda a Finalist in Multi-year
Bid – the ITU World Triathlon**

23rd November 2016

Madam, President, for a small island in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean with just over 64,000 people, Bermuda is once again “punching above its weight” as officials consider the island, along with two other finalists’ countries, bidding to host the ITU World Triathlon Grand Final in 2020. If successful, Bermuda will also host an ITU World Triathlon Series (WTS) race in the spring of 2018 and 2019 – with the impact of all three events resulting in significant direct spending on-island.

Madam President, the WTS is an annual worldwide series of nine to 10 triathlon races, culminating in a Grand Final. The week-long ITU World Triathlon Series events could attract as many as 1,200 competitors in each of the two years, including 150 elite athletes, while the Grand Final could draw as many as 3,000 competitors. Junior and amateur athletes will take part in each race series.

Visiting friends and families for each event would further increase our tourist numbers – with the BTA projecting that number to be around 10,000. Along with the athletes and their families will be journalists, TV broadcasters, support crew and competition officials that would drive visitation numbers significantly higher.

The event is broadcast on television in 160 territories worldwide, including in the United States where NBC Sports is the broadcast partner. Cozumel, Mexico hosted this year’s ITU World Triathlon Series Grand Final while Rotterdam Netherlands will host in 2017.

Madam President, we are now competing against prominent destinations. It was only three years ago that Bermuda was not in such elite company – in fact, we weren't even in the conversation, but now we are serious contenders. It just goes to show the distance we have travelled in a relatively short amount of time. Even if we don't come out on top this time, it's truly an accomplishment just to be considered for such a prestigious sports tourism event.

Madam President, the reason we are aggressively pursuing this opportunity is simple – it checks a lot of important boxes for the tourism economy. These international triathlon events are outside of the summer months...they bring robust media exposure...and this is sports – an area the BTA has made tremendous strides in over the past two years. Winning this bid would catapult Bermuda to the next level of sports tourism and it will be a terrific way to follow in the wake of the America's Cup.

Madam President, this has by no means been my Ministry's effort alone. Far from it! This effort has been in concert with the Ministry of Social Development and Sport, the Ministry of Economic Development, the Bermuda Triathlon Association and the Bermuda Tourism Authority – who were tasked by my Ministry with coordinating the bidding process. From the many meetings, phone calls and presentations with all stakeholders in recent months, I must commend the BTA on the outstanding job they have done!

With an event of this magnitude, and if we were serious about securing another major sporting event for the island, all hands had

to be on deck as we prepared our bid package. This package will be considered next month in Madrid Spain when the winning country will be announced.

Madam President, it doesn't hurt that Bermuda is the home of Flora Duffy, the reigning ITU World Triathlon Champion and perennial rock star of the sport. She is a wonderful ambassador for telling Bermuda's story as a perfect destination for athletes and adventure travellers. The way we see it, landing these events would be a fitting tribute to Flora, Tyler Butterfield, Tyler Smith and all of the impressive Bermudian triathletes making a name for themselves in this sport. This Government is proud to be supporting this initiative and our local Bermuda athletes.

Madam President, the destinations on the shortlist of bidders for the 2020 Grand Final have not been officially revealed, but previous hosts have been London, Auckland New Zealand and Chicago. As I mentioned earlier, the International Triathlon Union is expected to make their decision for 2020 at its Executive Board meeting next month in Madrid Spain, where Ms. Pat Phillip-Fairn, Mr. Phillip Schmidt and Mr. Christian Toetzke will accompany me for the official events.

Thank you, **Madam President**.