



OFFICE OF THE
PREMIER
CAYMAN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT

**Passing Out of the first members of the Cayman Islands
Regiment**

Remarks by Premier Hon. Alden McLaughlin, MBE, JP, MLA

5:30 p.m., Sunday, 16 August

Truman Bodden Sports Complex

Your Excellency, other honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen, I think it is rather odd for me to be making a speech with the audience behind me and especially men and women of the Cayman Islands Regiment.

Thank you for joining me in recognizing and welcoming the first official members of the Cayman Islands Regiment.

I am proud – indeed we should all be proud – of these 51 women and men who comprise the very first Cayman Islands Regiment.

I have thought about this moment for almost sixteen years now. It was in the aftermath of Hurricane Ivan that members of the Bermuda Regiment came to help us recover after Ivan had done its worst. They were disciplined and hardworking and provided great assistance to our people in a difficult time. They made a most lasting impression on all of us. And so when I first became a Minister in 2005, along with the then-Leader of Government Business Hon. Kurt Tibbetts, OBE, we approached the United Kingdom Government regarding starting our very own regiment. But at that time the UK Government was not willing to accommodate the request. But fast forward 15 years and on a visit here late last year by the then-UK Minister for the Armed services Brigadier Mark Lancaster the idea of the Regiment was discussed again. I am, and the country should be, most grateful for His Excellency Martyn Roper for his – not just support – but

his enthusiasm and his drive in persuading the UK Government on that occasion to support the formation of a Regiment and as the saying goes, the rest is history.

Well, perhaps not quite history yet for today is the beginning and indeed marks the culmination of many months of hard work and training to get us here.

Your Excellency I thank you and your office along with the Government of the United Kingdom for recognising the benefit to us in Cayman and those beyond our shores of our very own Cayman Islands Regiment. We announced only 10 months ago that we would be forming this Regiment and despite the impact of COVID-19 we are here today; an incredible achievement indeed.

As I look at this group of fine men and women I see promise of a great future. Not only your individual futures as you carry out your duty to serve our Islands in this great new institution, but I also see the promise of a great future for our Regiment. Undoubtedly every one of you can hardly believe you made it through those

rigors of training; whether here at home under the watchful eyes of Major Alex MacDougall and his team or in Bermuda or at Sandhurst in the United Kingdom.

As you go forward remember what you have gained from that training and use it for the benefit of our Islands and our Regiment. The future success and growth of the Cayman Islands Regiment rests largely in your hands; you as its first members. It will be in what you do and how you deport yourself that will help define the Regiment in the eyes and hearts of Caymanians and give it whatever reputation it earns. This is an awesome and important responsibility. Regardless of your rank each one of you has a part to play in the success of this regiment.

Hold fast to your motto “In Arduis Paratus - Prepared in Adversity”. Always be prepared to do your duty and to aid your fellow Caymanians and residents when disaster strikes - whether hurricanes or a virus.

Undoubtedly the Cayman Regiment will, over time, have a positive impact and play an important role in youth development and leadership in our Islands as future young Caymanians and residents join up and follow your footsteps under the leadership of Leftenant Theo Kelly, Leftenant Gabe Rabess, Leftenant Shanice Kelly, Leftenant Jonassi Swaby and Leftenant Halston Farley.

I commend Commanding Officer Leftenant Colonel Simon Watson, Operations Adviser Leftenant Colonel Simon Spiers, Major Andre Mon Desir and the Regimental Sgt. Major David Shelton for their leadership and all of their hard work in helping us realise this dream.

Members of the Cayman Islands Regiment - I salute you and wish for each of you a great future. May God Bless the Cayman Islands Regiment and may He continue to bless these beloved Isles Cayman.

Thank you.

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