



**MESSAGE**

**BY**

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**GOVERNOR GENERAL**

**ON THE OCCASION OF**

**NEW YEAR 2016**

My fellow Bahamians residents and visitors,

The dawn of a new year is always eagerly anticipated, and many of us have ushered in this day with much jubilation, excitement and renewed hope for success. For many, the annual Junkanoo parade this morning was part of that excitement, and yet for many others, the year began in worship, praise and thanksgiving to Almighty God for the blessing of seeing a new year, and undoubtedly, with fervent prayer for continued stability and success during the months to come.

It is a long-standing custom among many countries, including The Bahamas, to make plans for new and greater achievements over the next twelve months. I am sure that many of us also make resolutions which are used as guidelines for our lives during the year and I hope that those who have done so will make every effort to pursue them to the needed success.

As a people, we must always remember that Almighty God has blessed us with a beautiful country, and I call upon all to assist in the

maintenance of that beauty so that all of us and our visitors will be able to see the beauty and order which makes for the good of the whole country and come to admire the spirit which impels us to improve our environment for the enjoyment of everyone. This effort will take the full commitment of every one so that we can maintain our surroundings in a manner which will allow others to see and feel the pride and love we have for our country.

There are many things for which we must be grateful as we begin a new year, and among

these is the fact that we live in a country which guarantees our freedom. In the context of our democratic system, we have the opportunity to participate together in the thrusts toward the orderly development of our society. However, citizenship carries the profound responsibility for each one of us to be a productive part of continuing to build our democracy so that our young people will become the beneficiaries of seeing the system work for the good of all. We have much to be proud of as one united

people, and we have the responsibility to encourage and uphold each other as we move forward together.

I am sure that all will agree with me that our young people represent a pool of great potential for the future of our land, and therefore we must continue to inspire them to believe in themselves and to press forward to ensure that they develop their God-given talents and abilities to the fullest.

I therefore now address a few words of encouragement to our young people in particular. Your exuberance and creativity are being fashioned by your parents, guardians and teachers to help you to grow and develop into adulthood, and thereby to enable you to become good and productive citizens. Remember that your parents, guardians and teachers make many sacrifices just to assist you in your progress to adulthood, and to make sure that you are well prepared to become upstanding citizens. In order to benefit from their teaching and their example, I urge you to shun those negative forces which tend to work

against the good of our national development. Make sure that you prepare yourselves for the bright future which is yours as you progress.

As the year proceeds, I encourage all to do their part in building the strong foundation on which the family is established. As adults, let us mentor our young people and take advantage of the teaching and caring moments which this year will provide. Let us resolve to seize the opportunities which present themselves for us to unite in peace, love, and respect for each other, and boldly step forward to meet the future with confidence, knowing that we are assured of God's guidance and protection which, I am confident will help us to move through any uncertainties with hope and emerge with optimism.

Happy New Year to all!