

Statement on the occasion of the Emancipation Day

Statement by the Honourable Mia Amor Mottley, Q.C., M.P., Prime Minister of Barbados, on the occasion of Emancipation Day 2022

August 1, 2022

“Over these last few months, we have found ourselves at the forefront of an unparalleled convergence of global crises; namely, the COVID-19 Pandemic, global supply chain issues, skyrocketing fuel prices, a cost of living explosion and the growing impacts of the climate crisis.

It has been difficult. It is, and will continue to be difficult. But it is not impossible. One thing that has become increasingly apparent to me throughout all of this, is that any challenge we face as a nation, we can overcome once we work together. Our history guides us in this regard.

I urge all Barbadians to use today, to remember and reflect on what Emancipation Day is truly about. Less than 200 years ago many of our family members saw the end of the most brutal and egregious human rights violation, human history has ever recorded in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade.

Their emancipation was the result of a protracted and painful, but necessary collective effort across many of the former European colonies, to create a better world for themselves and for us, their descendants.

Today we commemorate not just their emancipation, but celebrate the lives and efforts of our African forefathers to end slavery. In remembering these things, let us understand that while the seas may get rough and while the struggle may be long, together we can and will see these challenges through. That is to say that egos, matters of self-interest and tribalism must give way to the way of thinking and the lifestyle that saw communities raise children and societies raise the bar.

At the same time, this era of global socio-economic malfeasance, that only favours the largest and most powerful of nations, must come to an end. The time for discussions and actioning of reparations is nigh; for while we as a people and a nation understand the need to face these challenges head on together, the global framework must be one that is fair and based on equality.

It is only then, when we all work together and fight for the common good, that we will overcome the crises that stand as roadblocks on our road to transformation and achieve the success I know lies in our future.”