

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF FINANCE
THE HON. SIR WILLIAM C. ALLEN
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS

FEBRUARY 28, 2002

OECD HARMFUL TAX PRACTICES PROJECT

THE BAHAMAS GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN ENGAGED IN EXTENSIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE NEGOTIATIONS OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS WITH THE ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD) ON A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE FORM OF COMMITMENT DESIGNED TO ACCOMMODATE ENHANCED TRANSPARENCY AND EFFECTIVE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION.

THE DISCUSSIONS HAVE BEEN PREDICATED ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT WHILE THE BAHAMAS IS PREPARED TO WORK WITH THE OECD, IT SEEKS A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD INCLUDING ALL COUNTRIES WITH WHICH IT IS MATERIALLY IN COMPETITION.

THE BAHAMAS HAS SUBMITTED A DRAFT COMMITMENT WHICH ADEQUATELY REFLECTS ITS WILLINGNESS TO COMPLY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE OECD ON INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND TRANSPARENCY AND ITS OWN COMMITMENT TO EVENNESS OF THE PROCESS. THIS SUBMISSION IS UNDER CONSIDERATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OECD'S INTERNAL APPROVAL PROCESS. THE BAHAMAS LOOKS FORWARD TO A CONSTRUCTIVE RESOLUTION OF THE DISCUSSIONS.