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**Red Ensign Group Conference 2017 Opening Remarks**

**Chairman of MACI – Mr. Philip Barnes**

11 July 2017

Good Morning All, the Protocol has been set, Thanks Ms. Exie Tomlinson-Panton.

As Chairman of the Board of the Maritime Authority of the Cayman Islands (MACI), I offer greetings on behalf MACI, and welcome all overseas delegates and guests to the beautiful Cayman Islands to participate in the Red Ensign Group (REG) Conference 2017. It is indeed a privilege to be chosen as the host country for this year’s meeting and we hope that all discussions present fruitful and mutually beneficial results.

The REG plays a key and dynamic role in sharing and supporting the UK administration in meeting its flag state responsibilities as well as each REG member dealing with their own responsibilities as flag administrations. This initiative of holding regular REG conferences has helped in accomplishing and upholding the high standards and the reputation that our ships enjoy today. This conference forum is ideal to for discuss and develop high level policies and procedures relating to the implementation of complex international maritime conventions, maritime laws, seafarer’s qualifications and standards and working and living conditions on board ships. It is understood that there is a full agenda for the conference consisting of important technical, legal and flag state operational matters for discussion including the topical subject IMO instruments implementation code known as III Code.

The Government of the Cayman Islands is very supportive of the important work being carried out by this conference and I wish that the ideas and best practices shared here over the next few days will ensure success in the future. I also hope that you will get some down time to enjoy our Island and get to know our people a little better. You will see, while here, that we are indeed the prized jewel in the Caribbean Sea.

Thank you and enjoy your time together.

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