

Statement from Minister of Home Affairs, Sen. the Hon. Michael Fahy, JP

Good morning,

Less than 24 hours ago, I addressed you regarding the ongoing industrial action between the Bermuda Industrial Union and the Fairmont Hamilton Princess that stemmed from an employment dispute.

Yesterday I outlined the steps that my Ministry had taken to seek to bring the two sides together as part of the arbitration process.

Granted yesterday was a day high in emotion with both sides seeking to get across their various viewpoints.

However today I am pleased to note that the two sides, with the assistance of Government have managed to come to a resolution which benefits all concerned. The resolution was agreed to and accepted by the BIU and the Fairmont Hamilton Princess management and I am happy to note that it is anticipated that all employees, including our public service workers, will return to work later this morning.

While I will leave the specifics of the agreement for the BIU and Fairmont to expand on, I just want to touch on the efforts of our Government representatives who worked to bring this situation to a close.

I'd like to thank the Attorney General, Mark Pettingill and his staff, and the Permanent Secretary of Home Affairs Randy Rochester and the Director of Workforce Development George Outerbridge for their work around the clock to get the two sides to the table.

And I wish to also highlight the Green Family for recognizing the importance of working with us to bring this matter to a close for the good of Bermuda.

Without question, this Government recognises the inconvenience that this situation caused the members of the public and our visitors. So we appreciate their patience and understanding during what was obviously a challenging time which saw them directly affected by the disruption of services.

If anything, these past few days have demonstrated:

- Ø The importance of maintaining strong relationships between employers and unions;
- Ø The importance of following the guidelines as set out in the collective bargaining agreement; and
- Ø The importance of going through the right channels of mediation to find resolution.

As I indicated yesterday, this Government will always recognise the rights of the workers, however when disputes arise we must be ever mindful that the labour process works best when it is rooted in a collaborative effort.

Thank you.