

# The Bahamas

**Also known as:**

*“The place where worlds meet”*  
(Source: *The Heraldry of the Commonwealth Caribbean*)

**Motto:**

*“Forward, Upward, Onward Together”*

**Location:**

The Bahamas is an archipelago state lying about 50 miles off the coast of Florida, extending over 750 miles south-easterly along the coast of Cuba to within 60 miles of Haiti and West of Turks and Caicos Islands. The archipelago comprises about 100,000 square miles with more than 4,000 islands, islets and cays, but it is commonly known as the country of 700 islands. Twenty-nine islands are permanently inhabited.

**History:**

The islands were colonised by the English in the 16th century and was a British Crown Colony from 1717 until internal self-rule in 1964. It gained independence on 10 July 1973.

**Head of State:**

Her Excellency Dame Marguerite Pindling, Governor General



**Head of Government:**

**Rt. Hon. Perry G. Christie**  
**Prime Minister**

**Date of birth:** 21 August, 1943

**Marital Status:** Married

**Education:**

Eastern Senior School, New Providence, The Bahamas  
The University of Tutorial College, London  
Inner Temple and Birmingham University, Honors 1969

**Professional and Political Career:**

2012: reelected Prime Minister.

2007: Leader of the Opposition.  
2002: Elected Prime Minister.  
1997: Leader of the Opposition; appointed leader of the PLP, reelected to the House of Assembly.  
1993: elected co deputy leader of the Progressive Liberal Party. with responsibility for Party activities outside of Parliament.  
1990: Minister for Agriculture, Trade and Industry.  
1982: Reelected Member of Parliament; Minister for Tourism  
1978: Chairman of Gaming Board (Regulates Casinos in the Bahamas)  
1977: Elected Member of Parliament and Minister of Health and National Insurance.  
1974 – 1977: Senator

**Economic Summary:** Tourism is the mainstay of the economy, providing employment directly and indirectly for over 50,000 persons. The industry is oriented mainly towards short-stay visitors and is concentrated in Nassau and in Grand Bahama Island. There is a strong offshore financial services sector. There is also a container trans-shipment port on Grand Bahama, as well as some export manufacturing.

**Airports:** Nassau International (New Providence)  
Freeport (Grand Bahama)

**Status:** Independent 10 July 1973

**Capital:** Nassau

**Population:** 338,300 (2008)

**Currency:** Bahamian dollar (BAH\$1 = US\$1) (2008)

**CARICOM Membership:** 4 July 1983

**National Anthem:** **March on Bahama Land**  
Lift up your head to the rising sun, Bahama land;  
March on to glory, your bright banners waving high.  
See how the world marks the manner of your bearing!  
Pledge to excel thro' love and unity.  
Pressing onward, march together to a common loftier goal;  
Steady sunward, tho' the weather hide the wide and treach'rous shoal  
Lift up your head to the rising sun, Bahama land;  
'Til the road you've trod lead unto your God,

MARCH ON, BAHAMALAND!

*(Words and music by Timothy Gibson)*

**National Highest Award:** Governor General Award

**National Dish:** Steamed Conch 'N Tomato Paste



Coat of Arms



National Flower



National Flag

**National Symbols:**