



CAYMAN ISLANDS
GOVERNMENT

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Financial Secretary's Welcoming Remarks at the GAIM Cayman Conference Opening Reception

Good Evening ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of the Government of the Cayman Islands, I would like to extend a warm welcome to you, our distinguished local and overseas guests and business associates. It is certainly a pleasure to host you in our beautiful Islands.

The Cayman Islands is an excellent place to live, work and do business. A testament to this is the more than 100 nationalities that we have welcomed among us. Our financial services industry has grown steadily and is now a prime gateway for international capital and economic growth for businesses and investors the world over.

We have a first-rate financial services industry and excellent business infrastructure, evidenced by the world's leading banks, accounting firms, law firms and fund administrators that are found in the Cayman Islands.

I am extremely delighted to attend the first GAIM conference to be held in the Cayman Islands, which I feel is a broad testament to the fact that this jurisdiction continues to stand-out as a reputable leader in today's global fund industry. This conference is significant because it allows for some prime networking amongst the world's leading industry professionals whilst giving us the opportunity to showcase our Islands as a first rate place to work and live.

This is not meant to be a high-powered and detailed speech but, please allow me to bring to your attention, some statistics pertaining to our fund industry. The number of funds licensed under our regulator, the Cayman Islands Monetary Authority, is more than 7,200, which has steadily increased since we enacted our Mutual Funds Law in 1993. The Cayman Islands currently has 160 licensed fund administrators.

The Cayman Islands Stock Exchange, which is primarily a listing facility, has its listings dominated by fund structures. Currently, the Exchange has more than 1,000 listings and a market capitalisation of more than 77 billion US



Dollars. This is a significant accomplishment as the Exchange was established just nine years ago and has reached break-even status two years before anticipated.

With such major achievements under our belt, I can confidently say that in a short time, the Cayman Islands' fund industry has emerged as a major force on the global scene. We are pleased that the international marketplace has responded positively to the high quality, well-managed products and services our jurisdiction offers.

The Government of the Cayman Islands, sincerely hopes that you take some time and enjoy the best of what Grand Cayman has to offer. You are in an ideal setting to do so, here at the Ritz-Carlton, and we encourage you explore our Island.

Before I close, I would like to state that, on Friday last, the Government of the Cayman Islands presented its budget for the financial year starting on 1st July 2006 to the Legislative Assembly. That Budget contained Revenue Measures of approximately CI\$23.3 million. None of those Revenue Measures are in respect of the funds sector – existing fees for the sector remain unchanged.

Ladies and gentlemen all that remains for me to do is to wish you a pleasant evening and a successful conference!