



REMARKS BY

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Minister of Tourism
Investments & Aviation
Commonwealth of The Bahamas**

SPACEX BRIEFING

Tuesday, 15 April 2025

Nassau, The Bahamas

Good afternoon, everyone.

Before we get into today's important updates, I want to recognize the historic moment that took place yesterday when Aisha Bowe became the first Bahamian to go into space.

Her amazing journey is a reminder of the brilliance and the tenacity of our people.

On behalf of the government and the Bahamian people, I express our congratulations and pride and joy.

Her people come from Exuma – so I must admit to feeling especially delighted by what she has achieved, and continues to achieve, at all altitudes - down here with us, at sea level, and all the way up to the heavens.

I am grateful she never listened to naysayers or skeptics who told her that her dreams were impossible – and I hope young Bahamians wondering how high to aim their own ambitions learn from Aisha to reach for the stars, whatever their aspirations.

Her space flight marked a new milestone - for her, for us, and for the commercial space industry.

As we saw yesterday, the commercial space industry is not a distant dream anymore.

It is real, it is here, and it is growing fast.

Space exploration is now part of the global economy—not just the global imagination.

And space tourism alone is already a multi-billion-dollar industry, estimated at \$14bn by 2030.

Projections indicate that by 2040, the broader space industry will be valued in the trillions.

And The Bahamas – thanks to our geography, our forward-looking vision, and our openness to innovation – is now a part of it.

We can be a serious player in the frontier that will define the next century.

But with every great opportunity comes challenges – and we will always put the safety of our people, our waters, and our environment first.

That is why we have spearheaded the legal reforms necessary for rigorous regulation and fully engaged the expertise of the FAA.

We ensured adequate due diligence by all relevant agencies of the government of the Bahamas as it relates to law, regulations security, safety and environmental.

Several weeks ago, we hosted a successful controlled landing of a Space X Falcon-9 booster in The Bahamas.

It was planned with our involvement, and it was executed flawlessly.

Exuma and Eleuthera were proud to host the many visitors – self-proclaimed space tourists - who came to witness the moment.

The Falcon-9 is a partially reusable rocket used for missions that include bringing cargo to the International Space Station and launching satellites.

The Falcon 9 programme has a long track record of

success, more than four hundred (400) safe landings, a 99% success rate.

Now, as many of you know, early last month, SpaceX launched a Starship from their Starbase facility in Texas. The intended site for re-entry was thousands of miles away, in the Indian Ocean. It was not intended to enter Bahamian air space.

The Starship – a new generation rocket substantially more powerful than the Falcon – is still in development, as SpaceX looks to develop the ability to undertake longer-distance and longer-duration missions. The operations of the Starship, a new

generation vehicle, fall under the jurisdiction of the United States' Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

Nine minutes into the March 6th flight, the Starship rocket began to break up, an incident visible from many countries, including ours.

And as you know, debris from the Starship 8 test vehicle was discovered in our waters.

The Bahamas was not involved in any way with the planning of that rocket's flight, but we were impacted by it.

Our country's Department of Environmental Planning and Protection is here today to provide an update on

the recovery, handling, and impact of the Starship 8 debris.

Notwithstanding, there will be no further Falcon landings in The Bahamas until SpaceX has completed a full Environmental Impact Assessment. DEPP will speak further to this if necessary.

You may already be aware that any additional landing each require a separate license from CAAB.

Regarding the debris from Starship 8 – it was collected and removed outside of The Bahamas at the full expense of SpaceX. Should any resident suspect

space debris has washed ashore, please contact the DEPP.

None of it will remain in our country, and The Bahamas will incur no cost.

The cost and logistics of this effort are being handled entirely by SpaceX, in accordance with international standards and under Bahamian oversight, to ensure compliance with safety and environmental standards.

I note also that additional debris has been identified in our waters, linked not only to SpaceX, but to three additional companies operating within the broader aerospace and commercial launch industry. The

Office of the Attorney General and DEPP are reviewing to ensure compliance with international Outer Space Treaties and Conventions.

These discoveries are under review, and we are working to determine the origin and responsibility in each case.

As commercial space technology and activities evolve, the industry holds great promise – but it will always require careful scrutiny, to protect our national interests.

Maximizing the opportunities and minimizing the risks will require a comprehensive strategy, including

diplomatic agreements, regulatory enforcement, scientific partnerships, and legal reforms.

As Bahamians, we will always protect and defend our sovereignty, our safety, and our environment.

All technical agencies are here and will take questions thereafter,

We are also pleased to welcome representatives from the US Embassy, who are here to speak about the ongoing cooperation between our two governments.

I want to thank all the agencies and partners involved in today's briefing.

And I thank the Bahamian people for your continued engagement and vigilance.

Now it is my pleasure to introduce US Embassy in Nassau Charge d'affaires Kimberly Furnish.