

PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENT

For Immediate Release

Speaker: Rodrick Wood, RLS #057, President, Bahamas Association of Land Surveyors (BALS)

Event: Trade Union Congress (TUC) Press Conference

Date: Thursday, December 4, 2025 @ 10:00 A.M.

Location: Omar's Legal Centre, Warwick St., Nassau, NP.

Good morning, members of the press, colleagues from the Trade Union Congress, and fellow Bahamians.

Thank you to the TUC for hosting this gathering and for its vital work in advocating for all working people. I am Rodrick Wood, President of the Bahamas Association of Land Surveyors, and I am here today to share significant updates on the renewal and forward momentum of our profession.

1. A New Partnership for Strength

First, BALS is proud and happy to officially join the Trade Union Congress. This affiliation is a strategic alignment. It signals that BALS views itself not just as a professional body, but as an advocate for the rights, standards, and welfare of our members—the skilled land surveyors who are the foundation of responsible national development. We stand in solidarity with the TUC's mission.

2. Celebrating a National Achievement

In October, BALS, alongside our partners, proudly hosted the first-ever Geospatial Week 2025. This landmark event was a resounding success, bringing together professionals from across various sectors to advance the geospatial sciences that are critical to our nation's infrastructure, environmental management, and economic planning. It was a testament to what we can achieve through collaboration.

3. Forging Productive Partnerships

As part of our renewed engagement with key institutions, the BALS Council has held a very productive courtesy call with the Director of Lands and Surveys. We are committed to a collaborative relationship to modernize and strengthen our sector. We note, however, that we are still awaiting the formal appointment of the Surveyor-General's representative to the BALS Council, a crucial step for fully integrated governance as mandated by law. We look forward to finalizing this appointment soon.

4. A New Internal Architecture for Integrity and Action

Following a highly successful General Meeting at the Akhepran International Academy, our membership has mandated the establishment of several groundbreaking committees to guide our future. These include:

- A **Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC)** to address past challenges with transparency and build a stronger, more unified foundation.
- A **Budget and Finance Committee** to ensure the utmost fiscal responsibility and sustainability.
- **Geodetic Committee** to deal with all higher level Geodetic Matters Locally and Internationally including all MOU's.
- And a **Membership and Standards Committee** to uphold and elevate professional integrity.

5. Appointments to the Land Surveyors Board

In a key step for regulatory oversight, the BALS Council has submitted its nominations for the Land Surveyors Board. These nominations were formally ratified by our general membership, ensuring they carry the democratic endorsement of the profession.

6. Taking Our Service to the Public & Our Islands

Our work is not just for ourselves; it is for the people of The Bahamas. To that end, we are planning to make our services and presence immediately available to the public, with functions being planned for Abaco and Grand Bahama in the short term. This is just the beginning of our "Bringing BALS to You" national tour, which will extend to Long Island, Eleuthera, and every remaining island in 2026.

7. & 8. The Path Forward: Building on Momentum

Our momentum will not stop. We are already planning the follow-up to Geospatial Week to ensure its benefits are long-lasting. Furthermore, we have plans to meet with banks and lending institutions to streamline processes for land development, making it easier for every Bahamian to realize their dream of land ownership.

A Call to Action and Our Vision

Today, we issue a direct challenge to our partners in the media. Help us to:

1. **Inspire the Next Generation:** Spread the word to students about the incredible opportunities in geospatial sciences—from training and certification to international conferences and student exchanges.
2. **Empower Communities:** Help us educate citizens about their land rights and how the new BALS is a resource for guidance and regular information sessions.

3. **Support Our Transformation:** Champion our evolution from a closed organization to a professional, community-based body ready to advise and support all islands, agencies, and citizens on land matters.
4. **Mark Our Presence:** Watch as we erect a commemorative monument on each island, starting where our Council resides, to celebrate our profession and its role in national development.
5. **Connect with Us Digitally:** Look for the launch of our first-ever official BALS website in January 2026, followed by our new podcast in February, to ensure our communication is open and accessible to all.

In conclusion, the Bahamas Association of Land Surveyors is awake, active, and organized. We are committed to working with the TUC, the government, and the people of The Bahamas to build a future where good governance, professional excellence, and service to the community are our guiding principles.

Thank you. I am now happy to take a few questions.