



Governor's Office
St Helena, Ascension and
Tristan da Cunha

HE GOVERNOR BELINDA LEWIS' RESPONSE TO WELCOME ADDRESSES, 12/09/2026

My Lord Bishop, Honourable Chief Minister, Madam Speaker, Honourable members of the Executive and Legislative Councils, The Honorary French Consul, Madam Sheriff, Chief Secretary, Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

Thank you most sincerely for your generous words of welcome. I am very grateful for the remarkable warmth with which I, and my family, have been received as we've begun to make St Helena our home. I am also grateful to everyone who has invested time and effort into arranging this wonderful inauguration ceremony, and to all of you for your presence here today to bear witness to my oath taking. I would also like to note my thanks to Governor Philips and to Mrs Philips for their kindness and generosity to me and my family.

It is a great honour to serve the people of St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha on behalf of our Sovereign, His Majesty King Charles the Third. I can assure you that I will strive to discharge the responsibilities incumbent on me as Governor to the best of my ability. I will listen carefully, I will learn with humility, and serve you with diligence, integrity and respect.

I am looking forward to working closely and constructively with the Honourable Chief Minister and the elected Government in a strong spirit of partnership. St Helena has a long, proud history, and it also has a promising future: I want to celebrate this, and am ready to play my part to help realise the potential of the many opportunities the Chief Minister has noted, and to advance the interests of the communities we are all here to serve.

There will, inevitably, be difficult issues to navigate. Madam Sheriff has mentioned some of today's geopolitical challenges – the situation in the Middle East, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, climate change - and we could add many, many more to that list. These events may feel far away, but, like many others, we're vulnerable to the impact of supply chain disruptions and rising transport and commodity prices. The Chief Minister outlined other, more local pressures. Against this backdrop, efficient public service delivery and sustainable economic growth can be tough goals to achieve.

But I share the Government's optimism for the future. And having worked in a number of different countries and across diverse cultures, I strongly agree with the Chief Minister that progress is best made when people work together with honesty, courtesy and determination. I can promise you that that will be my approach as your Governor.

When I look out at the beautiful ocean, I am mindful of the strong bonds with Ascension and Tristan da Cunha. Each island has its own distinct identity, and each deserves care and attention. I am hugely looking forward to visiting both islands as soon as possible.

Thank you once again for your very warm welcome. I am deeply honoured to be here, supported by my wonderful husband Tony and our two young daughters. And I look forward to working with you, and serving you, in the years ahead.