



# PRESS STATEMENT

STATEMENT FROM KABATHA SMITH, DIRECTOR OF THE TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

MAY 2ND, 2025



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Friday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025

## **Statement From Kabatha Smith, Director of the Turks and Caicos Islands Human Rights Commission**

The Human Rights Commission (TCIHRC) is aware of the video circulating on social media depicting an incident involving Immigration Officers and a male resident. The footage, which shows officers using what appears to be excessive force during an attempted detention, has understandably caused significant public concern and distress.

Since becoming aware of this incident, the Commission has made attempts to obtain clarity and information from the relevant authorities. To date, we have been informed that internal meetings and investigations are ongoing. The TCIHRC has also received two official complaints concerning this matter.

The Human Rights Commission takes all allegations of excessive use of force by law enforcement officers very seriously. As a national institution mandated to promote and protect the rights of all individuals in the Turks and Caicos Islands, we are committed to closely monitoring this situation and ensuring that the rights of the individual involved are respected and upheld.

We recognize the strong reactions from members of the public. Some have condemned the officers' conduct as a violation of human dignity, while others have expressed concerns for officer safety given reports that the young man may have acted aggressively. We acknowledge these perspectives, and we affirm that due process and accountability are vital—both for maintaining public trust and for upholding the rule of law.

While we await the outcome of the official investigation, we emphasize that no one is above the law, and all persons—regardless of their status—are entitled to humane treatment and due process. Excessive force undermines public confidence and can amount to a breach of fundamental rights as protected by our national and international obligations.

The Commission will continue to engage with the relevant authorities and will provide further comment as developments arise. In the meantime, we urge calm, respect for the investigative process, and a collective commitment to justice and human dignity.

Mrs. Kabatha Smith  
Director  
Turks and Caicos Islands Human Rights Commission

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