



**PRIME MINISTER BROWNE  
ADDRESSES  
THE MEMBERS  
OF  
THE ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA DIASPORA  
CELEBRATING  
THE 41<sup>ST</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE**

Greetings to all Antiguan and Barbudans dwelling in places outside of our beloved country. I wish each and every citizen, living abroad, a blessed and enjoyable 41<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of Independence.

Fifty-five years ago, on 27 February 1967, the most important step towards national freedom—taken by a generation that is no longer in leadership—was masterfully exercised. Our country’s leaders were far from satisfied to have control over the nation’s domestic affairs only, and not yet permitted to exercise leadership over defense and foreign affairs.

Fourteen years would then pass when, on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1981, the ultimate step would be taken. Antigua and Barbuda won its sovereignty. Since that date to the present, life chances on Antigua and Barbuda have increased significantly.


Our country’s gross domestic product (GDP) has moved from a paltry \$323 million dollars in 1981, to more than \$1,500 million dollars in 2021. The economy is five times as productive now as then. Covid-19 impacted our growth in 2020, since borders were closed to prevent the disease’s spread. Nevertheless, the current administration has been spectacular in its many achievements.

The placement of a Fourth Landed Campus of the University of the West Indies at Five Islands, Antigua, is surely the greatest accomplishment of this administration, taking our country's education to the next level. The PLH investment in Barbuda, destined to exceed US\$1,000 million dollars, is the largest tourism project in our generation's lifetime. The new runway, new resorts and other tourism projects on Barbuda will change the opportunities and trajectory of Antigua and Barbuda, moving us closer to being an Economic Powerhouse.

Those of our brethren who left Antigua and Barbuda many years ago for the purpose of acquiring tertiary level education, or in order to earn a higher income, may soon find that those reasons for leaving our native land no longer apply to your young family members and youthful others, living in Antigua and Barbuda today. Conditions are changing rapidly, thanks to sound policies and intelligent decisions.

The evidence nevertheless shows that those Antiguan and Barbudans who live in the metropolises have been very good to their relatives and friends who have traveled abroad for education, training and exposure. You have welcomed us into your homes, provided succor and comfort, and you have always rejoiced in our success. I thank you on behalf of all Antiguan and Barbudans.

May the blessings of our ancestors continue to pour down upon your heads, and may you sing as the last line in our national anthem commands: Defend Her Liberty.



Honourable Gaston Browne M.P.  
Prime Minister