GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

STATEMENT

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Remarks by Minister for Communications and Works Hon. Kye M. Rymer at the BVI Electricity Corporation S.T.E.P. Recipient Contract Signing

Release Date: 7 February, 2025



REMARKS BY

HONOURABLE KYE M. RYMER

MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKS

AT THE

BVI ELECTRICITY CORPORATION S.T.E.P. RECIPIENT CONTRACT SIGNING

FEBRUARY 6TH 2025

Greetings,

It is an exciting day in this Territory. We are not just signing contracts; we are fuelling a movement.

The Solar Technology Energy Programme, or S.T.E.P., is here, and it's our golden ticket to reducing energy costs. We are also embracing innovation, and securing our future as global leaders in sustainability.

So the good news: This government has put your money where its mouth is. Thanks to the Premier and his bold commitment and his partnership, we have injected $1 million into the S.T.E.P. initiative to kickstart this energy revolution.

But let us be clear! This is just the beginning.

I must acknowledge and to the incredible team at BVIEC—the General Manager, the Chairman of the Board, and every staff member—thank you for believing in this vision and for working hard to make this a reality.

Your efforts, homeowners across our islands who have signed up, will now see 50% of the upfront costs covered for your solar installations.

That’s right—half of the burden, gone!

And for those asking, “What is in it for me?”

Let’s break it down:

- This will slash your electricity bills by up to 50%—permanently.

- We will say goodbye to fuel price anxiety. Sunshine is free, abundant, and 100% Virgin Islands-made!

- Join a community of pioneers who will save, such as the persons using up 15,000 kilowatts annually you will see a savings of $2,700 a year or there about.

Here’s where we can dream bigger, BVIEC, let’s expand S.T.E.P. to include all solar technologies that cut energy costs and usage. What about solar water heaters? Solar-powered air conditioning units, even going into energy-efficient appliances.

These innovations exist, and I am challenging our BVIEC team to explore integrating them into future phases of this S.T.E.P. initiative.

As I mentioned the solar water heaters, as we move this year to merge Water and Sewerage and BVIEC, that is one of the things that I am sure that S.T.E.P. will also be doing, to introduce solar water heaters.

As I am speaking, I know the Premier is listening and he will inject a little bit more money, so that we can cover those cost as well.

Imagine cooling your home with solar air condition or heating water with sunshine—zero fuel, zero guilt, and 100% savings.

Let’s make it happen!

Now, let us talk about the generators that currently supply our energy:

We have nine working, and while we will continue to keep them maintained, keep them well-oiled and keep them working, here’s my truth—I do not want us to have to use them-at all. I want us to eliminate our need for them. Every solar panel install means less reliance on burning, upwards of maybe close to $50 million a year for fuel to power those generators.

So with each panel installed, we will be reducing that cost. That is $50 million we could reinvest in roads and water, so it is necessary for us to consider that.

This isn’t just about “going green”—it is about embracing a sustainable future by reducing our reliance on fossil fuel.

But S.T.E.P. only works if you step up.

So here is my rallying cry:

- Sign up today. Whether you are in Tortola, Virgin Gorda, Anegada, or Jost Van Dyke—BVIEC has options for you.

So tell a friend. This is not a secret anymore, it is an affordable solution for everybody. Not just for those who can afford it. Anybody that is interested you can get solar panels on your home.

Let us think bigger. Solar is not just for roofs. Let us innovate together—across homes, and everywhere else.

To the BVIEC team, the General Manager (GM) and the Chairman, let’s keep pushing boundaries, let us make S.T.E.P. a model—showcasing not just solar panels but the holistic energy solutions that make our territory stand out.

So let’s be clear: This is for real!

I acknowledge all the persons signing today, and congratulate you for taking this bold approach.

No empty promises. No delays. The paperwork is about to be signed, the funds are ready, and the sun is shining. All that is missing, right now, is you?

Let’s S.T.E.P. forward together.

I thank you.

May God bless these Virgin Islands.

Thank you, and may God bless these Virgin Islands!