GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

STATEMENT

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Statement by Honourable Kye M. Rymer- Renewable and Energy Efficient Products to have Zero Percent Customs Duty

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Good day, my fellow Virgin Islanders.

I speak to you today not just as Minister responsible for alternative energy but as your neighbour — someone who cares deeply about the places we call home, the children we raise here, and the future we will leave them. A greener, more resilient, and energy-independent future for the Virgin Islands is within our reach. Your government is firmly committed to that future, and today we take a major step to empower every resident to join this vital journey.

We have set an ambitious target: sixty percent (60%) of our energy from renewables by 2030. This is more than a number - it matters for our sustainability, our economy, our health, and the legacy we pass on to our children. But targets don’t happen by themselves. We need your participation, your ideas, and your action.

You may recall the duty-free concession on renewable energy items introduced in 2021 and the strong public interest it generated. Building on that success, Cabinet has approved an expanded concession: for five (5) years, effective September 1, 2025, through August 31, 2030, a zero-customs duty rate will apply to all renewable energy and energy-efficient products imported into the Territory.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Solar panels, solar water heaters, and solar lighting

- Solar air conditioners and solar appliances

- Technologies harnessing wind power

- Electric vehicles and supporting charging infrastructure

- LED light fixtures and LED light bulbs

Just to name a few.

This initiative builds on our Solar Technology Energy Programme (STEP). Alongside the existing subsidised programme, already helping homeowners, we are introducing a simple, user-friendly process for participation. You can purchase your own renewable energy system and register with the BVI Electricity Corporation (BVIEC) for support with installation and grid connection. We'll be with you every step of the way.

The promise of renewables is already taking shape: on Anegada, we are in final testing of a groundbreaking project that currently powers the island with renewables for 19 hours a day. This success demonstrates what is possible and what we can replicate across the Territory.

By investing in renewable energy and efficiency, you will enjoy:

- Lower energy bills for your family and business

- Reduced dependence on imported fossil fuels

- A cleaner, healthier environment that preserves the natural beauty of our islands

- A stronger, greener economy with new opportunities for local businesses

The extension of the duty-free concession is not just a financial measure — it is a bold step forward in our national journey toward energy resilience, environmental stewardship, and economic empowerment. It demonstrates the Government's determination to fulfill our mandate under the National Sustainable Development Plan, particularly Goal #4 and Outcome #9 on Sustainable Energy, placing the Virgin Islands firmly on the path to becoming a regional leader in renewable energy adoption.

Do not let this golden opportunity slip through your fingers. For the next five years, the door is wide open - a rare window to bring renewable and energy-efficient technologies into your homes, businesses, and communities at zero customs duty. This is more than a chance to save money - it is your moment to take control of your energy future, reduce your monthly bills, and be part of a powerful movement of transformation. Act now, act boldly, and be counted among those who will

proudly say: I helped transform the Virgin Islands into a beacon of sustainability and innovation.

To every resident: seize this moment and explore the countless options available to you - there is truly something for everyone. Whether it’s an electric vehicle, solar panels, solar water heaters, pumps, or modern solar lighting and appliances, the choice is yours. Go further: embrace energy-efficient products such as LED lighting and fixtures and any solar-powered apparatuses that lower your bills while protecting our environment. And for our entrepreneurs — this is your time to dream bigger, to launch bold, innovative renewable energy and efficiency businesses or support services. Together, let us drive a transformation that makes the Virgin Islands a proud leader in sustainability and energy independence.

The sun blesses us freely every day - an abundant gift of energy waiting to be harnessed. Together, let us transform this free, endless resource into the power that drives our homes, our businesses, and our future. By embracing it, we can make the Virgin Islands a shining regional model of sustainability - an eco-friendly place to live, work, and thrive.

Get ready. “The Future is Renewable. The Future is Ours.” Let’s build it together.

Additional Documents or Media

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