GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

PRESS RELEASE

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Junior Minister for Culture and Tourism Addresses UNESCO Conference

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Virgin Islands Represented at UNESCO Conference in Spain

(Junior Minister Discusses Culture and Education, Culture and Peace)

Junior Minister for Culture and Tourism, Honourable Luce Hodge-Smith participated in the UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development – MONDIACULT 2025 – held in Barcelona, Spain, from 29 September to 1 October 2025.

The global forum brought together Ministers of Culture and senior cultural policymakers from around the world to discuss strategies for integrating culture into sustainable development and global peacebuilding initiatives.

Honourable Hodge-Smith provided insights as part of two panel discussions focusing on Culture and Education – examining how cultural heritage, creative industries, and education systems can collaborate to empower youth and promote inclusive, lifelong learning; and Culture and Peace – exploring the role of cultural exchange, dialogue, and preservation in fostering peaceful and resilient societies.

The Virgin Islands reaffirmed its commitment to advancing culture as a pillar of national development and identity. Emphasis was placed on integrating cultural education into the national curriculum and supporting creative youth initiatives.

The Junior Minister highlighted the Territory's efforts to preserve intangible cultural heritage, promote local arts, and strengthen community engagement through cultural programmes. She underscored the importance of intercultural dialogue and cultural diplomacy in maintaining harmony within diverse societies.

"It was an honour to represent the Virgin Islands at MONDIACULT 2025 and share our vision for culture as a driver of education, peace, and sustainable development." Junior Minister for Culture and Tourism, Honourable Luce Hodge Smith stated. "The discussions reaffirmed that culture is not only about preserving traditions but about shaping the future through creativity, learning, and unity."

The Virgin Islands' participation demonstrates its active engagement in global cultural policy discussions and its partnership with UNESCO in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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Photo Credit: UNESCO

About:

The Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sustainable Development is responsible for advancing the Territory’s tourism sector, preserving and promoting cultural heritage, and implementing policies that support sustainable growth and environmental stewardship.

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