

STATEMENT

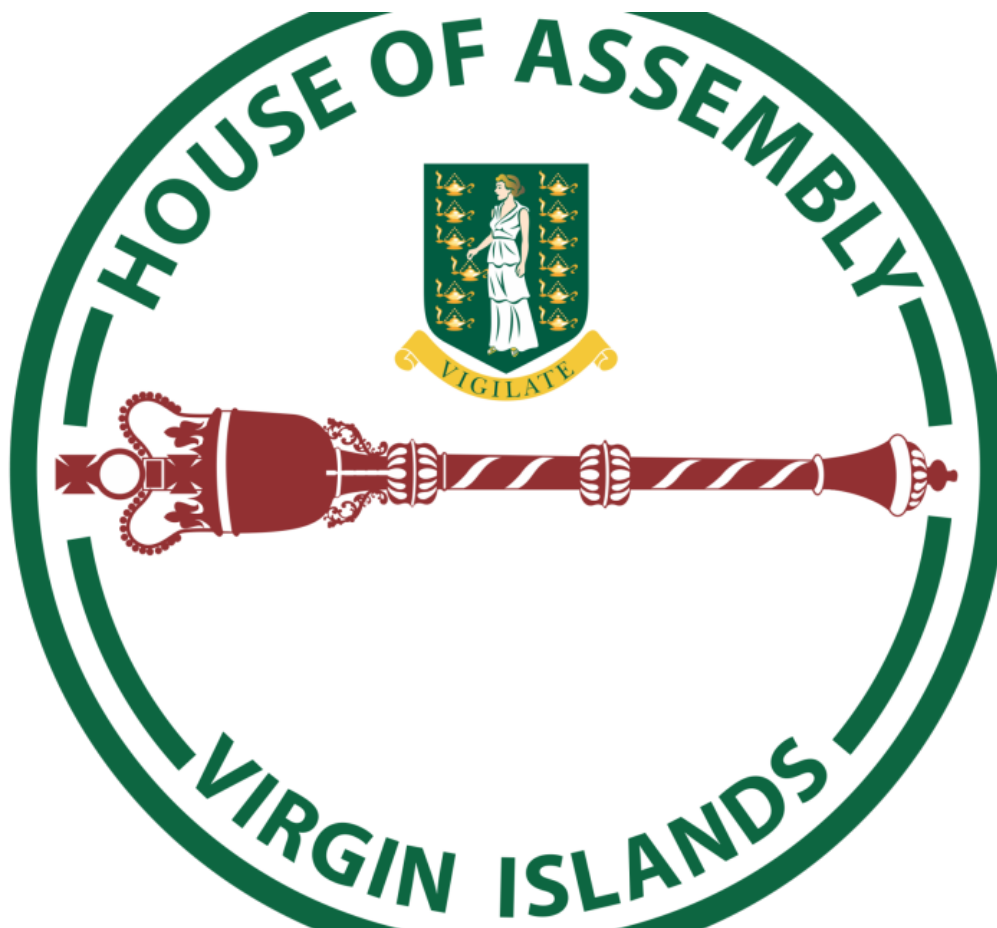
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Members of the House of Assembly Respond to the Statement by the Rt. Hon. Stephen Doughty MP

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Members of the House of Assembly note the statement made on 13 October by the Minister for Europe, North America and the Overseas Territories, the Rt. Hon. Stephen Doughty MP, and His Majesty's Government's recognition of the significant progress the Virgin Islands has made in delivering governance reform.

Members would, however, expect to see the spirit of partnership and mutual respect which has underpinned our reform journey clearly recognised. While the Minister's statement echoes language from the Commission of Inquiry describing past governance failings, it is important to stress that the Virgin Islands has engaged in this process in good faith, with diligence, integrity, and a commitment to meaningful reform.

Progress towards stronger governance began well before the Inquiry, with deeper commitments made to ensure that the necessary reforms were completed. The Governor himself has publicly acknowledged on several occasions the seriousness with which the House has approached its responsibilities and the tangible progress that has been achieved. The people of the Virgin Islands and their elected representatives have delivered substantial change that is designed to last, and this achievement deserves to be acknowledged with respect. Today, we are stronger, better and more prepared to continue our journey towards good governance in every aspect of our growth and development. We look forward to continuing to build on this foundation as equal partners.

The revocation of the draft Order in Council marks an important moment for our Territory, a recognition of the strength of our democratic institutions and the seriousness with which this Government and the Assembly have approached reform. Building on a long-standing commitment to good governance, and working with the Governor, the public service, and international partners, we have completed the Framework agreed with the United Kingdom and advanced the most comprehensive programme of legislative and institutional change imaginable.

Eighteen new laws have been passed to strengthen transparency, accountability, and the rule of law, underpinned by a Governance Reform Transition Plan to ensure these reforms endure across administrations. Real reform requires consultation, depth, and durability. That is the path we have chosen.

We welcome the Minister's confirmation that an Interim Administration is neither required nor justified, and we remain ready to work transparently with the Governor under the agreed monitoring arrangements. But reform cannot be a perpetual state. It must mature into self-sustaining governance, grounded in local accountability and the right of Virgin Islanders to shape their own democratic future.

As we move forward, we seek to take our relationship with the United Kingdom to a new level of maturity, one defined by trust, collaboration, and mutual respect, while continuing to work closely with the Governor and our dedicated public service to realise our shared aspirations for the Territory.

The revocation of the Order in Council is not an end, but a recognition of a maturing democracy. As elected representatives, we remain committed to building a Virgin Islands that is transparent, accountable, and self-confident, a Territory that engages with the United Kingdom as an equal partner in good governance, mutual respect, and self-determination.

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Additional Documents or Media

- [press statement issued jointly by members of the house of assembly of the virgin island](#)