GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

# PRESS RELEASE

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# Celebrating 75 Years of Legislative Restoration Ceremony

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The Virgin Islands proudly marked the 75th Commemoration of the restoration of the legislature with the recognition ceremony titled, **‘Diamonds of the Season: A Night of Excellence, Celebration and Reflection’** held at the Eileene Parsons Auditorium, H. Lavity Stoutt Community College, on 7th November 2025.

The Speaker for the House of Assembly, Honourable Corine N. George-Massicote, said the Recognition Ceremony was not a recital of names, it is a celebration of values.

“This Recognition Ceremony is not merely a recital of names; it is a celebration of values.  It represents our collective expression of gratitude to the men and women who, through the decades, have chosen service over self, duty over comfort, and legacy over applause.” She added that honouring the distinguished contributors whose names were read, should renew a shared pledge:

- “To guard the diginity of the House and the trust of the people.
- To debate ideas without demeaning persons.
- To ensure that every dollar may be traced, every decision explained, and every outcome evaluated.
- To build a Legislature as strong in its ethics as it is in its laws.”

The keynote speaker, Honourable Akierra M.D. Missick LL. B (Hons), P.DIP, TEP, MP, elected member for Leeward and Long Bay, Turks and Caicos Islands, addressed the audience with profound gratitude and respect. She emphasised the significance of this milestone as a celebration of bold enterprise, collective faith, and the enduring conviction in self-determination. She honoured past leaders including Hamilton Lavity Stoutt, Willard Wheatley, Ralph T. O’Neal, Dr. Orlando Smith, and current leaders such as Dr. Natalio Wheatley and the current Speaker, Corine George-Massicote highlighting their contributions to governance, education, infrastructure, and institutional development.

Honourable Missick stressed three core truths taught by these leaders: the importance of legacy, the need for evolving purpose, and the foundational role of community. She highlighted the Territory’s National Sustainable Development Plan and Vision 2036 as invitations to progress that respects heritage and embraces

resilience, innovation, and transparency.

Her call to action invited everyone to commit to resilient infrastructure, human potential, and institutional strength. She concluded by inspiring the Virgin Islands to continue as a beacon of democracy and resilience in the Caribbean.

Notable dignitaries in attendance in support of the ceremony included the Speaker for the House of Assembly in Bermuda, Honourable Dennis Lister, JP, and the Deputy Speaker for the House of Assembly in Anguilla, Honourable Evans McNeil Rogers.

**Honouree Categories**

- First Nominated Female Member: Emogene Creque
- First Elected Female Member: Eileene Parsons, OBE; Ethlyn Smith
- Longest Serving Uninterrupted Member 5th House of Assembly: Hon. Julian Fraser, RA
- Youngest Elected Member: Hon. Sharie de Castro
- First Female Clerk and Longest Serving Clerk: Margaret Borde
- Longest Serving Deputy Clerk: Joann Vanterpool
- First Sergeant-At-Arms: Junior W. Romney
- Longest Serving Sergeant-At-Arms: Dean Fahie
- First Speaker and First Clerk: Henry Creque, OBE
- First Female Speaker: V. Inez Archibald
- Longest Serving Speaker: Keith Flax
- Longest Serving Premier: Hon. Dr. D. Orlando Smith, OBE
- First Opposition Leader: Q.W. Osborne, OBE
- Longest Serving Opposition Leader: Ralph O'Neal, OBE

**Upcoming Celebration Events**

The 75th Anniversary celebrations continue with:

- 7.5 Nights of Lights at the House of Assembly Chamber in Road Town from 16th to 23rd November
- Daily quizzes on local radio station ZBVI

- Mock sitting with students on 21st November at the Chamber in Road Town 10:00 a.m.
- Major celebration event on 23rd November at the C.B. Romney Tortola Pier Park 6:00 p.m.
- Church Service on 30th November at the St. George's Anglican Church in Road Town 8:30 a.m.

The community is invited to participate in these events to honor the Territory's rich legislative history and commit to a promising future.

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**For Additional Information Contact:**

Giovanni Herbert
Public Relations Officer
House of Assembly
Telephone: 1(284)468-6909
Email: gherbert@gov.vg
Facebook: https://facebook.com/HOABVI
Youtube: @houseofassemblyvi2922

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## Gallery







## Additional Documents or Media

- press_release_celebrating_75_years_of_legislative_restoration_ceremony.pdf
- 75th Recognition Ceremony ad
- 75th Recognition Ceremony ad
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