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Virgin Islands Moves to Strengthen Engagement with the United Kingdom Parliament

The Government of The Virgin Islands has strengthened its engagement in Westminster in the United Kingdom with the reconstitution of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on the British Virgin Islands (BVI APPG).

An APPG is an informal group of parliamentarians who share an interest in a particular country, territory or issue. Although APPGs do not make laws or take government decisions, their members can raise awareness, ask questions, convene discussions and help ensure that the Territory's perspectives are heard across Parliament and Whitehall.

The reconstituted Group brings together members of the House of Commons and the House of Lords from across the political spectrum. The elected officers are:

- Chair: Dr Al Pinkerton MP, Liberal Democrat
- Vice-Chair: Carolyn Harris MP, Labour
- Vice-Chair: Jack Rankin MP, Conservative
- Vice-Chair: Lord Brady of Altrincham, Conservative

The attendance of parliamentarians from the Labour, Conservative, Liberal Democrat and Reform UK parties demonstrates the breadth of cross-party interest in The Virgin Islands and provides a strong foundation for the Group's work.

Premier and Minister of Finance, Honourable Dr. Natalio D. Wheatley, said, "The APPG has been reconstituted to promote and support the interests and aspirations of the people of The Virgin Islands; to provide an informed, cross-party forum for parliamentary engagement; to strengthen relations between both governments; and to advance constructive dialogue on self-determination, constitutional development, good governance, security, financial services, sustainable economic development and climate resilience."

Premier Wheatley emphasised the importance of the APPG in supporting the Territory's priorities across Parliament and Whitehall.

He said: "Its reconstitution comes at a significant point in the UK-Virgin Islands relationship, as the Territory advances constitutional reform, strengthens its institutions and continues to advocate for a modern partnership founded on mutual respect and the right of the people of The Virgin Islands to self-determination."

Representative of The Virgin Islands in the United Kingdom and European Union, Ms Tracy Bradshaw, welcomed the reconstitution of the Group: "Decisions and debates in Westminster can have profound consequences for the people of The Virgin Islands. It is therefore essential that parliamentarians understand our Territory, not only the challenges we face, but also our progress, our contribution to the United Kingdom and the aspirations of our people."

The previous BVI APPG, chaired by James Sunderland MP, provided an important forum for parliamentary engagement during a particularly consequential period for the Territory following the 2022 Commission of Inquiry. The reconstituted Group will build on that foundation while pursuing a forward-looking programme responsive to the Territory's present priorities and long-term aspirations.

The BVI London Office will support the Group as its public enquiry point and facilitate engagement with the Government and people of The Virgin Islands. The required registration process is being finalised in accordance with the Rules on All-Party Parliamentary Groups.

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About:

The Government of The Virgin Islands is committed to promoting good governance and the sustainable development of the Territory with a view to ensuring a well-informed, prosperous, cohesive and stable society. The Premier's Office serves as the focal point for coordinating cross-sectoral policies and programmes.