



OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

January 16, 2024.

David Rutley MP
Minister for Americas and the Caribbean
King Charles Street
London
SW1A 2AH.

Dear Minister Rutley,

CARIBBEAN OVERSEAS COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES CAUCUS

STATEMENT ON GOVERNOR OF THE BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS' REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL POWERS

We the Premiers, Deputy Premiers and Government Representatives of Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat and the Turks and Caicos Islands held an emergency virtual meeting of the Caribbean Overseas Countries and Territories Caucus on Thursday, 11th January 2024 where we discussed the request made to the United Kingdom (UK) Government by outgoing Governor of the British Virgin Islands H.E. John J. Rankin CMG for the granting of additional powers to the Governor on the basis of his Fifth Quarterly Report on Governance Reform.

We acknowledged the progress of reforms made by the duly elected Government of the British Virgin Islands and the Governor, the remaining governance reforms to be completed, and the Government's opposition to the granting of additional powers to the Governor in areas of governance devolved to the elected arm of government.

We affirmed that the Governor's request is unjustified and unnecessary based on the progress already made and the commitment of the Government to completing governance reforms and continuing to uphold good governance.

We stand in full solidarity and support of the Government and people of the British Virgin Islands and urge the UK Government to decline the Governor's request for additional powers which would be a step backward in the democratic governance of the British Virgin Islands and Overseas Territories, and directly contravene the letter and spirit of the Joint Declaration for a Modern Partnership agreed between the UK and Overseas Territories in December 2023, based on democratic principles and consultation.

We are desirous of the Government of the British Virgin Islands and the Governor's Office working assiduously and cooperatively with full support from the UK Government through jointly agreed additional technical assistance to complete all outstanding governance reforms.

We also call on the UK Government to adhere to the timeline of the Order in Council in reserve to be lifted by May 2024 returning full, unfettered constitutional and democratic rights to the people of the British Virgin Islands.

We will remain engaged with the British Virgin Islands on how Members of the Caribbean Overseas Countries and Territories Caucus can most effectively assist the Government with its implementation of remaining governance reforms, should this be required.

We reaffirm our commitment to a modern partnership with the UK that is democratic, consultative, and respectful of the rights of the Governments and peoples of the Overseas Territories.

Yours Sincerely,



Hon. Charles Washington Misick,
Premier of the Turks and Caicos Islands.
Dean of the Caribbean OTs Caucus

Agreed by:

Dr. The Honourable Ellis Webster, Premier of Anguilla

The Honourable David Burt, Premier of Bermuda (represented by The Honourable Walter Roban, Deputy Premier)

Dr. The Honourable Natalio D. Wheatley, Premier of the British Virgin Islands

The Honourable Juliana O'Connor-Connolly, Premier of the Cayman Islands

The Honourable Joseph E. Farrel, Premier of Montserrat (represented by (Ms. Debra Lewis, Director of International Affairs)

The Honourable Washington Misick, Premier of the Turks and Caicos Islands