

PRESS RELEASE

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Virgin Islands Government Concludes Successful Participation in Joint Ministerial Council Meetings in London

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The Government of the Virgin Islands today signaled the successful conclusion of this year's Joint Ministerial Council (JMC) meetings, held in London, United Kingdom, where leaders and representatives of the United Kingdom's Overseas Territories (OTs) gathered to address shared challenges, strengthen intergovernmental collaboration, and chart a unified path forward.

Premier and Minister of Finance, Dr. the Honourable Natalio D. Wheatley, led the Virgin Islands delegation, delivering several key presentations on critical issues including climate change resilience, enhanced financial controls, and sustainable development priorities. These sessions provided an essential platform for the Virgin Islands to advocate for its national interests while contributing to discussions affecting the broader OT family.

"The JMC remains an invaluable opportunity for Overseas Territories to speak candidly and constructively about the challenges we face," Premier Wheatley stated. "Whether we are navigating the increasing threat of climate change, working to fortify financial management systems, or seeking equitable treatment within the UK-OT partnership, our shared experiences strengthen our resolve. We have demonstrated that when we unify our efforts, we are better positioned to find effective, lasting solutions for the greater good of all our people."

Throughout the week, OT leaders engaged directly with UK Ministers and senior officials on a wide range of matters, including environmental protection, disaster preparedness, constitutional affairs, and economic development. Premier Wheatley emphasized the importance of maintaining momentum on these discussions to ensure that Overseas Territories continue to have a strong voice on policy decisions that directly affect their citizens.

The meetings concluded on Thursday evening with a reception hosted by Minister for the Overseas Territories, Stephen Doughty MP. As the current President of the United Kingdom Overseas Territories Association (UKOTA), Premier Wheatley delivered remarks underscoring the collective strength of the OT partnership and reaffirming the Virgin Islands' commitment to advancing shared priorities.

"I was honoured to address my OT colleagues and UK partners as the sitting President of UKOTA," Premier Wheatley noted. "We stand united in our determination to work collaboratively, advocate decisively, and prepare responsibly for the future. Our partnership with the UK must continue to evolve in a spirit of mutual respect, transparency, and shared purpose."

In the coming weeks, the Government of the Virgin Islands expects to receive the official JMC Communiqué, which will outline the strategies, commitments, and next steps agreed upon collectively by all OT Premiers and Chief Ministers. Once available, the Government will ensure that the whole document is shared with the Virgin Islands public.

The Government of the Virgin Islands extends its appreciation to the UK Government, fellow OT leaders, and all participants who contributed to this year's productive and forward-looking JMC sessions.

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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 and promoting the sustainable development of the Virgin Islands to ensure a well-informed, prosperous, cohesive and stable society.

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