GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

STATEMENT

Tel: (284)468-2730
Official Government Website:
https://gov.vg

Remarks by Honourable Stacy Mather, Territorial At Large Representative

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Thank you Premier.

My people of the Virgin Islands,

Good morning.

I make this announcement today, not as a member of any political party or grouping, but as a member of this community, as a neighbour, as a guardian, as a servant to our shared home, and now also as a Member of the Government.

Let me be clear, politics has its place, but my duty and responsibility to serve the people of the Virgin Islands comes first.

Our country will always come first with me.

I entered politics not to uproot or divide, but to nourish and help build the Virgin Islands into the home we all want it to be.

When I was elected, I made a solemn pledge to serve the people of this country. I have done so for more than two years as a Member of His Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

And I will continue doing so faithfully to the best of my ability as a Member of the Government.

My people, these are strange and uncertain times. As a society, we face many pressing social, economic and development issues that require immediate and focused attention.

An all-hands-on-deck approach is needed if we are to effectively address these issues and make tangible gains in the near and medium term.

Setting the Virgin Islands on a sustainable course is an enormous task, and the Government needs as many hands as possible to confront the societal challenges affecting us daily: unemployment, high cost of living, and, of course, crime.

I put my knowledge, skills and experience in youth and community empowerment at the full disposal of the Government to help tackle these challenges.

The fruit of the BVI requires this move, and today I've decided to allow my roots to cross over to the other side in the quest to harvest even more fruit for the people.

My people, crossing the floor is not a leap away from you; it is a step toward you.

It is a step to get more work done for the people of the Virgin Islands.

It is a step to accelerate progress.

It is a step to ensure policies can be further developed and a step toward resources that can help provide opportunities for more of our people.

This move is not a moment of silence; it is a moment to raise the volume where it matters most and to mobilise more work to be done.

While I will now sit with the Government, I am the same person with the same access, but with greater responsibility to deliver for you.

I would like to thank the Premier and all Members of the Government for graciously welcoming me into their ranks and for the confidence they have placed in my ability to deliver for the people of the Virgin Islands.

As an At-Large Representative, I am pleased to have the opportunity to offer advice, guidance, and input into the RATED programme, which has become a Territory-wide initiative. I am eager to collaborate with the Premier to evolve its existing structures, enhance the workforce training component, and introduce small, scalable agricultural initiatives that will yield swift results.

I also look forward to applying my experience to supporting community empowerment programmes and initiatives that strengthen the work of NGOs and small community businesses, which have become the backbone of the Virgin Islands.

I look forward to working with the Premier, my Government colleagues, every Member of the House of Assembly, the public sector, private sector, civil society and members of our community to build this country that we all love. It is time to work and build the Virgin Islands for all of us.

I thank you for your kind attention.

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For Additional Information Contact:

Angela U Burns
Information Officer II
Premier's Office
Government of The Virgin Islands
Tel: +1 284 468 9445
Email: aburns@gov.vg
Website: https://gov.vg/
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/BVIGovernment/

Additional Documents or Media

- hon_mather_speech.pdf