GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

STATEMENT

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Contract Signing Ceremony Design Consultants for Fisheries Landing Site at the Omar Hodge Fishers' Wharf and the Road Town Master Plan

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Remarks by

Premier and Minister of Finance

Honourable Natalio D. Wheatley

Contract Signing Ceremony

Design Consultants for

Fisheries Landing Site at the Omar Hodge Fishers' Wharf

and the Road Town Master Plan

24 March, 2026

Good afternoon to each and everyone.

Today is a meaningful day in the life of our Territory.

We gather to witness the signing of two important contracts that mark two significant milestones in the continued development and transformation of the Virgin Islands. These contracts - one for the Design Consultancy of the Fisheries Landing Site at the Omar Hodge Fishers’ Wharf, and the other for the Design Consultancy of the Road Town Master Plan - represent progress, vision, and confidence in the future of the Virgin Islands.

Both projects are being expertly managed by the Virgin Islands Recovery and Development Agency, and I want to begin by acknowledging the RDA for its efficiency, professionalism, and consistently high standard of work. Time and again, the Agency has demonstrated its ability to deliver major projects that have a transformative impact on our Territory, and we are grateful for their continued partnership.

Virgin Islanders have always been a maritime people. While fishing is an occupation for some; it is part of our heritage, our identity, and our way of life. For generations, our fishers have fed our families, supported our communities, and contributed to our local economy. Today, the fishing sector continues to provide

jobs, support small businesses, and strengthen our food security.

In recent years, the world has seen how fragile international supply chains can be. Global shocks - from pandemics to geopolitical tensions - have shown us that we cannot depend solely on imports for our food supply. Strengthening our local food production systems is not just wise; it is necessary. A modern, well-designed Fisheries Landing Site will help ensure that our fishers have the facilities they need to operate safely, efficiently, and sustainably. It will support livelihoods, enhance food resilience, and reinforce our commitment to responsible use of our marine resources.

This project also carries deep emotional significance. The late Omar Hodge held a strong and genuine vision for the Fishers' Wharf. He understood the importance of supporting our fishers and preserving this essential part of our culture. Advancing this project today is a way of honouring his legacy and ensuring that his vision continues to serve the people of the Virgin Islands for generations to come.

As for the Road Town Master Plan project, Road Town is the heart of our Territory - our commercial centre, our administrative hub, and a space where thousands of people live, work, and move every day. As our economy grows, as more businesses invest, and as more people see opportunity here, Road Town continues to expand. Growth is a sign of a healthy and dynamic economy, but it also brings new pressures on our infrastructure.

This is why planning is essential. Through proper planning, we can ensure that our limited land space is used efficiently and sustainably. We can anticipate future demands, make provisions for infrastructure development, and ensure that growth is orderly and well-managed. A thoughtful master plan will help us create a capital city that is functional, resilient, and attractive - a Road Town that works for its people and one that we can all be proud of. This is what we are aiming for with the Road Town Master Plan.

I extend warm congratulations to WDMO Group Design & Drafting and OBM Limited, the two firms selected for these consultancy projects. We are excited to see the ideas and solutions you will bring forward as we shape the future of our capital and as we continue to build a stronger, more resilient, and more prosperous

Virgin Islands.

To the RDA, thank you once again for your leadership and your commitment to excellence. Your work continues to move this Territory forward.

And to the people of the Virgin Islands, these projects are for you. They reflect our shared aspirations, our shared responsibilities, and our shared belief in the future of our home.

Thank you, and may God continue to bless these Virgin Islands.

Additional Documents or Media

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