



THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

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PRESS RELEASE

HoA Speaker Raises Concern Over V.I. Representation at 69th CPA Conference

Monday, 21 September- The Virgin Islands participated in the 69th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC), held in Cape Town, South Africa, from 13 to 19 September 2026. The delegation was led by Speaker of the House of Assembly, Honourable Corine N. George-Massicote, who also served as Head of Delegation.

The delegation included the Leader of His Majesty's Loyal Opposition, Honourable Marlon A. Penn; Honourable Ronnie W. Skelton; Honourable Melvin M. Turnbull; and Clerk of the House of Assembly, Mrs Bethsaida Smith-Hanley.

The Conference brought together parliamentarians and parliamentary officials from across the Commonwealth under the theme, "Strengthening International Law and Parliamentary Democracy in a Changing World Order: Commonwealth Leadership." Discussions focused on parliamentary democracy, artificial intelligence, climate resilience, human rights, disability inclusion, youth participation and the challenges facing smaller jurisdictions.

During the CPA General Assembly, which included more than 500 voting delegates, Hon. George-Massicote raised concerns about the representation of the Virgin Islands and other affected territories. The concern followed a decision to display the flag of the country with which each territory is constitutionally associated, rather than the territory's own flag.

She explained that the Virgin Islands participates in the CPA in its own right, through its own Legislature and delegation, and called for affected territories to be consulted on



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decisions concerning their representation at Commonwealth Parliamentary Conferences and other official CPA events.

Hon. George-Massicote also identified Montserrat, the Turks and Caicos Islands, Bermuda and the Cayman Islands as affected territories, noting that the issue raised broader questions of identity, recognition and meaningful participation.

The intervention received support from delegates, including representatives from Botswana, British Columbia and Scotland, as well as other affected territories, including Gibraltar and St Helena.

Speaker George-Massicote called for further consideration of the concerns raised and for appropriate arrangements to be developed for future Commonwealth Parliamentary Conferences.

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Note to Editors:

- 1) Audio of Speaker's statement**
- 2) Video of Speaker giving statement**
- 3) 5 images**