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SECOND INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM

Caribbean regional seminar on the implementation of the Second International Decade
for the Eradication of Colonialism: challenges and opportunities in the process of
decolonization in today's world

Frigate Bay, Saint Kitts and Nevis
12 to 14 May 2009

STATEMENT
BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

Decolonization Talks in St Kitts and Nevis

British Virgin Islands

Brief Remarks

I bring you greetings from my Premier the Honourable Ralph O'Neal, OBE, and all the people of the British Virgin Islands.

I wish to state quite clearly that not one man, not one woman, not even one

Constitutional Change

Our Constitution was changed to allow for the introduction of four at large Territorial seats but there were no guidelines issued as to how this system would work in practice. This system has been left by the United Kingdom in the realm of unworkability and is quite disruptive to Governance in the British Virgin Islands. The question is often asked by our constituents: What

is an At-Large member? How does it work with a district system?

Another example where there is unworkability in the Governance of the British Virgin Islands is where the Governor is in charge of the Civil Service in relation to appointment, dismissal, promotion and discipline, despite some devolution recently, but the local political arm is responsible for paying salaries and little else in this regard.

But what happens when you have an unsupportive and difficult Governor determined to do what he wants without listening to reason, or the advice of the Political arm of Government.

The result is that the Civil Service will sense this division and would ignore the legitimate instructions of the political arm and do just what it likes. This

Conclusion

There are many areas that are ripe for reform in the relationship between the British Virgin Islands and the United Kingdom which would still allow the United Kingdom to carry out its responsibilities as a Governing Power. We are anxious to have a good working relationship with the United Kingdom

our Administering Power