

STATEMENT FROM THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

The National Security Council (NSC) convened a special meeting today following two unrelated shootings, over the weekend of 27 and 28 July 2024, resulting in the death of one male. The NSC expresses its condolences to family and friends directly impacted by these two heinous and brazen acts of violence.

The Royal Virgin Islands Police Force (RVIPF) updated NSC on the incidents and set out the next steps in their investigations. The NSC was grateful for the quick response by the RVIPF and offered its full support for the police investigation.

NSC further acknowledged that the recent murder is shocking and disturbing, and therefore reiterated its zero-tolerance policy to crime. Based on the briefing from the RVIPF, the two incidents were allegedly premeditated and calculated acts of violence. NSC is working with other law enforcement and criminal justice partners, inclusive of the Royal Virgin Islands Police Force, to address the root cause of this and other types of crime.

Crime prevention requires community effort. The NSC therefore calls on each citizen to play his/her role in the prevention and detection of crime.

The NSC is asking anyone with any relevant information to be in touch with the police without delay or by calling Crime Stoppers and the confidential and untraceable hotline **800-8477[TIPS]**, **800-847-8477** and **368-9339**. NSC remains committed to working with the community to improve security.

As the Territory celebrates its 70th Emancipation Festival, the NSC is encouraging a period of safe and peaceful celebrations, free from crime and a time for jubilation, reflection and community spirit. The NSC further stated that any criminal, anti-social or aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated. Police presence at and around the festival activities and throughout the BVI will be enhanced to include road checks, and stops and searches on land and on sea. The public is urged to report anything that looks suspicious to the police.

The NSC considers matters relating to internal security and any significant security developments in the Territory, including the occurrence of significant criminal activity. The NSC comprises the Governor, as Chairman and members, including the Premier, the Minister for Communications and Works, the Attorney General and the Commissioner of Police.

29 July, 2024