



HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER
Road Town, Tortola
British Virgin Islands VG1110

Tel: (284) 468-3701 ext. 6920/6980
(284) 468-9999
Email: Jwillock@gov.vg

6th July, 2021

The Rt. Hon. Sir Gary Hickinbottom
Commissioner
BVI International Arbitration Centre
3rd Floor Ritter House
Wickhams Cay II
Road Town, Tortola
Virgin Islands

URGENT

Dear Sir Hickinbottom;

It was brought to my attention that the former United Kingdom appointed police commissioner Michael B. Mathews wrote a letter in regards to my statement on Good Governance sent to the one-man Commissioner.

In my statement, I said that over the years there has been a challenge, with proper background checks for police officers hired in the Royal Virgin Islands Police Force.

I stand by that statement. It's my understanding that former commissioner Mathews stated in a letter to you and to the media that my statement is "pure fabrication" and it was not based upon any knowledge of the subject.


I will advise you Commissioner and Mr. Mathews that not only do I stand by my statement, but the current Police Commissioner, Mark Collins, also confirmed what I said in a public statement to you.

"The current system of recruiting does not delve deep or far enough into the background checks of potential candidates for the RVIPF. At present, there are no social media or financial checks made and limited checks are made in relation to previous employer and criminal records. It is my view that I would need to recruit a vetting/recruitment officer to deal with this matter." according to Mr. Collins.

I strongly suggest that you make clear for the record this new information, and also convey to Mr. Mathews and ask him to offer the Speaker an apology.

I have also enclosed Mr. Collins entire statement found on your webpage, just in case you may have difficulties finding it.

Sincerely,


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Honourable Julian Willock, MHA
Speaker, House of Assembly

Encl:

- c. Hon. Premier and Minister of Finance
- Hon. Leader of the Opposition
- Silk Legal