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USVI to Collaborate with CARICOM in Functional Cooperation Initiative

The partnership paves the way for enhanced regional integration, fostering economic growth, environmental sustainability, and social development across the Caribbean

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The U.S. Virgin Islands has officially accepted an invitation from the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to participate in functional cooperation, marking a significant step towards regional collaboration and mutual development.

According to a release from Government House, the agreement, still in its initial stages, sets the groundwork for the territory to collaborate closely with the regional organization on various fronts.

The Office of the Governor is in the process of organizing meetings to outline the policies, procedures, and protocols that will define this new partnership. Functional cooperation with CARICOM is aimed at fostering joint efforts in specific areas of mutual interest, focusing on practical initiatives and programs designed to yield real-world benefits. These efforts are directed at overcoming common challenges and achieving shared goals within the Caribbean region.

The territory has identified several key areas of interest that align with CARICOM's objectives, including the development of a blue economy, investment in crucial economic sectors such as agriculture, tourism, and technology, facilitation of intraregional trade, climate change mitigation, enhancement of regional employment opportunities, disaster recovery, and addressing crime, poverty, and emerging public health issues.

Teri Helenese, director of State-Federal Relations and Washington Representative for the Government of the U.S. Virgin Islands, is spearheading this initiative on behalf of Governor Albert Bryan, Jr.'s office, Government House made known. As the highest elected leader under the American flag in the English-speaking Caribbean region, the administration said Mr. Bryan's involvement is pivotal in promoting regional cooperation and tackling common challenges.

The U.S. Virgin Islands is committed to building a robust partnership with CARICOM, Gov't House said, ready to contribute to and benefit from the community's collective objectives.

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