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Advocacy of Plaskett and Colleagues Triggers Historic DOJ Rejection of Insular Cases

The Department of Justice acts on a call from Congresswoman Plaskett and colleagues to end the use of racist legal logic in U.S. territories

Federal / **Published On June 01, 2024 07:54 AM /**

Staff Consortium **June 01, 2024**

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V.I. Delegate to Congress Stacey Plaskett addresses the audience during a Wednesday, April 17th press conference in Washington, discussing the Insular Cases

Congresswoman Stacey Plaskett recently shared a statement regarding the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ) response to a bipartisan call to denounce the controversial Insular Cases, which have historically impacted U.S. territories negatively.

Last month, Plaskett co-led a bipartisan, bicameral initiative that resulted in 43 Members of Congress signing a letter urging the DOJ to formally condemn the Insular Cases. These cases have been criticized for their racist underpinnings and colonial frameworks which have affected the constitutional rights and quality of life for over 3 million residents across U.S. territories.

The Department of Justice has responded positively, agreeing with the Congressional call and confirming their commitment to eliminating any reliance on these outdated precedents. "The Department of Justice unequivocally condemns the racist rhetoric and reasoning of the Insular Cases," stated the DOJ, emphasizing that such logic is "irreconcilable with foundational American principles of equality, justice, and democracy."

This response marks a significant acknowledgment by the DOJ, reinforcing its position to ensure that its litigators do not employ the racist and unjust reasoning from these cases in future legal matters.

Reflecting on the progress, Ms. Plaskett expressed her satisfaction and determination to continue advocating for the full reversal of the Insular Cases to ensure fair treatment and equal rights for the residents of U.S. territories. "This is an important step in advancing equity for the U.S. territories," Plaskett remarked, committing to seeing the efforts through to a conclusive end.

The announcement and ongoing legislative actions are part of broader efforts to rectify historical injustices and ensure that all U.S. citizens, irrespective of their geographic location, are treated equally under the law.