

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Gov. Mapp To Address Territory On Thursday Following Meeting With HOVENSA's Owners

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Following [a press briefing](#) at Government House on St. Thomas Wednesday morning, Governor Kenneth Mapp met privately with Hess Oil Virgin Islands Corp. and PDVSA, owners of the defunct HOVENSA refinery on St. Croix. Late Wednesday, Government House announced Gov. Mapp would address the territory on Thursday about the status of the refinery.

Thursday's address to the territory will commence at Government House in St. Thomas at 10:30 a.m., and will be broadcast live on local radio and television.

In his announcement of the private meeting with the refinery's owners Wednesday, Mapp spoke strongly about HOVENSA's responsibilities to the territory.

"Today, we're meeting with folks of Hess Oil and PDVSA for a private meeting," the Governor began. "They've asked for a meeting, we're a new government, and we're willing to meet and listen to their presentation of what plans they have for the property at the south shore of St. Croix."

Mapp said he would seek to find out how "they intend to address the many obligations owed to the people of the Virgin Islands, how they intend to address the contamination that the plant has left in the Virgin Islands, and the affect to our water tables in the territory."

He referred to today's private meeting as a "get-to-know-each-other meeting."

"So, we're going to have a get-to-know each other meeting and allow them the opportunity to tell us what is their path with this government and to [make sure that] the payments of monies owed to this government are fully met," the governor said.

The governor stressed that while it is important to meet with big corporations that seek to do business in the Virgin Islands, what's even more pressing is how his administration will help provide relief for the people of the territory.

"I want our commissioners and directors to understand that while we can sit at the table with large companies and do the business of the territory, we have many people in the Virgin Islands that need our help, that require our help, and ask that we empathize with them," Mapp said.

He continued, "To some folks we're going to have to say, 'some of what you need we cannot provide.' But, there are many, many people in this territory that we can help, and that is what government is about, that is what Lieutenant Governor Potter and I have ran on and that's what we are committed to providing the people of the Virgin Islands."

Following the 30th Legislature's [rejection](#) of the ABR Operating Agreement entered into between the company and the de Jongh administration, HOVENSA told *VI Consortium* that it would proceed with its plan to completely shutdown the refinery.

"It is unfortunate that the Legislature of the Virgin Islands chose to reject the Operating Agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands and ABR, which means the sale of HOVENSA cannot move forward," Alex Moorhead, HOVENSA's spokesman, [said](#) . "Due to the impending depletion of its operating cash, HOVENSA is proceeding with the shutdown of its operations, which was announced prior to the Legislature's rejection of the Operating Agreement."