

The Virgin Islands Consortium

V.I. Supreme Court Justices Vested For Second Term

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ST. THOMAS -- The three justices of the Supreme Court of the Virgin Islands have been sworn-in to their new ten-year terms of office during a ceremony on Thursday at Government House here, Government House announced this afternoon.

All three justices -- who were unanimously supported by the Senate on October 27, 2006 and became vested on Dec. 28, 2006 -- terms had expired on October 27, 2016. They were [renominated by Governor Kenneth Mapp](#) on November 2, 2016.

Chief Justice Rhys S. Hodge, Associate Justice Maria M. Cabret, and Associate Justice Ive Arlington Swan were administered the oath of office by specially designated Justice Verne A. Hodge, former presiding judge of the Territorial Court. The 2nd floor ballroom of

Government House was filled to capacity for the occasion with officials off all branches of government, employees, family members, and the British Virgin Islands Premier, the Honorable D. Orlando Smith.

In remarks following his swearing-in, Chief Justice Hodge said that of the court's many accomplishments during its first ten years, he is most proud that it earned the confidence of the Judicial Council of the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, which determined in 2012 that, after only five years of existence during which high quality case law was produced, appeals of decisions by the Supreme Court of the Virgin Islands should go directly to the Supreme Court of the United States. This appellate procedure established that the local high court's performance is on par with that of any state, marking a giant step forward in the 100 year march toward greater self-governance, according to Government House.

Associate Justice Cabret praised the dedicated work by support staff, including clerks of the court, law clerks, and the administrator, for the success of the Supreme Court. "Our work," she stated, "is a demonstration of our love for the people of the territory and our profession."

For his part, Associate Justice Swan said he is grateful to be a member of a generation of Virgin Islanders who left home with a commitment to be educated and to return and perform public service. "Service to the people of the Virgin Islands is the highest honor to be bestowed", he stated. "Service is all I ask," Justice said, "and all I can give."

Mr. Mapp said he was proud to host the ceremony at Government House, adding that in nominating the justices for re-appointment to the Supreme Court, he was "motivated by the good and high quality of work on behalf of the people of the Virgin Islands."

Crediting excellence and self-determination for having advanced greatly the territory's institutions since colonization, Chief Justice Hodge stated his belief that the next milestone to be celebrated will be a local Constitution.