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## St. Croix Welcomes First Cruise Ship 18 Months After a CDC No Sail Order

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**Moko Jumbies welcomed passengers of the Celebrity Equinox on St. Croix on Aug. 18, 2021. It was the first cruise ship to dock on the island in 18 months. By. ERNICE GILBERT FOR THE VI CONSORTIUM**

ST. CROIX — After eighteen months of seeing no cruise ship activity at the Ann E. Abramson Marine Facility in Frederiksted because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the V.I. Port Authority welcomed Royal Caribbean's Celebrity Equinox, which docked with almost 3,500 passengers and crew Wednesday morning.

The arrival of the ship, which included a 97 percent vaccination rate, was an important indication of renewed cruise tourism traffic to St. Croix, which was already a struggling product on the big

island as the bulk of cruise ships to the territory have historically docked in St. Thomas. VIPA Executive Director Carlton Dowe and his team organized a small welcome ceremony where gifts were presented to the ship's captain.

Also present were Senate President Novelle Francis, Gov't House Communications Director Richard Motta on behalf of the governor, and Senator Kenneth Gittens.

V.I. Dept. of Tourism representatives, among them Deputy Commissioner Neelia Ross and Asst. Commissioner Elizabeth Watley, were present. The department organized entertainment activities to include dancers, Moko Jumbies, a deejay and Steelpanist Kevin Williams, Jr.

See some scenes of the event below:

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