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Homeland Security Investigations Unveils Soft Interview Room in St. Thomas For Victims of Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation

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ST. THOMAS — Homeland Security Investigations on Friday unveiled its soft interview room for victims based on what HSI said were several high-profile human trafficking and child exploitation cases on St. Thomas.

According to HSI, on the heels of the January 23, 2023 sentencing of a U.S. Citizen human trafficking leader to 87 months of incarceration and \$1,095,712 in victim restitution for violations concerning sex trafficking and labor exploitation within the District Court of the Virgin Islands, HSI St. Thomas staff created a soft interview room to further support victims of human

trafficking.

The interview room is designed to accommodate and provide a safe space for victims of all ages on island, according to the release. The sentencing and restitution were the result of an HSI investigation into a human trafficking organization responsible for smuggling undocumented noncitizens into the U.S. for the purpose of engaging in commercial sex for a period of approximately 15 years. This is an HSI led investigation with assistance from ERO, CBP-OFO, CBP-AMO, USPIIS, the FBI, and the Virgin Islands Police Department.

“Thanks to the great collaborative efforts of the various law enforcement agencies, this sentencing should send a strong message that HSI and our local and federal law enforcement partners are committed to seeking, dismantling, and bringing to justice those who perpetrate human trafficking in the U.S. Virgin Islands,” said Acting Special Agent in Charge Rebecca Gonzalez-Ramos. “The building of this state-of-the-art soft room will provide a safe place for victims to tell their stories” Said Acting Rebecca C. Gonzalez-Ramos “This soft room will be the beginning of the healing process for those who had being victimized”.

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