



**Statement by Chief Minister Dr. the Honourable D. Orlando Smith  
Update on Plan of Action  
Friday, 30 September, 2005**

My fellow citizens and residents of the BVI:

Over the past days, our community has rallied together against crime and violence.

With admirable resolve and courage we have closed ranks and said in no uncertain terms that security and peace will once again be the order of the day. I would like to thank every member of this community who has done his or her part in this shared effort.

While we still have much work ahead of us, I am deeply grateful and inspired by the strength of character that the people of the British Virgin Islands are displaying during this challenging time.

Ladies and gentlemen, for our part, my Government is working aggressively to beat back the growing threat of crime. The Royal Virgin Islands Police Force continues to actively investigate the recent rash of crimes.

A former UK Detective and police advisor to the Overseas Territories visited the territory earlier this week. He identified the police's immediate with the Commissioner needs and made 3 recommendations which both the Governor and I have accepted.

1. The immediate amalgamation of several existing units which will be renamed ***Drug and violent Crime Task Force***.
  - a. This unit will bring Special Investigations, the Drug Unit, the Marine Unit, the Air wing and Intelligence Units under a single unified command. It will be dedicated, operating within the rule of law to combat violent crime, armed robbery, drug trafficking and drug importation.
  - b. This new Unit will be the sharp point of the spear in our fight against crime here on our shores – and any attempt to infiltrate our shores.
2. Another specialist will arrive in the territory early next week and two more will follow thereafter. Meanwhile, I am most appreciative to members of this community who have shared information in relation to criminal activity, and we urge you to be vigilant as we strive to make the BVI a safer place for all of us to live.

3. The police are making provision to establish a unique police hotline for anonymous tip-offs, being aware of the general perception about confidentiality. The police are currently negotiating with Cable and Wireless to provide a toll free 1-800 telephone line which will be routed in Miami.

The purpose of this method is to put to rest any apprehension or concern of any person who wishes to give information about any crime committed in the BVI, and not having to worry about the risk of his or her name or voice being detected.

The text of the information or tip will be directed back to the BVI police for action. As soon as this is made available, you will be advised accordingly. Be assured that this medium that you will remain anonymous.

Taken together, these steps demonstrate our determination to eradicate the scourge of crime from our midst. We have lost too much already. This is a moment of great challenge for our community. We have been forced to confront a great evil in our midst. But in the face of this adversity we are finding new strength, new purpose and a new sense of shared responsibility.

We all now know that we must stand together in common cause to make the kind of future we want for ourselves and for our children. It is not an easy task – but nothing could be more noble or more worthy.

Together, we shall overcome the violence and put the criminals to route. And we shall ensure peace and security in our beloved BVI. Thank you and God bless you all.