



THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
GOVERNMENT HOUSE

Charlotte Amalie, V.I. 00802
340-774-0001

VIRGIN ISLANDS AFRICAN HERITAGE WEEK AND AFRICAN LIBERATION DAY

* * * * *

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES

* * * * *

A PROCLAMATION

In honorable respect to people of African ancestry and international cultural heritage observances celebrating freedom movements and liberating achievements of the African world, the Virgin Islands of the United States annually celebrates, commemorates and recognizes *Virgin Islands African Heritage Week* and *African Liberation Day* in May. Enacted through Act 5473 of 1989 pursuant to Title 1, Chapter 11, Section 192, General Provisions of the Virgin Islands Code, *Virgin Islands African Heritage Week* and *African Liberation Day* are to be annually commemorated during the third week of May and on May 25th respectively.

In 2018, *Virgin Islands African Heritage Week* and *African Liberation Day* observances continue their alignment during the fourth year of the *International Decade for People of African Descent (IDPAD)* proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations from January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2024 (*UN Resolution 68/237*) with the theme of "*People of African Descent: Recognition, Justice and Development*." This time is set aside for reflection, contemplation, introspection, community action, and commemorative celebration for, by and with Virgin Islanders of African Descent in reverent remembrance of our proud African civilizations, culture, heritage, arts, technologies and more that are ancestrally linked to our Virgin Islands Caribbean Americas.

Virgin Islands African Heritage Week and *African Liberation Day* provide historic and cultural heritage observances that reaffirm the ancestral heritage and cultural linkages to Africa, the patriotic ties to the United States of America in honor of the contributions of people of African descent, in concert with restoring ancestral memory of the positive traditions, quests for freedom, and dignified heritage of Africa and the African World inclusive of our transcultural liberation achievements of our beloved Virgin Islands Caribbean Americas. Themes of liberation, freedom, restorative justice, liberation and resilience are celebrated by, of and for Global Indigenous African people who have traversed through the Virgin Islands Caribbean Americas.

Virgin Islands African Heritage Week and African Liberation Day 2018 commemorates the 60th Anniversary of the First Conference of Independent African States convened in 1958 led by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of the independent Republic of Ghana—an African nation that many Virgin Islanders have ancestral family lineage with. *African Liberation Day* events maintain an organizational platform for the Government of the Virgin Islands to promote African World and Pan African collaborative interactions with VI Caribbean NGOs, CSOs and community organizations and institutions, inclusive of the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI), the only *Historically Black College and University* (HBCU) in the Caribbean and its' *Virgin Islands Caribbean Cultural Center (VICCC@UVI)*, to organize, teach, research, institute and facilitate *Virgin Islands African Heritage Week and African Liberation Day* cultural heritage education and commemorative socioeconomic activities.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Kenneth E. Mapp, Governor of the Virgin Islands of the United States, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Revised Organic Act of 1954, as amended, do hereby proclaim May 25, 2018 as *African Liberation Day* inclusive of the week of May 19-26, 2018 as *Virgin Islands African Heritage Week 2018* throughout the Virgin Islands of the United States in solidarity with global observances. May our Virgin Islands community continue to ring the bells of freedom with respect, solidarity and harmony with our regional, national and international sisters and brothers commemorating, observing, proclaiming and celebrating similar African Heritage, Unity, and Liberation Day activities. I call upon all residents, ancestral natives and visitors of the Virgin Islands of the United States and respectfully inclusive of our sisters and brothers in the wider Caribbean and Americas, to support the organizational, individual and other multicultural events scheduled in honor of all of these historic occasions.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereto set my hand and cause the Seal of the Government of the Virgin Islands of the United States to be affixed at Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, this 24th day of May, 2018, A.D.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "K. Mapp", written over a horizontal line.

Kenneth E. Mapp
Governor

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Osbert Potter", written over a horizontal line.

Osbert Potter
Lieutenant Governor