

SUPREME COURT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS



PRESS RELEASE

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Pursuant to title 4, section 22(f) of the Virgin Islands Code which mandates that not later than sixty days before the expiration of a Chief Justice's term, a majority of the full-time justices sitting en banc shall select a Chief Justice from among their members, the Honorable Rhys S. Hodge, Chief Justice, convened the first meeting for the justices to select their new Chief Justice on October 18, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. at the Supreme Court in Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas.

Chief Justice Hodge and the Honorable Maria M. Cabret, Associate Justice, attended this historic meeting and constituted the majority. Because title 4, section (f)(4) does not allow a Chief Justice to succeed himself or herself unless all the other justices decline in writing to serve, the Honorable Ive Arlington Swan, Associate Justice, who did not attend the meeting to select the chief justice, had previously submitted correspondence declining to serve as Chief Justice. At the meeting, Justice Cabret likewise tendered correspondence declining to serve as Chief Justice. After Chief Justice Hodge acknowledged receipt of the correspondence, a formal vote was held by the two justices present and Chief Justice Hodge was selected unanimously by the voting justices to serve another term, thereby becoming the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Virgin Islands to be selected by vote of the majority of the justices of the Court.

Asked to comment on his selection, Chief Justice Hodge stated, "I am pleased to have the opportunity to continue to serve the people of the Virgin Islands in this capacity for yet another term. The Supreme Court of the Virgin Islands has made a tremendous amount of progress in the last four years and I was pleased to be an instrumental part of that progress. Yet, our work remains unfinished. The United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit will be performing a five year review next year pursuant to section 23 of the Revised Organic Act, and the Supreme Court remains committed to successfully demonstrating that it has established sufficient institutional traditions to justify direct review of our decisions by the United States Supreme Court. I convey my thanks to the other justices of the Court and the employees who continue to support me and lend their talents to our developing organization."

In congratulating Chief Justice Hodge, the Honorable Maria M. Cabret commented, "I am delighted that Chief Justice Hodge will continue to be our Chief Justice, as he has been doing an admirable job and I am certain he will continue his remarkable efforts to build a very strong foundation for the Supreme Court of the Virgin Islands and to improve the administration of justice in the Territory".

Chief Justice Hodge's new three year term will commence on December 19, 2010 and end on December 18, 2013.

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