



**THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
GOVERNMENT HOUSE
Charlotte Amalie, V.I. 00802
340-774-0001**

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the annual observance of the International Day for the World's Indigenous People on August 9th is an occasion for Virgin Islanders of Indigenous Amerindian Caribbean Descent to reaffirm their patriotic ties to the original people of the Caribbean and the United States of America, their cultural ties with Indigenous people, their traditions and heritage with their kith and kin throughout the lands of the Caribbean, Americas and the world; and

WHEREAS, all citizens of the diverse ethnic and cultural communities in the Territory are invited to acknowledge and celebrate the vital individual, community and institutional contributions of Indigenous Caribbean Amerindians and all Indigenous people of the world to the economic, political, cultural, scientific, educational, spiritual and religious life of the Territory; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations designated August 9th annually as the *International Day of the World's Indigenous People* by UN Resolution 49/214 on December 23rd, 1994 and strengthened by the UN Resolution 61/295 on September 13th, 2007 with social contract the creation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. This year's theme is "**Leaving No One Behind: Indigenous Peoples and the call for a new social contract.**"; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) is organizing a virtual commemoration of the International Day on Monday, August 9, 2021. Indigenous Peoples, UN agencies, Member States, civil society and the general public are all invited. Invited speakers will comment on the distinct elements to be considered when building and redesigning a new social contract for indigenous peoples, where their own forms of governance and ways of life (which were not previously accounted for) must be respected and based on their free, prior and informed consent and genuine and inclusive participation and partnership; and

Proclamation — International Day of the World's Indigenous People

WHEREAS, research and DNA-testing have proven that there are descendants of Indigenous Amerindian people living in the Virgin Islands; and

WHEREAS, On June 28, 2021 Governor Albert Bryan, Jr. signed a Proclamation recognizing Opi'a Taino International, Inc. and the Guainia Taino Tribe of the Virgin Islands who are both Amerindians and Native American tribal groups organized and incorporated in the United States Virgin Islands, who strive to protect and preserve the culture, and promote the socio-economic welfare of the Taino people who settled in the Virgin Islands before the first encounter with Europeans and their descendants; and

WHEREAS, indigenous Amerindian people of the Caribbean have contributed to the national tradition of every aspect of our society from agriculture and science to business and the arts. As the international community celebrates and commemorates the *UN's International Day for the World's Indigenous People* we recognize the need to honor their history, culture and essential roles within the American and Virgin Islands heritage narratives.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Albert Bryan, Jr., Governor of the United States Virgin Islands, by virtue of the Authority vested in me by the Revised Organic Act of 1954, as amended, do hereby proclaim August 9th as *International Day of the World's Indigenous People* throughout the United States Virgin Islands. May our communities continue to ring bells of freedom with respect, solidarity and harmony with our regional, national and international sisters and brothers commemorating observing, proclaiming and celebrating similar Indigenous People of the World events. I call upon all residents of and visitors of the Territory to respectfully extend this to our family in the wider Caribbean and Americas to support the organizational, individual and other multicultural events scheduled in honor of both of these occasions.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Government of the United States Virgin Islands to be affixed at Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas Virgin Islands, this 4th day of August, 2021.




Albert Bryan, Jr.
Governor

ATTEST:


Tregenza A. Roach, Esq.
Lieutenant Governor