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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**UVI AFRICAN ART COLLECTION ON DISPLAY  
AT FORT CHRISTIAN MUSEUM**

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Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriol of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources is pleased to announce that the Division of Libraries, Archives, and Museums, as a part of its Black History Month and V.I. Cultural Month series, will host an exclusive exhibition of African masks from the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) African Art Collection. The exhibit, hosted at the Fort Christian Museum, opened on February 14<sup>th</sup> and will continue until Thursday, March 31, 2022.

The complete 233-piece mask collection was on display at the Reichhold Center for the Arts until September 2017, at which time Hurricanes Irma and Maria caused severe damage to the facility and, consequently, the collection suffered. With a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, as well as aid of conservators from the Smithsonian Institute and A.M. Art Conservation, the Reichhold was able to restore several critically damaged pieces that are currently on display.

“Fort Christian Museum is thrilled to collaborate with UVI and the Reichhold Center for the Arts in reviving this unique collection”, said Territorial Director Amy deSorbo.

The exhibit contains Bundu helmets from the Sande Society of the Sierra Leone and Liberia countries. Also included are two “Maiden Spirit” masks from Nigeria.

Fort Christian Museum is open from 9:00 AM to 4:00PM, Monday through Friday. For more information, contact Monica Prosper, Fort Christian Museum Curator, at 340-714-3678, Ext. 8203 or Denise Humphrey, Reichhold Center for the Arts Director, at 340-693-1552.