



PR#061-23

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Cabinet Brief**

*Belmopan. 9th March, 2023.*

The Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño, met on 7th March 2023.

- Cabinet received a report from the Ministerial Consulting Team that has been engaged in meetings with the Joint Unions on the important issues of Increments and Pension Reform. Following the report, Cabinet agreed on the following:
  1. Increments for all public officers and teachers would be unfrozen effective 1st April 2023.
  2. The Ministerial Team would continue discussions with the Joint Unions Negotiating Team (JUNT) on the matter of the two increment points lost. Those discussions would be based on specific economic performance targets in the fiscal year 2024/25 and beyond.
  3. The government will implement a phased approach to the Public Sector Pension Reform. In phase one, the goal is to institute, effective 1st July 2023, a new contributory pension scheme applicable only to new entrants into the Belize Public Service. Phase two will include a comprehensive review of the existing Public Service Pension Scheme to determine how to make it more effective, efficient and sustainable. For this purpose, a working group will be established, including the government, JUNT, the National Trade Union Congress of Belize, GAMAS, and the private sector.
- After hearing presentations from the Belize Sugar Cane Farmers Association (BSCFA) and BSI/ASR, Cabinet has decided to convene a Commission of Inquiry to examine the modernization of the sugar cane industry and improve its viability.

**Ends**