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PRESS RELEASE

Hon. Henry Charles Usher Receives Courtesy Visit from H.E. David Comissiong

Belmopan. September 7, 2022.

Today, Hon. Henry Charles Usher, Minister of Public Service, Constitutional and Political Reform and Religious Affairs, held discussions with H.E. David Comissiong, Ambassador of Barbados to CARICOM and the Association of Caribbean States (ACS). Accompanying the minister were Mr. Cesar Ross, Director of the Good Governance Unit, and members of the Good Governance Unit and the Belize Reparatory Justice Commission.

H.E. Comissiong expressed his excitement in becoming the High Commissioner of Barbados to Belize and the future work he hopes to accomplish in partnership with Belize. The focus of the discussion was CARICOM's justice and reparation movements, which includes the establishment of reparations and justice commissions throughout CARICOM member states.

These discussions tied in with the motion entitled "Reparatory Justice for the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and Slavery in British Honduras" that Hon. Cordel Hyde tabled before the House of Representatives in October 2021. In this motion, he stated, "Now, therefore, be it resolved that this honourable House debate the issue and take the unanimous decision that, one: the Government of Belize is morally, legally and ethically obliged on behalf of the former slaves and the descendants of Belize, then the British settlement in the Bay of Honduras, to present the appropriate case in the United Kingdom to determine whether as a matter of law, the United Kingdom is liable for the unlawful seizure, transportation and subsequent enslavement of African people in Belize under British colonial rule up until 1833 and to receive the appropriate reparations from Britain."

Ambassador Comissiong reiterated that Belize could reinforce the reparations movements as it is a country rich in unique indigenous history that was immensely impacted by colonial powers and slavery injustice.

The members of the commission were pleased with being offered the opportunity to work closely with H.E. David Comissiong on such an important task. Hon. Usher strongly supports the reparations movement and encourages the commission members to establish themselves so that reparation education and lobbying can begin in Belize.

Ends

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