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PRESS RELEASE

Minister of Blue Economy and Civil Aviation Signs Agreement to Modernize Belize's Airspace

Belmopan, March 13, 2023.

The Government of Belize, through the Ministry of Blue Economy and Civil Aviation, participated in the 250th Ordinary Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Central American Corporation of Air Navigation Services (COCESNA) held in Madrid, Spain, on March 12, 2023. Hon. Andre Perez, Minister of Blue Economy and Civil Aviation, and Kennedy Carrillo, CEO of the ministry, attended the meeting, where a US\$8.5-million agreement was signed for the acquisition of a new aviation primary radar and the upgrading of its air traffic control center.

The new primary radar will significantly improve Belize's control centers and it will provide the opportunity to modernize its air navigation services, making them safer and more secure on a regional and international scale. Belize currently utilizes a secondary surveillance radar system that relies on signals transmitted by equipment on an aircraft to determine its location. The new surveillance radar will emit a signal that bounces off aircraft to determine their positions, even in cases where aircraft are uncooperative or involved in illicit activities.

Furthermore, the COCESNA board members have agreed to provide additional support to Belize to enhance technical capacity-building and legal reform efforts. These measures aim to ensure that Belize's Civil Aviation Regulations fully comply with the standards set by the International Civil Aviation Organization. The approval of this support demonstrates COCESNA's commitment to improving aviation safety and efficiency in Belize and the wider Central American region.

COCESNA was established in 1960 as an international organization focused on integrating and coordinating air navigation services and aeronautical safety capacity-building in Central America. The board of directors is the highest authority within COCESNA, responsible for overseeing its operations and decision-making processes. Minister Perez has been newly appointed to the position of chairperson for the Finance Commission of the regional corporation.

The signing of this agreement marks a notable milestone for Belize's aviation industry as it paves the way for the provision of advanced and dependable air navigation services to the global community. The Government of Belize remains dedicated to collaborating with COCESNA to ensure that its air navigation services adhere to global standards and enhance the safety and efficiency of air travel in the region.

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For more information, contact:

Kennedy Carrillo

CEO, Ministry of Blue Economy & Civil Aviation

ceo@blueeconomy.gov.bz