



PR#159-23

PRESS RELEASE

Cabinet Brief

Belmopan, 6th July 2023.

The Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño, met on 4th July 2023.

- Cabinet considered and approved the establishment of a Firearms and Ammunition Control Board to receive, consider and process firearm applications; to provide regulations and criteria for the approval of firearms licensing, including training and certification of license holders; and to develop a plan for the digitization of a firearms and ammunition licensing system to replace the current manual system.
- Through a Vital Statistics Unit mobile clinic in Santa Cruz Village in Southern Belize, more than 1,300 Belizeans were able to successfully apply for and obtain vital documents. Building on the success of this mobile clinic and aware of the fact that many persons have been unable to provide proof of their Belizean nationality, Cabinet requested that the Attorney General's Ministry propose an appropriate mechanism to assist undocumented Belizeans in regularizing their status as citizens.

Every child born in Belize has the inalienable right to Belizean nationality and birth registration. Mindful of this, Cabinet requested that the Attorney General's Ministry, through the Vital Statistics Unit and with the Ministry of Health & Wellness, coordinates to develop a mechanism for more efficient birth registration.

- In February, Cabinet approved a waiver of duties and taxes on female sanitary products. In pursuance of its obligations as a member of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy, government requested a

waiver from the CARICOM Council for Trade and Economic Development to waive the Common External Tariff (CET) on female sanitary products. Approval was granted for the suspension of the CET on sanitary towels and napkins for one year and tampons for two years. Government will now update the necessary regulations to reflect the zero-rating of duties on these products.

- In an effort to bring Belize into full compliance with its obligations under the CARIFORUM-EU and CARIFORUM-UK economic partnership agreements, Cabinet gave its approval for the 10th phasedown tariff reduction and recommended that the matter be introduced at the next sitting of the House of Representatives.
- Finally, Cabinet reminds Belizeans that we are in the hurricane season and as such should be prepared and remain alert.

Ends