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PRESS RELEASE

Cabinet Brief

Belmopan. 13th June 2024.

The Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño, met on 11th June 2024.

- Cabinet welcomed and endorsed the 2024 National Review Report which assesses Belize's Progress in achieving its commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The report indicated that Belize made significant progress in seven Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), moderate progress in eight, and limited progress in two. It also highlighted achievements in areas such as poverty reduction, health, unemployment, investment, debt reduction and security, all key goals in Plan Belize.
- Cabinet was briefed on the recovery efforts related to the fires that have affected multiple communities countrywide. The Cabinet was informed that the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) continues to work with affected communities to provide support, including monitoring areas made vulnerable to mudslides and ensuring that support is provided to replant crops that were destroyed.
- In preparation for the hurricane season, Cabinet was briefed by the Chief Meteorologist who advised Cabinet that the 2024 Hurricane Season will be active. In addition, the National Emergency Coordinator outlined the disaster management plan for the 2024 Hurricane Season, including NEMO's 13 emergency functions.
- Cabinet supported the Ministry of Economic Development's Plan for Belize and the International Institute for Sustainable Development, through the National Adaptation Plan Global Network, to co-host the 2024 Conference in San Pedro Town. The forum will be hosted from 12th to 14th August 2024 and will bring together experts and policymakers from different sectors to facilitate discussions on key issues relating to climate change, specifically on adaptation priorities, commitments, and strategies.
- Cabinet expressed its outrage over the incident which occurred at the San Ignacio Community Hospital on 1st June and is grateful that medical practitioners, staff and patients were not harmed by those criminal elements who stormed the facility. Decisive action has been taken and instructions have been issued, calling for the escalation of the operation to round up those persons who participated in the attack on the facility and staff as well as all gang elements operating in San Ignacio and Santa Elena.

- Cabinet also gave its support for Belize, through the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development & Investment together with the IDB, to host Ministers of Finance and the Economy of 26 Latin American and Caribbean countries for the Third High-Level Regional Dialogue on the Climate Change Platform. The meeting will be held in San Pedro Town from 30th to 31st August 2024.
- Cabinet gave its approval for the submission of legislation to amend the Criminal Code to criminalize the unauthorized publication, dissemination or disclosure of statements, documents, video footage, photographs, or other materials that form part of an ongoing criminal investigation that can endanger the lives of witnesses and compromise the integrity of investigations.
- To enhance access to finance, especially for small businesses, and to generally promote investment and economic growth, Cabinet was pleased to support and approve the submission of the Moveable Property Security Rights Bill to the National Assembly. This Bill seeks to establish a Secured Transactions and Collateral Registry.

The newly established registry will streamline the utilization of movable collateral, including inventory, accounts receivable, livestock, crops, equipment, and machinery, to secure finance. This will prove particularly beneficial to small businesses that may not have land to provide as collateral. Overall, it will ease lending risks and improve access to finance, primarily for small businesses. This will benefit the private sector and foster growth, innovation, and development.

- Cabinet gave its approval for the Attorney General's Ministry to sign a memorandum of understanding between the Belize Intellectual Property Office (BELIPO) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), concerning the development of alternative dispute resolution around intellectual property. This is to provide for a more timely and cost-effective way for intellectual property issues, which often include international parties, to be resolved.
- Cabinet supported a request by the Peoples' Constitutional Commission for a six-month extension of its work. This will extend the Commission's mandate from 15th May 2024 to 14th November 2024 to allow it to properly complete its work.
- Finally, Cabinet wishes all our Belizean fathers, a Happy Father's Day!

Ends