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PRESS RELEASE

National Consultations to Assess CARICOM's Readiness to Engage in Negotiations for the Liberalization of Trade in Goods with External Trading Partners

Belmopan, November 15, 2024.

On November 14, Dr. the Hon. Osmond Martinez, Minister of State for Foreign Trade in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, and Ambassador Wayne McCook, Assistant Secretary-General for the Directorate of CARICOM Single Market and Trade, visited Citrus Products of Belize (CPBL) to assess Belize's preparedness for engaging in external negotiations with countries outside of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).

The assessment will utilize both qualitative and quantitative data, including stakeholder consultations within the country, to evaluate the region's readiness and identify priority issues. These insights will inform the development of targeted policy measures to enhance CARICOM's trade performance.

Minister Martinez was supported by Ms. Tricia Gideon, the Deputy Director General for Foreign Trade, and other officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade.

This visit serves as a foundation for upcoming engagements with two other key productive sectors in the country, the Belize Sugar Industry (BSI) and the producers in Spanish Lookout. It also provides an opportunity to gain insights into Belize's productive sectors' contribution to the local and regional economies, while addressing the challenges and key concerns of these sectors. These visits underscore the government's ongoing commitment to supporting local and regional food security.

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