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PRESS RELEASE

An Introductory Course on Pilotage and Application of Agricultural Drones for Precision Agriculture in Northern Belize

Belmopan, December 3, 2024.

The Office of the Prime Minister and Ministry of Investment, through its Investment Policy and Compliance Unit (IPCU), joined the Corozal Think Tank, DRTX Drones, Corozal ITVET, and the Corozal Town Council to conduct a course titled “An Introductory Course to Agricultural Drone Pilotage in Belize.”

This course aims to enhance the use of agricultural drones in Belize to improve yields, reduce costs, and minimize pilot errors that could damage valuable resources. It addresses the need to equip Belizean farmers with new skills to enhance the profitability of their operations and modernize the agriculture sector in the Corozal and Orange Walk districts. Agricultural drones represent a transformative technology that enhances the efficiency, accuracy, and sustainability of farming operations.

Drones’ high-resolution imagery supports better crop monitoring, and the application of inputs for plant nutrition, pest control, and disease management. With no similar training currently available in Belize, this initiative fills a critical gap, providing much-needed tools to optimize production costs and increase yields, especially in the cultivation of sugarcane, onions, carrots, rice, pasture, cattle, poultry, coconuts, and soybeans.

The training, conducted by DRTX Drones Mexico from Quintana Roo, represents a step toward modernizing agriculture and diversifying economic activity in Belize’s Northern Districts. By fostering skills and entrepreneurial development, the Ministry of Investment and the Corozal Think Tank aim to promote export-led growth in agriculture and other sectors.

The Think Tank acts as the Steering Committee for the Regional Economic Development Masterplan for the Corozal District, which was realigned with the

priorities of the Plan Belize Medium-Term Development Strategy. The group of professionals in the Corozal Think Tank is tasked with identifying and implementing projects and policy recommendations to drive economic growth activity and prosperity for residents of the Corozal District.

Present at the course's opening were Mrs. Narda Garcia, CEO in the Office of the Prime Minister, Investment and Civil Aviation; Mrs. Thea Garcia-Ramirez, Chair of the Corozal Think Tank; Mr. Fred Roches, Ministry of Agriculture; His Worship Mayor Rigo Velloso, Corozal Town Council; Mr. Neri Ramirez, CEO of the Corozal Free Zone; Mr. Lincoln Blake, Director of the Investment Policy and Compliance Unit, Ministry of Investment, Mr. Jose Antonio Texocotitla Pinzon, Facilitator, DRTX Drones Mexico; and Mr. Rick Pech, Manager of the Corozal ITVET.

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