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## PRESS RELEASE

### **The Ministry of Public Service, Constitutional & Political Reform and Religious Affairs Hosts Second Annual National Anti-Corruption Conference**

*Belmopan, December 12, 2024.*

The Second Annual National Anti-Corruption Conference was successfully held on Monday, December 10, at the Best Western Plus Belize Biltmore Plaza in Belize City. Spearheaded by the Good Governance Unit (GGU), under the Ministry of Public Service, Constitutional & Political Reform and Religious Affairs, the event was organized in collaboration with the United States Department of State's International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL).

The conference brought together key stakeholders from government, civil society, and international organizations to unite under the theme: "Empowered by Choice, United by Voice, Belize Against Corruption."

The morning session commenced with presentations on the following topics:

- **Onboarding Civil Asset Recovery & Anti-Money Laundering** by the Financial Intelligence Unit
- **Developments in Open Contracting & Procurement** by the Contractor General
- **Updates from the Ombudsman and the National Human Rights Institute**

Following the presentations, a discussion was held where panellists addressed questions from the audience, fostering constructive dialogue and valuable exchanges of ideas.

The afternoon session emphasized partnerships and capacity building of public officers at the national and municipal Levels. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) highlighted initiatives for good governance and collaboration with the GGU through the CARSI Grant in the central government. A professor from Galen University delivered a compelling presentation on the topic, "**Capacity Building for Anti-Corruption at the Municipal Level**," engaging mayors from across the country during a vibrant question-and-answer session.

Participants were then invited to roundtable discussions on subjects including Civil Asset Recovery & Anti-Money Laundering Initiative, Open Contracting & Procurement, and the Role of the Ombudsman and National Human Rights Initiatives. These discussions encouraged deep dives into tackling challenges and creating opportunities to advance Belize's anti-corruption agenda.

The event concluded with presentations summarizing the outcomes of the roundtable discussions. A heartfelt thanks were extended to all presenters, moderators, and guests who contributed to the success of this year's conference.

Through the GGU, the Ministry of Public Service, Constitutional & Political Reform and Religious Affairs reaffirmed its commitment to combating corruption and strengthening transparency, accountability, and good governance across Belize. As highlighted throughout the day, empowering citizens and fostering collaborative partnerships remain pivotal to this effort.

**Ends**