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PRESS RELEASE

Minister of State, Hon. Dr. Osmond Martinez, Engages with Key Belizean Industries to Enhance Global Market Position

Belmopan, January 13, 2025.

The Minister of State for Foreign Trade, Hon. Dr. Osmond Martinez, and officials from the Directorate General for Foreign Trade visited key industries in Punta Gorda on Friday, January 10th. The visit aimed to strengthen Belize's position in global markets through targeted support and collaboration with local enterprises.

The delegation began their tour at Naledo Belize Ltd., a leading name in Belize's food and beverage industry, renowned for its Turmeric Whole-root Paste, spices, and snacks. Recognized for both local and international success, Naledo is exploring ways to scale its production and diversify its product range to reach new markets. During the visit, Minister Martinez highlighted the importance of export development in maintaining the global competitiveness of Belizean products. The Directorate General for Foreign Trade reaffirmed its commitment to facilitating Naledo's growth through targeted trade initiatives and capacity-building efforts.

The delegation also visited Copal Tree Lodge and the Copalli Rum Distillery, a leading producer in Belize's premium rum industry. The distillery, known for its commitment to sustainable practices and high-quality organic ingredients, is poised to expand its international footprint in the United States, Europe, and the Caribbean. Discussions focused on strategies to boost global market access, enhance tourism-related offerings, and foster product innovation. Minister Martinez commended the distillery's dedication to sustainability and emphasized the need to balance growth with environmental responsibility.

The visit concluded at the Maya House of Cacao and Chocolate Museum, where Minister Martinez was joined by Hon. Oscar Requena, Minister of Rural Transformation, Community Development, Labour and Local Government. The delegation met with the Toledo Cacao Growers Association (TCGA) to address challenges and opportunities in Belize's cacao industry. Discussions highlighted the TCGA's CDB-funded project aimed at strengthening Belize's position in the global cocoa-chocolate value chain. Key topics included climate change impacts, fire damage, and rising international competition. The association emphasized the importance of infrastructure development, land title security, and sustained funding for initiatives such as the National Cacao Committee and climate adaptation programs.

Ministers Martinez and Requena and the Directorate General for Foreign Trade reaffirmed their commitment to supporting Belizean industries across sectors. These engagements reflect the government's ongoing efforts to ensure Belizean businesses remain competitive, sustainable, and globally recognized.

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