



PRESS RELEASE

Minister of State Dr. Osmond Martinez Appointed Chair of CARIFORUM

Belmopan. January 20, 2025.

Belize proudly announces that Minister of State for Foreign Trade, Dr. Osmond Martinez, has assumed the Chair of CARIFORUM for the period January to June 2025. This prestigious role underscores Belize's commitment to regional integration and leadership within the Caribbean Forum.

In preparation for this significant responsibility, Belize hosted a CARIFORUM delegation from January 14 – 17, 2025. The delegation, led by Director General Mrs. Alexis Downes-Amsterdam, with support from Mrs. Yvanette Baron George and Mr. Rovin Ghansham, met with Belizean officials on critical CARIFORUM matters to ensure a seamless transition and effective leadership during Belize's tenure.

The mission included comprehensive briefings with officials at the Ministerial, Executive, and technical levels in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade. Discussions focused on key areas such as policy dialogue, EPA institutional frameworks, development cooperation initiatives, and trading relationships under the CARIFORUM/EU and UK Economic Partnership Agreements meetings including the Trade and Development Committee and the Joint Council. Pending matters to be addressed as part of the regional work programme and the importance of strategically identifying and concluding key issues were also discussed. Minister Martinez highlighted the need for a re-branding of CARIFORUM and aligning priorities to significantly benefit member states and the region as a whole.

The mission concluded with Belize as Chair of the CARIFORUM Consultation on EPA Preference Utilization, an essential initiative to enhance the benefits of the EPA for member states.

This mission reflects CARIFORUM's dedication to fostering coordination and collaboration among its members. Belize's Chairmanship marks a pivotal opportunity to advance CARIFORUM's objectives, strengthen regional cooperation, and drive impactful outcomes for member states.

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