



PR#137

## PRESS RELEASE

### Cabinet Brief

*Belmopan. February 12, 2021. 8:00 a.m.*

The Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño, met in regular session on Tuesday, February 9, 2021.

- Cabinet welcomed the mid-term report from the Economic Recovery Advisory Team. The group is tasked with making recommendations to engineer sustainable economic activity and to protect and create jobs to successfully emerge from the current economic crisis. The report was discussed, and nine ministerial working groups were established to review the recommendations and advise on implementation thereof by way of report to Cabinet at its meeting at the end of February for urgent consideration and action.
- Cabinet approved the re-establishment of the National Trade Negotiating Commission (NTNC) which will comprise of representatives from the private sector, civil society and government. This NTNC will serve as a forum for dialogue among public and private sector and to provide advice and make recommendations to Government on trade policy issues, trade agreements and information sharing. In addition, the Commission will, when appropriate, participate in trade negotiating sessions.
- Cabinet also gave its approval for the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology to review the Belize Education Sector Reform Project II, a loan project between the Government and the Caribbean Development Bank that provides funding for projects that enhance the learning environment for primary and secondary school students. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Cabinet is of the view that this project should be reviewed to ensure optimal benefit to Belizean students.

- Cabinet supported a request by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Immigration for the replacement of the outdated and obsolete passport system with a new and modern e-passport system, including biometric data which will be more secure and allow for greater efficiency.
- As a result of market contraction, the local dairy industry contracted by 53 percent in January 2021. To this end, Cabinet gave its support to set up a working committee to include local producers of dairy products to seek ways to create the environment necessary to foster the growth of a competitive dairy sector and to find ways to make better use of the excess milk in the market.

**Ends**