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PRESS RELEASE

Belize Participates in the Thirty-Second Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM

Belmopan. February 25, 2021. 5:35 p.m.

Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño participated in the 32nd Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) on February 24-25, 2021, via videoconference.

The heads of government assessed the regional progress made in combatting the COVID-19 pandemic and reiterated their call for a global summit, in the context of the World Health Organisation's (WHO) ACT-A Facilitation Council, to address the urgent need for equitable access and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines.

Ongoing efforts at implementing the CARICOM Single Market and Economy were also discussed. In advancing the regional agenda on food and nutrition security, the heads supported the implementation of policy recommendations for the commercialization of the regional agri-business sector. Prime Minister Briceño accepted the invitation from Guyanese President for Belize to join the Special Ministerial Task Force on Food Production and Food Security.

The CARICOM heads deliberated on the Framework for a Joint Tourism Policy and provided direction in preparation for the expected rebound in travel in the coming months. The heads received an update on the status of reparations issues and were briefed on security issues in the region. There was also a renewal of commitment to reinvigorate efforts for a strategic partnership with the new Biden-Harris Administration of the United States of America.

The proposal by Belize on the way forward for the election process of the Secretary-General of CARICOM was endorsed.

Prime Minister Briceño updated his colleagues on the recent developments between Belize and Guatemala. CARICOM heads re-emphasized their steadfast support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and security of Belize.

Following the agreed amendment to the rotation schedule for the Chairmanship of CARICOM, Belize is scheduled to take up the chairmanship on January 1, 2022.

Accompanying the Prime Minister in the meeting were Hon. Eamon Courtenay, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, and Immigration; Ambassador Amalia Mai, Chief Executive Officer in the Ministry; H.E. Lawrence Sylvester, Ambassador of Belize to CARICOM; and other senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Immigration.

Ends