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PRESS RELEASE

Belize Participates in the 42nd CARICOM Heads of Government Meeting

Belmopan. July 6, 2021. 5:00 p.m.

Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño headed the Belize delegation to the 42nd Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) from July 5 to 6, 2021.

In addressing a wide range of critical issues during the virtual meeting, the heads assessed the regional advancements made in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. They agreed to redouble their efforts to acquire adequate supplies of vaccines with the determination to achieve regional herd immunity of 80% coverage by the end of 2021 and mandated the mobilization of resources to address vaccine hesitancy.

The Heads of Government emphasized that the CARICOM Single Market and Economy must be used as an important vehicle for rebuilding and transforming the economies of member states devastated by the pandemic. The proposal to incentivize private sector partnership in addressing transport and logistics requirements for the successful implementation of the Agri-Food Systems Agenda was also endorsed by the heads.

CARICOM Heads also received a report on the political situation in Haiti and updates on regional natural disasters from St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Guyana, Suriname, and Barbados. A report on the Joint Tourism Policy for the region was presented and the heads endorsed the recommendation for a harmonized policy to cater to the return of cruise ships to the region. The heads welcomed the report on the ongoing efforts towards the elimination of roaming charges for the region as part of the creation of a CARICOM Single ICT Space.

As of July 1, 2021, Prime Minister Briceño joined the Bureau of the Conference and will serve in that capacity over an 18-month period. Belize will take up the CARICOM Chairmanship in January 2022 and will host the 33rd Inter-sessional Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government in February 2022.

Accompanying the Prime Minister were Hon. Eamon Courtenay, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, and Immigration; Hon. Ramon Cervantes, Minister of State in the ministry; Ambassador Amalia Mai, chief executive officer in the ministry; H.E. Lawrence Sylvester, Belize's Ambassador to CARICOM; and other senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, and Immigration.

Ends