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PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of National Security Refutes Allegations made against BDF Patrol

Belmopan. June 3, 2020. 6:30 p.m.

The Ministry of National Security hereby clarifies misinformation that has been circulating on social media regarding a Belize Defence Force (BDF) patrol in the Toledo District.

The BDF conducts patrols and monitors Belize's borders daily in accordance with its duties and mandate under the laws of Belize to preserve the territorial integrity of Belize. Reports appearing in both local and international media yesterday, June 2nd, referred to allegations being made against some members of a BDF patrol accused of entering Guatemalan territory on Sunday, May 31, 2020. The Ministry has confirmed that the allegations are false.

On Sunday, May 31st, while conducting a routine patrol, some members of the BDF 2020 visited a neighborhood near Jalacte Village in the Toledo District of Belize where they briefly encountered some civilians with whom they engaged in a respectful and civil manner and then departed. As is the norm on all border patrols, the BDF personnel on this occasion carried with them calibrated GPS equipment. The patrol commander reported that some individuals who were in the area accused the patrol of illegally entering Guatemala when in fact the patrol was still within Belize. It is regrettable that some members of the media chose to report these false allegations.

Whenever there is an incident near the border that raises concern between Belize and Guatemala, the norm under the Framework Agreement and Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) of 2005 is for the respective governments to request that the Organization of American States (OAS) establish the facts surrounding the case. In response to the recent allegations, the Government of Belize has invited the OAS to ascertain what actually took place. In the meantime, the Government will be guided by Annex C of the CBMs, which requires both parties to desist from making false accusations and public statements that could be harmful to relations between the two countries. The Government and Ministry encourage members of the media to do the same.

Ends

For more information, visit:

[https://www.oas.org/sap/peacefund/VirtualLibrary/Inter-](https://www.oas.org/sap/peacefund/VirtualLibrary/Inter-StateDisputes/Belize-Guatemala/Agreements/AgreementOnFrameworkforNegotiationsConfidence-BuildingMeasures.pdf)

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