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PRESS RELEASE

CARICOM Appoints Dr. Carla Barnett as New Secretary General

Belmopan. May 11, 2021. 1:00 p.m.

Today, CARICOM Heads of Government met at their 21st Special Meeting to conclude the process for the recruitment of a new secretary general of CARICOM, a Belizean national, Dr. Carla Barnett.

CARICOM heads received a report from the Community Council, which was mandated in February 2021 to manage the process of recruitment. Based on the consensus recommendation resulting from the transparent and rigorous process carried out by the Community Council, CARICOM heads unanimously agreed to appoint Dr. Barnett.

All CARICOM heads acknowledged the historic nature of the appointment of Dr. Barnett as the first woman to be appointed secretary general, though her selection was based on her qualifications, experience and skills. All heads pledged their support to working with Dr. Barnett for advancing the agenda of the region.

Prime Minister Briceño, who led the Belize delegation at the meeting, thanked his CARICOM colleagues for the confidence entrusted to Dr. Barnett. He noted that Dr. Barnett will take up the post of secretary general at a most critical time for the region. The Prime Minister also highlighted that in addition to her unimpeachable qualifications, Dr. Barnett's professional career has precisely equipped her with the skills, experience and network to lead the CARICOM Secretariat.

In addressing the Conference of CARICOM Heads, Prime Minister Briceño said, “It is not lost on us that Belize is geographically on the western rim of our shared Caribbean space. However, CARICOM’s centrality to Belize’s identity, culture, aspirations and development has never been in doubt. Belize’s commitment to our integration, Community and Secretariat is unshakeable. And is now well exemplified by our provision of the next Secretary General.”

Dr. Barnett will assume her post in August 2021 for a five-year term. She has expressed her vision as one for a Caribbean Community where all citizens want to contribute to building a sense of “one Caribbean people with one common experience and destiny.”

Prime Minister Briceño has conveyed the congratulations of the Government and people of Belize to Dr. Barnett.

Ends