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PRESS RELEASE

Cabinet Brief

Belmopan. 20th May 2021. 3:00 p.m.

The Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño, met in regular session on 18th May 2021.

- Cabinet received an update from the Ministerial Consultation Team on their last meetings with the Joint Unions and decided that a letter of clarification be sent to the Joint Unions to confirm the five-hour workweek reduction; that the forbearance period to allow for borrowers up to the end of December would apply to the entire portfolio including but not limited to mortgages; requesting that the National Trade Union Congress of Belize propose a nominee to serve on the board of directors of the National Bank of Belize; and to remind the members of the unions that any public officer continuing to strike beyond 14th May will not be paid any salary for any period on strike thereafter.
- Cabinet approved a plan to restructure the core functions of the Belize Bureau of Standards by designating the Supplies Control Act and the compliance component of the Standards Act into a Supplies Control Unit administered by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise, and to appoint a Controller of Supplies in accordance with the Supplies Control Act.
- Cabinet gave its approval for the designation of the remaining national lands within the South Water Caye and Sapodilla Caye marine reserves as mangrove forests reserves. In addition, Cabinet authorized the drafting of legislation that will enable the protection of these national lands. This will help to protect the mangroves on these remaining national lands and will assist in meeting the timeline for corrective measures for Belize to make progress and to address some

key issues negatively affecting the status of the Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System as a World Heritage Site.

- Cabinet gave its approval for the introduction of legislation to amend the Court of Appeal Act to allow for more than four justices of appeal to be appointed.
- Cabinet gave its approval for the reopening of land and sea border points to receive foreign tourists, namely, the Santa Elena Northern Border, Benque Viejo del Carmen Western Border, San Pedro and Punta Gorda borders. The borders will be opened by 31st May for foreign tourists who wish to visit Belize for recreation and vacation purposes only.
- Finally, Cabinet approved the establishment of the Belize Advisory Safety Policy to allow for improved compliance by Belize in fulfilling its obligations under the International Civil Aviation Convention.

Ends