

JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE OFFICIAL VISIT OF HON. JOHN BRICEÑO, PRIME MINISTER OF BELIZE TO GUATEMALA

At the invitation of H.E. Alejandro Giammattei, President of the Republic of Guatemala, Hon. John Briceño, Prime Minister of Belize made an official working visit to Guatemala on 2 June 2021.

During the visit President Giammattei and Prime Minister Briceño held substantive and productive discussions on a number of bilateral and regional issues. While Guatemala's Claim is before the International Court of Justice, the two Heads reiterated their commitment to further strengthening the ties of friendship and cooperation between Belize and Guatemala.

The Leaders exchanged views on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the health, social and economic sectors of their countries. They reiterated the urgent need for equitable and affordable access to vaccines so that a sustainable path to recovery could earnestly begin.

Trade and Cooperation

President Giammattei and Prime Minister Briceño reviewed the frameworks in place to facilitate bilateral trade and deepen cooperation between their two countries.

In view of the important role trade can play in the economic recovery of their countries, the Leaders agreed to enhance the Partial Scope Trade Agreement between Belize and Guatemala. They directed their officials to reactivate the institutional framework of the PSA with a view to improving its implementation and advancing its expansion.

Both Leaders welcomed the reactivation of the Belize Guatemala Joint Commission, which met on 18 May 2021 in Belize City. They reiterated their commitment to the full implementation of all thirteen bilateral cooperation agreements. They directed the Joint Commission to accelerate the implementation of all the agreements and to explore and design projects and programmes of cooperation between the two countries aimed at strengthening friendship between the people of Belize and Guatemala and their development.

Security and Migration

The Heads exchanged views on the threats posed by transnational organized crime to the security of their countries, quality of lives of their citizens and peace in the region. They directed discussions, towards the establishment of a high level security group, be

commenced between their respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs, through the existing mechanisms established by the Agreement on a Framework for Negotiations and Confidence Building Measures between Belize and Guatemala signed in 2005.

The two Leaders discussed the ongoing migration situation and reiterated the importance of a regional approach.

Prime Minister Briceño congratulated President Giammattei on his imminent assumption of the Presidency Pro Tempore of the Central American Integration System and pledged Belize's support and cooperation.

Prime Minister Briceño thanked President Giammattei for the warm hospitality shown by the Government and People of Guatemala to him and his delegation. Prime Minister Briceño extended an invitation to President Giammattei to visit Belize at the earliest opportunity.

The Official Visit to Guatemala of Prime Minister Briceño, was carried out following the positive dialogue started during the Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs at the Office of the Organization of American States (OAS) in the Adjacency Zone (AZ), on March 4, 2021, and constitutes a historical event for the bilateral relationship that endorses the high priority that both Peoples and Governments give each other.

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2 June 2021