



**PRESS RELEASE**

**Belize Participates in WIPO Heads and Ministerial Meetings on Intellectual Property for Caribbean Countries**

*Belmopan, November 15, 2023.*

Belize was represented at the Regional Meeting of Heads of Intellectual Property (IP) Offices of Caribbean Countries and the Ministerial Meeting on IP for Caribbean Countries held in St. Kitts and Nevis from November 2 to 6, 2023. Hon. Anthony Sylvestre, Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, and Ms. Kay King, Deputy Registrar of the Belize Intellectual Property Office (BELIPO), attended the meetings which were held under the theme, "Intellectual Property (IP): Innovation to Prosperity".

Present at the meetings were Daren Tand, Director General of the World Intellectual Property Office (WIPO), and Hasan Kleib, Deputy Director General of the Regional and National Development Sector.

Ministers with responsibility for IP in the region successfully concluded the meetings by discussing priority areas of IP within their jurisdictions and re-affirming their commitment to the following:

1. Collaborating with WIPO in developing, formulating, updating and implementing intellectual property strategies and work plans in line with the countries' economic and social development priorities;
2. Strengthening the institutional capacity of intellectual property offices/registries;
3. Strengthening of the digital infrastructure of the intellectual property system;
4. Strengthening and advancing a Harmonized Regional Intellectual Property System;
5. Supporting the ongoing work in the region concerning geographical indications and origin-linked products to ensure that the necessary policy and legislative framework is in place;
6. Cooperation for the use of intellectual property platforms and global databases;
7. Continued utilization of the services of WIPO to assist in the legislative review and public awareness initiatives towards the accession, implementation and promotion of WIPO-administered treaties;
8. Considering the adoption of the regional regulations on governance and operation of collective

management organizations in CARICOM;

9. Raising and building public awareness on respect for intellectual property; and
10. Collaborating with WIPO towards increasing awareness of global trends in this context to help policymakers understand and develop potential policy choices.

These resolutions are incorporated in the Plan Belize Medium-Term Development Strategy 2022-2026, with specific mention of government's commitment to finalizing the Automation of the Registration (e-filing) and Payment Services, completing the National Intellectual Property Strategy and the development of an IP culture that includes advocacy and consistency in the treatment of IP in the public sector.

BELIPO, under the auspices of the Attorney General's Ministry, remains committed to the execution of Plan Belize as we endeavor to build a modern intellectual property system that values and protects Belize's vibrant and creative culture.

**Ends**