



PR#032-25

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Statement by the Government of Belize on the Passing of Mr Aurelio Martínez**

*Belmopan. March 18, 2025.*

The Government and people of Belize are deeply saddened by the sudden and tragic passing of the late Aurelio Martínez, a Honduran musical and cultural icon, on March 17, 2025.

Aurelio Martínez, affectionately known as Aurelio, had become the leading cultural ambassador of the Garifuna People and was a highly accomplished singer, percussionist, guitarist, and performer who shared the uniqueness and richness of the Garifuna culture locally, regionally, and internationally.

He leaves a profound mark on Garifuna music and culture through the internationally acclaimed Lita Ariran, which he founded, and his extensive discography including Darandi (2017), Lándini (2014), Laru Beya (2011), Garifuna Soul (2024), Songs of the Garifuna: Lita Ariran (1995); and hugely successful collaborations including Wátina (2007) and Paranda (1999).

His musical legacy will live on through his songs and music and continue to inspire current and future generations of Garifuna musicians and delight audiences from around the world who love the Garifuna culture. Here in Belize, he is a beloved icon who has left an indelible mark on our culture.

Additionally, he was a successful politician and held the distinction of serving as the first Afro-Honduran member of the National Congress of Honduras from 2006-2010.

The Government of Belize takes this opportunity to express its sincere condolences to Aurelio Martínez's family, friends, and fans. Aurelio is beloved by Belizeans and we celebrate his life and legacy. The nation is deeply saddened by his passing.

**Ends**