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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Minister Thea Garcia Ramirez Represents Belize at High-Level IDB Regional Dialogue on Violence Against Women in Mexico City**

*Belmopan, June 5, 2025.*

Hon. Thea Garcia-Ramirez, Minister of Human Development, Families and Gender Affairs, represented Belize on the international stage during a high-level panel hosted by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) on June 3, 2025, in Mexico City. The virtual dialogue, titled “Challenges in Addressing Violence Against Women in Latin America and the Caribbean,” brought together regional leaders to address the persistent and growing crisis of gender-based violence.

Minister Garcia-Ramirez joined a distinguished panel of female leaders, including First Lady Ann-Marie Davis of the Bahamas; Márcia Lopes, Minister of State for Women, Brazil; Pedrica Saint-Jean, Minister for the Status of Women and Women’s Rights, Haiti; Cynthia Figueredo, Minister of Women, Paraguay; and Olivia Grange, Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Jamaica. The panel was moderated by Diana Rodríguez Franco, Special Advisor on Gender and Diversity in the Office of the IDB President.

During the discussion, Minister Garcia-Ramirez highlighted the urgent need to address the intersection of domestic violence and organized crime in Belize. She noted that violence against women is no longer confined to the private sphere and has become entangled with broader issues of security and development. “When setting priorities, we focus on data-driven interventions, multisectoral partnerships, and community-led prevention strategies,” said the Minister. “Tackling this crisis requires a whole-of-society response that centers the needs and voices of women and girls.”

The panel explored shared regional challenges, including underreporting of violence, insufficient protective services, and limited access to justice. Participants exchanged experiences and identified opportunities for collaboration in strengthening legal frameworks, investing in prevention, and building regional solidarity.

The participation of Minister Garcia-Ramirez reaffirmed Belize's commitment to advancing gender equality and safeguarding the rights and dignity of women and girls.

The Ministry of Human Development, Families, and Gender Affairs remains dedicated to accelerating action and promoting safe, inclusive communities for all.

**Ends**