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PRESS RELEASE

Belize and United States of America Sign MOC for a Biometric Data Sharing Partnership

Belmopan. July 24, 2025.

Hon. Francis Fonseca, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, Culture, and Immigration, and Kristi Noem, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, signed a Memorandum of Cooperation, which sets the stage for a Biometric Data Sharing Partnership (BDSP), on July 22, 2025. The objective of the new partnership is to enhance border security and public safety through the sharing of information.

The foundation for this MOC is the Letter of Agreement between the Government of Belize and the Merida Initiative, which sought security cooperation among the United States, Mexico, and the countries of Central America to combat the threats of drug trafficking, transnational organized crime, and money laundering.

The key implementing agencies are the Police Department and the Department of Border Management and Immigration Services. Data sharing will improve the ability to make informed decisions, detect criminality, and assess risk while facilitating lawful international travel and migration. These agencies will be able to access information on known or suspected terrorists, deported felons, smugglers, gang members, alerts, watchlists, and other derogatory indicators.

Personal data is protected and cannot be transferred to a third party. The MOC is governed by the Laws of Belize, and all Belizeans continue to enjoy the protection of the Constitution and other relevant national legislation. There is no connection between the proposed National ID and this Memorandum of Cooperation.

Although a small nation, Belize is not immune to organized, transnational crime, as has been seen from the international trade of drugs, contraband, and people, as well as the presence of foreign criminals in the country. The MOC on the BDSP now strengthens national capacity and further reinforces joint efforts to make the entire region safer and more prosperous for all citizens.

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