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PRESS RELEASE

Belize Strengthens National Tsunami Preparedness

Belmopan, February 3, 2026.

Belize strengthened its national tsunami preparedness through a five-day Tsunami Ready Visit led by the International Tsunami Information Center for the Caribbean (ITIC-CAR) in collaboration with national and local stakeholders. The visit was conducted from Monday, January 26 to Friday, January 30, 2026, and focused on enhancing Belize's tsunami readiness planning, standard operating procedures, and community preparedness under the Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme.

The Tsunami Ready activities included technical training on Pacific Tsunami Warning (PTW) products and services, the review and strengthening of tsunami standard operating procedures (SOPs), and outreach initiatives targeting at-risk coastal communities. These efforts built national and local capacity to prepare for, respond to, and recover from tsunami events, while reinforcing Belize's commitment to regional and international tsunami risk reduction initiatives.

The international technical team supporting the visit included Ms. Christa von Hillebrandt-Andrade, Manager, International Tsunami Information Center-Caribbean Office (Puerto Rico); Ms. Kimberly Maisonet González, Contractor, International Tsunami Information Center – Caribbean Office (Puerto Rico); and Mr. Christopher Moore, Tsunami Modeler, NOAA Center for Tsunami Research, Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory.

The visit involved key stakeholders, including the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO), the National Meteorological Service of Belize (NMS), and the Belize City Council's City Emergency Management Organization (CEMO).

Core activities included a national workshop focused on tsunami SOPs, technical discussions with the Belize City Council, and site visits to the National Meteorological Service offices. Additional sessions included national-level training and a tabletop exercise at NEMO's Headquarters in Belmopan, along with a courtesy call to the United States Embassy.

The week concluded with community engagement visits to tsunami-prone coastal communities, including Placencia, Riversdale, Hopkins, Gales Point, and Mullins River. These engagements involved meetings with Village Emergency Committees and local leaders to strengthen community awareness, preparedness, and coordination.

Hon. Henry Charles Usher, Minister of the Public Service and Disaster Risk Management, emphasized the importance of the mission, stating: "By strengthening our tsunami preparedness through the Tsunami Ready Programme, we ensured that our communities, especially those along the coast, are better equipped to respond to emergencies. This collaboration with our regional and international partners demonstrated our commitment to protecting lives and building a safer Belize for everyone."

Through the Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme, Belize continues to enhance its capacity to protect lives, livelihoods, and coastal development, while strengthening coordination among national agencies, local authorities, and international partners.

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