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PR#068-26

PRESS RELEASE

GOB Convenes Inaugural Meeting of the National Cacao Committee

Belmopan, March 6, 2026.

The Government of Belize launched the inaugural meeting of the National Cacao Committee (NCC), uniting public and private stakeholders to chart the future of Belize's cacao industry. Established by Cabinet in January 2026, the Committee serves as the Government's principal platform for institutionalizing a national approach to developing cacao as a new growth sector, particularly in southern Belize, where the industry supports rural livelihoods and indigenous farming communities.

Stakeholders outlined the current state of the sector and agreed on key priorities for the next 12 months:

- Expand national production and processing capacity.
- Invest in digital systems such as a national farmer registry and farm mapping.
- Improve physical infrastructure, including farm access roads.
- Advance legal reforms to strengthen the sector's governance framework.

Members also explored legislation to guide industry development and certification systems to enhance Belize's competitiveness in premium international markets.

Participants welcomed the inaugural meeting as a milestone more than a decade in the making and reaffirmed their commitment to a coordinated national effort to strengthen the industry. Co-led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Ministry of Rural Transformation, the Committee will advance its work through three technical groups focused on agribusiness development, infrastructure development, and legal reform and compliance. Together, these groups will drive implementation, mobilize resources, and strengthen Belize's position as a leading origin for high-quality cacao.

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