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PRESS RELEASE

GOB Launches National Commission for Persons with Disabilities

Belmopan, September 4, 2026.

The Ministry of Human Development, Family Support and Gender Affairs officially launched the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities on September 3, marking an important step in Government's continued efforts to strengthen the rights, representation, and inclusion of persons with disabilities in Belize.

Held under the theme **“Together Towards Inclusion,”** the launch brought together persons with disabilities, Government officials, civil society organisations, disability advocates, development partners, and representatives of key national institutions to formally introduce the Commission and begin a new phase in the implementation of the Disabilities Act, 2024.

For the Ministry, the establishment of the Commission represents more than the creation of another national body. It provides an important mechanism through which the commitments contained in the Disabilities Act can be translated into coordinated action, greater accountability, and meaningful improvements in the lives of persons with disabilities.

The Disabilities Act, 2024 provides Belize with a comprehensive legislative framework for advancing and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities, including in areas such as education and training, employment, health care, accessibility, and protection from discrimination.

The National Commission for Persons with Disabilities brings together representatives from Government, civil society organisations serving persons with disabilities, labour, the private sector, and key national institutions. Under the Act, the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry responsible for Human Development serves as Chairperson of the Commission.

Ahead of the public launch, Commissioners participated in their inaugural working session, beginning the substantive work of the new body. Discussions focused on building a shared understanding of the Commission's mandate, reviewing the Disabilities Act and Terms of Reference, and beginning discussions on the strategic priorities that will guide the Commission's work.

During the official ceremony, members of the Commission received their Instruments of Appointment, formally assuming the responsibility entrusted to them under the Disabilities Act.

Delivering the keynote address, Hon. Thea Garcia Ramirez, Minister of Human Development, Family Support and Gender Affairs, reaffirmed the Ministry's commitment to working with the Commission and the disability community to advance greater inclusion across Belize.

The programme also included an overview of the Disabilities Act, 2024 by Mr. Delvitt Samuels, Crown Counsel and drafter of the Act, along with special remarks from Ms. Alisa Fisher and H.E. Rossana Briceño, Special Envoy for the Development of Families and Children.

The occasion was attended by representatives from across Government, organisations serving persons with disabilities, members of the disability community, civil society, the United Nations system, development partners, statutory bodies, labour, and the private sector.

The Ministry's goal is not simply to speak about inclusion, but to help create a Belize in which inclusion is increasingly experienced in the nation's schools, workplaces, communities, public spaces, services, and institutions.

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