



PRESS RELEASE

Belize Advances Energy Partnerships and Hands Over OLACDE Ministerial Presidency to Bolivia

Belmopan, October 20, 2026.

Belize strengthened its engagement with regional and international energy partners during an official visit to Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, from October 6 to 10, 2026, to participate in the 11th Energy Week and the 56th Meeting of Energy Ministers of the Latin American and Caribbean Energy Organization (OLACDE).

Dr. Leroy Almendarez, Chief Executive Officer, represented Hon. Michel Chebat, Minister responsible for Energy. He was accompanied by Mr. Deon Kelly, Acting Director of Energy. Energy Week took place from October 6 to 9, with the ministerial meeting convened on October 8 and 9.

On behalf of Minister Chebat and the Government of Belize, Dr. Almendarez formally handed over the presidency of OLACDE's Meeting of Energy Ministers from Belize to Bolivia for the 2026–2027 term. The handover reaffirmed Belize's commitment to regional cooperation and continuity in addressing shared challenges in energy security, affordability, and sustainable development.

In his address, he called for regional cooperation that leads to practical action through shared technical expertise, coordinated energy planning, renewable energy development, storage, and electricity interconnection where technically and economically feasible. He urged greater access to concessional financing, technical assistance, and project-preparation support to help smaller economies turn energy priorities into projects that can attract investment and reach implementation.

“Ultimately, the success of the energy transition will be judged by what it delivers for ordinary citizens,” Dr. Almendarez stated. He emphasized that families must be able to afford electricity, students need reliable lighting to study, and small businesses require dependable power at costs that allow them to grow. Alongside the regional programme, the Belize delegation held discussions with key development partners and regional institutions to advance the country's energy priorities.

Discussions with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) explored opportunities for further energy-sector support beyond the existing rural electrification project. The engagement provided an opportunity to consider how the partnership could respond to Belize's wider energy needs while building on efforts to expand electricity access and improve economic opportunities in rural communities. Meetings were also held with the World Bank to discuss existing energy projects, including the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) initiative, and explore additional energy-sector support. Battery storage is important to strengthening electricity-system resilience and

enabling greater use of renewable generation by storing electricity for use when needed.

Discussions with Dr. Jorge Marcial Islas Samperio, Vice Minister of Mexico's Ministry of Energy, focused on the electricity-supply challenges currently affecting Belize and the importance of maintaining reliable access to electricity imports. Belize's current domestic generation capacity is insufficient to meet national demand. Recent constraints on electricity supply have required load shedding or the use of diesel-generated power to bridge the shortfall. Continued electricity supply from Mexico is therefore critical to reducing outage risk and reliance on diesel generation while Belize advances investments in domestic generation and energy storage. The discussions emphasized the importance of sustained bilateral engagement to support electricity reliability, protect households and businesses, and strengthen Belize's energy security.

The delegation also met with Dr. Mohammad Rafik, Executive Director of the Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREEE), to discuss support for Belize and opportunities for further collaboration. The engagement explored how closer cooperation could help Belize draw on regional expertise in advancing its sustainable-energy objectives.

These engagements supported Belize's priorities of improving electricity reliability, expanding access, and preparing energy projects for financing. Dr. Almendarez also highlighted the need to strengthen institutions and train energy professionals to use emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, digital systems, and smart grids. He encouraged greater participation by young professionals, universities, and innovators, supported by regional exchanges and shared learning.

As Belize concluded its presidency, Dr. Almendarez thanked the Dominican Republic for hosting the meetings and expressed appreciation to the OLACDE Secretariat, member countries, and development partners for their support. He extended Belize's best wishes to Bolivia and reaffirmed the country's commitment to continuity and active participation in regional energy cooperation.

The Government of Belize remains committed to working with national, bilateral, regional, and international partners toward universal access to reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy.

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