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PRESS RELEASE

Belize Advances Disaster Risk Management Priorities

Belmopan, November 13, 2026.

Hon. Henry Charles Usher, Minister of the Public Service, Disaster Risk Management and Enterprise, met with Ms. Elizabeth Riley, Executive Director of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), at the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) Headquarters on November 12, 2026, during her official mission to Belize.

The meeting, attended by Captain Daniel Mendez, National Emergency Coordinator of NEMO, and Ms. Nanyamka Burnett, Acting Executive Assistant at CDEMA, focused on Belize's national disaster management priorities and opportunities to strengthen preparedness, response capabilities, and resilience.

Discussions centred on the implementation of Belize's Country Work Programme for 2026–2030, with particular attention to national preparedness, recovery planning, institutional capacity, and sustainable disaster risk financing. The parties also explored existing and emerging threats and hazards, including cyberattacks and those associated with climate change, and the need to strengthen the country's ability to anticipate and respond to them.

A key priority identified was strengthening disaster risk management competencies across the public service. Minister Usher underscored the importance of expanding training and capacity-building opportunities for public officers while ensuring that these investments translate into measurable improvements in national preparedness and response capabilities. Improved coordination among government ministries and agencies was also highlighted as essential to advancing a whole-of-government approach to disaster risk management.

The discussions also addressed the importance of sustainable disaster risk financing, including strengthening national contingency arrangements and exploring mechanisms to reduce Belize's dependence on external assistance after major disasters. Ms. Riley shared updates on CDEMA's institutional strengthening initiatives and reaffirmed the agency's commitment to providing technical assistance, training, and regional expertise in support of Belize's priorities.

Ms. Riley also met with NEMO's technical team to engage on operational priorities, ongoing initiatives, and opportunities to strengthen technical cooperation in support of Belize's disaster risk management programme.

The engagement reaffirmed the shared commitment of the Government of Belize and CDEMA to advancing Comprehensive Disaster Management, strengthening national disaster management systems, and building resilience across Belize and the wider Caribbean.

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