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PRESS RELEASE

CDB Launches Belize Trade Program and EPA/CSME Standby Facility Projects

Belmopan. February 10, 2022. 6:20 p.m.

Hon. Eamon Courtenay, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, and Immigration, together with Dr. Hyginus “Gene” Leon, President of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), launched the Bank’s Belize Trade program and Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)/ CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) Standby Facility Projects today in Belmopan.

The projects, provided through grant funding to the tune of US\$1.5 million, seek to assist and enhance the capacity of the government’s trade interfacing agencies such as the Customs and Excise Department, Belize Bureau of Standards, and Belize Agricultural Health Authority to improve trade facilitation in Belize. These projects will contribute to building the resilience of the economy by improving service delivery, lowering trade costs and reducing processing time. Notably, the private sector also benefits from the trade program with the Toledo Cacao Growers Association receiving the bulk of the financing.

In his keynote address, Minister Courtenay reiterated the Government of Belize’s firm commitment to enhancing the competitiveness of the economy, recognizing that trade will play a significant role. CDB President Dr. Leon noted that the bank was increasing the prominence of trade related initiatives, recognizing its role in supporting development and reducing poverty.

Dr. Leon was accompanied by Mr. Isaac Solomon, Vice President (Operations); Mr. Shelton Nicholls, Senior Advisor; Mr. Daniel Best, Director of Projects; Ms. Andrea Power, Coordinator – Regional Integration; and Ms. Cassie-Ann James, Communications Officer.

Minister Courtenay was supported by Ambassador Amalia Mai, CEO, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade; Dr. Osmond Martinez, CEO, Ministry of Economic Development; and other senior trade officials from the Directorate General for Foreign Trade.

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