

# Reporter

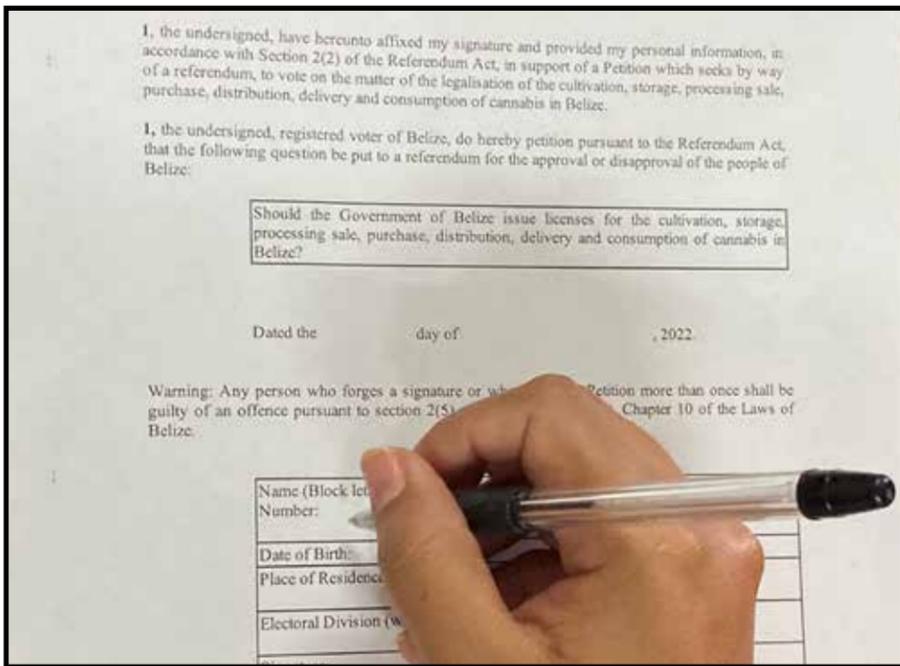
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## 10% Threshold reached!

### NEAB: We collected enough signatures to trigger 'marijuana' referendum



*By Michelle Sutherland*

"The Threshold has been reached with legitimate signatures," said Pastor Louis Wade, of the National Evangelical Association of Belize (NEAB), when he was asked for an update on the ongoing petition to trigger a referendum on marijuana legalization.

According to data from the Election and Boundaries Department, Belize

currently has 186,897 registered voters. The announcement from Wade suggests that the petition's organizers managed to gather at least 18,690 signatures, which represent the required 10 percent as stipulated under the Referendum Act.

Last Thursday, prior to the Easter holidays, the churches had managed to collect 13,000 plus signatures, which represented 70% of their target collected in only six days.

During the holidays, when we spoke with Wade again, the number had increased to 15,000.

It is expected that the signatures will be delivered to the Governor-General in the next couple of days. In accordance with the Referendum Act, the next step will be for the Governor General to forward the forms to the Chief Elections Officer (CEO) for verification. Once

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### NTUCB: No role for Cabinet in triggering 'ganja' referendum



*NTUCB President Luke Martinez*

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### Senior diplomat forced to relinquish post amid rape allegations



*Alexis Rosado, 51, was forced to relinquish his post*

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## Human Rights Report 2021: Belizean officials found to have violated intl. human rights



*By Javam Flowers*

The United States Department of State issued Belize's report on human rights practices which cited "significant

human rights issues [that] included credible reports of inhuman treatment by security and prison officers, [as well as] widespread and serious corruption by government officials."

The State

Department's "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices" is an annual U.S. government account of human rights conditions in countries around the globe.

The report characterizes countries based on their adherence

to "internationally recognized human rights," which generally refer to civil, political, and worker rights outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights

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# CROSSROADS

Dear Editor,

I believe that it would be a little less than idiocy to accept that the most important issue of amendment, or review, of our Constitution is to decide between staying in the Commonwealth or leaving.

It seems that right now on the World's historical stage the wisdom of alliances with like-minded nations is being portrayed in Ukraine. Don't you think that they would dearly wish that they were numbered among the nations that call themselves "The Commonwealth of Nations."

As in personal life, so in international affairs, it is good and wholesome to be surrounded by like-minded friends, like India, a former British colony, Canada, Australia, and Jamaica... when your nation is attacked by a ruthless, cold-blooded killer!

Our review and amendment should focus on matters of governance proceeding from public offices from which the most corrupting behaviour has been witnessed.

The greatest contrast in mature democratic action would result in changing from one key legalese phrase to another. Most to be abolished

is the infamous "AFTER CONSULTATION." This legalese gives the Prime Minister a completely free hand in appointing the most important check and balance in the governance of the country. The simplest correction would be to use an opposing idea for more democratic and checking – "WITH THE CONCURRENCE" of the Leader of the Opposition...or the concurrence of the Senate.

If we wish our constitution to become our first and best teacher of what Belize Culture and Civilization is really about, we must amend it a bit to give real meaning to the core ideas of democracy like: equality. Should we not emphasize DIVERSITY? Should we not emphasize TOLERANCE. Unequivocally dedicated to the Christian Faith, I believe that this very faith teaches me respect, tolerance and LOVE for others who believe differently.

DIVERSITY and TOLERANCE must be inserted into our PREAMBLE.

Finally, I now insert "OBE" to my name signifying my great respect for Britain and the Commonwealth of nations.

Signed: Paul Rodriguez, OBE

## Senior diplomat forced to relinquish post amid rape allegations

By Michelle Sutherland

One of Belize's most senior diplomats, Alexis Rosado, 51, has been forced to relinquish his duties as the Ambassador to the European Union after he was charged and arraigned on Wednesday afternoon in the Belmopan on several offenses of a sexual nature he is alleged to have committed against a female minor who was 13-years-old at the time.

Late on Wednesday evening, following several requests for an interview, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a brief press release in which they confirmed that Ambassador Rosado was charged with "serious offenses of a sexual nature," for which he was arraigned in the Belmopan Magistrate Court.

The release added, "At the direction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Immigration, Ambassador Rosado has relinquished his diplomatic

postings overseas. The case involving Ambassador Rosado is expected to proceed according to law."

Ambassador Rosado was flown into the country on Wednesday, where he was escorted to the Belmopan Police Station and charged with one count of rape, one count of sexual assault, and six counts of aggravated assault of an indecent nature. Rosado, who was represented by attorney Rene Montero Jr., pleaded not guilty to the charges and was released on \$5,000 bail plus two sureties of the same amount. He is to return to court on July 6th, 2022.

Credible reports are that the victim, who is now 27, reported to authorities that the senior diplomat had allegedly been having inappropriate sexual relations with her since she was 13-years old and that she had endured the sexual abuse for several years. She reportedly filed the report against

Ambassador Rosado late last year and after months of investigation, the Director of Public Prosecution Cheryl Lynn Vidal directed that the charges be brought against Rosado.

Ambassador Rosado who is among the most senior diplomats in Belize was moved from his Ambassador's post in Guatemala and assigned to Belgium to serve as the Ambassador for the European Union when the Briceño Administration took over. Due to his vast expertise, Rosado

was assigned to be Belize's co-agent in the ongoing territorial dispute with Guatemala which is presently before the International Court of Justice.

During his service to the nation, Rosado has also held the post of Ambassador to Costa Rica, Panama, and Honduras, High commissioner to the United Kingdom, as well as Chief Executive Officer in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which he held for several years. He has held several other key positions, that are too numerous to mention.

### THE REPORTER

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# 10% Threshold reached!...

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verified, the law states that Governor-General will be required to issue a Writ of Referendum within 30 days of the receipt of certificates

from the Chief Elections Officer pursuant to section 2(4).

Almost two weeks ago NEAB along with its sister churches, launched a nationwide petition

urging Belizeans to attach their signature asking the Briceño Administration to hold a referendum to decide on the legalization of marijuana in Belize.

# NTUCB: No role for Cabinet in triggering ganja referendum

By Michelle Sutherland

President of the National Trade Union Congress of Belize (NTUCB) Luke Martinez is also correcting statements made by the Minister of New Growth Industries, who suggested recently that Cabinet would have to decide what happens with the referendum petition.

Martinez told the Reporter, "I am trying to see where the Cabinet falls in making a decision as it relates to a referendum because the Referendum Act is very clear."

"We are hoping that maybe there was some mistake in that pronouncement or I don't know," Martinez said. "I would want him to publicly clarify those comments and show where the Cabinet makes such a decision, and maybe with his legal expertise, he could interpret those sections of the Referendum Act, and how it ties in with a cabinet decision."

Also calling out Musa for his comments that the churches were a bit too late in gathering their petition was Pastor Louis Wade, who is a member of National Evangelical Association of Belize (NEAB).

He too clarified to the Reporter that the triggering of a referendum has nothing to do with Cabinet. Wade said,

"The thing that triggers a referendum is the 10 percent of signatures from those on the electoral list, and whose signatures have been vetted and approved by the Elections and Boundaries Department, after submission to the Governor-General. So it does not have anything to do with ministers or Cabinet."

Wade and Martinez both made reference to section 2 of the Referendum Act which reads: "Subject to the provisions of this Act, a referendum shall be held in any of the following circumstances... where a petition is presented to the Governor General signed by at least ten percent of the registered electors in Belize whose names appear in the approved voters' list existing at the time of presentation of the petition."

Wade also clarified that there is no fixed

deadline in trying to secure the signatures for the petition but that the timeline presented so far reflects NEAB's internal timeline.

Martinez reiterated the need for the government to continue with the consultations since he says that the public is also expecting a referendum to gauge the overall pulse of the nation. "This is more than just smoking week: it is more than just a moral issue. It's economic; it's commercial... How it is going to benefit the country?"

Last week apart from claiming that the Churches were a bit late in requesting a referendum on the legalization of marijuana, Musa claimed that even if they were able to collect signatures from 10% of the voting population the final authorization would come from Cabinet.

Vairos di eez dong,  
bot kip op yu helt.

## Weh Wi Ga Fi Seh

### April 22: Mek Evriday Ertday

Aypril 22 da di day wi set fi tink bowt wi preshos Ert. Da Ertday. Tudeh, wi aks yu pleez tink a evriday az wahn day fi protek wi preshos Ert! Wi di shyaa sohn sentens fahn di Kriol-English dikshineri weh hafu du wid wi preshos Ert, ahn di pees a lan weh sohn a wi oan, er liv pah, er di faam.

**bongjri** *n.* boundary. Di bongjri fi fi wee lan deh rait bai da poas. The boundary for our land is right by that post.

**flod** *v.* flood. Wen ih rayn plenti, mai hows aalwayz flod owt. When it rains a lot, my house always floods badly. — *n.* flood. (Both *sg.* & *pl.*) Afta wahn harikayn, flod aalwayz deh. After a hurricane, floods always happen.

.....**tap gyalan flod** *n.phr.* big flood. Kaiyo Riva aalwayz ga tap gyalan flod. The Cayo River always has high floods.

**koas** *n.* coast. Lan weh deh lang di koas oanli dyaa. Land that is along the coast is very expensive. See: see front, seesaid.

**mangro** *n.* mangrove. Di mangro dehn da Bileez da fi mek di lan noh wash weh. The mangrove in Belize keeps the land from washing away.

**prapra** *v.* farm clearing; the process in plantation preparation in which all the burned brush is cleared off the land. Afta dehn bon di plantayshan, dehn hafu prapra di lan fi klair aaf aal a di bush weh bon. After they've burned the plantation, they have to clear the land of all the bush that was burned.

**swampi** *adj.* swampy. Wi mi hafu spen lat a moni fi ful op di pees a lan weh wi geh kaa ih mi oanli swampi. We had to spend a lot of money to fill the piece of land that we got because it was really swampy. -----

Silvaana Udz, Ed.D. da fahn Bileez. If yu waahn tel shee bowt sohnting speshal fu put eena dis Kriol aatiki, eemayl: sudz142@gmail.com Vizit: [www.nationalkriolcouncil.org](http://www.nationalkriolcouncil.org)

# Human Rights Report 2021: Belizean officials ...

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agreements. In section one, dubbed "Arbitrary Deprivation of Life and Other Unlawful or Politically Motivated Killings," the report highlighted credible reports that the government or its agents committed "arbitrary or unlawful killings."

Such incidents like the one on September 5, which saw off-duty Belize Defence Force (BDF) soldier Jessie Escobar being fatally shot by a soldier in a joint police-BDF patrol that stopped a group of men outside a store. The shooter, BDF Private Raheem Valencio, was arrested and charged with murder. Police officer Juan Carlos Morales and another BDF soldier in the patrol, Ramon Alberto Alcoser, were both charged with attempting to pervert the course of justice.

Section two, "Torture and Other

Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment," highlighted numerous incidents. During the first half of 2021, "25% of the complaints received by the Office of the Ombudsman were filed against police for abuse of power, harassment, and brutality."

Notably, while there certainly are prevalent issues with certain security officer's use of excessive force, section four, "Freedom of Expression, Including for Members of the Press and Other Media," was mostly free of significant controversy, particularly as it relates to "Internet Freedom."

"The government did not restrict or disrupt access to the internet or censor online content, and there were no credible reports that the government monitored private online communications without appropriate legal authority," The report underscored.

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# Russia-Ukraine conflict puts fragile global trade recovery at risk

By WTO

Prospects for the global economy have darkened since the outbreak of war in Ukraine on 24 February, prompting WTO economists to reassess their projections for world trade over the next two years.

The organization now expects merchandise trade volume growth of 3.0% in 2022 — down from its previous

has created immense human suffering, but it has also damaged the global economy at a critical juncture. Its impact will be felt around the world, particularly in low-income countries, where food accounts for a large fraction of household spending,” Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala said. “Smaller supplies and

where countries can discuss their differences without resorting to force, and it deserves to be supported in that mission,” she said.

With little hard data on the economic impact of the conflict, WTO economists have had to rely on simulations to generate reasonable assumptions about GDP growth in 2022 and 2023. Current estimates based on the

merchandise trade volume estimates through the end of 2023, including error bands indicating confidence intervals associated with the forecast. Given current GDP assumptions, merchandise trade volume growth in 2022 could be as low as 0.5% or as high as 5.5%. These projections will be updated in October, but an earlier revision

countries.

Chart 2 illustrates the recent rise in world fuel prices, which pre-dates the conflict in Ukraine. The benchmark Brent crude oil price for March came in at US\$ 118 per barrel, up 38% from its level in January and up 81% year-on-year. (It should be noted that daily prices have moderated recently, from a peak of US\$ 128 per barrel on 8 March to US\$ 104 per barrel on 1 April.)

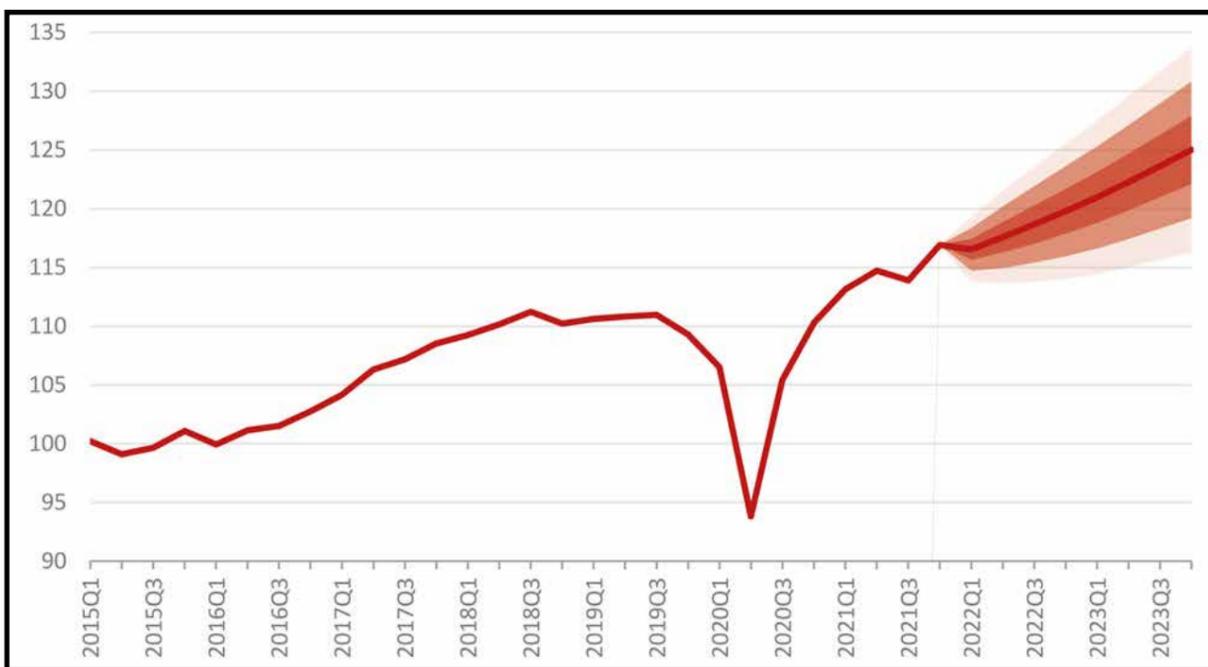
Unlike oil prices, natural gas prices tend to diverge strongly across regions. The price of natural gas in Europe rose 45% between January and March to US\$ 41.0 per million Btu, whereas prices remained relatively low in the United States at around US\$ 4.9 per million Btu. Higher oil prices may reduce real incomes and import demand worldwide, while higher natural gas prices would probably have a greater impact in Europe.

In the two decades before the global financial crisis, world merchandise trade volume grew around twice as fast as world GDP at market exchange rates, but the ratio between trade growth and GDP growth fell to around 1:1 on average after the crisis. If the current

forecast is realized, this ratio would be 1.1:1 in both 2022 and 2023, suggesting no fundamental change in the relationship between trade and output. Risks to the forecast are mixed and difficult to assess objectively. There is some upside potential if the war in Ukraine ends sooner than expected, but substantial downside risks could emerge if fighting persists for a long time or if the conflict escalates.

Chart 3 shows quarterly merchandise trade volume indices by region from the first quarter of 2019 to the final quarter of 2023, at the end of the forecast period. Regional disparities in the forecasts persist, but Europe is now expected to underperform on the import side along with Africa and the CIS. The latter is mostly due to sanctions against Russia. Meanwhile, Middle East import volumes are expected to pick up as higher oil prices boost export revenues, allowing countries in the region to import more. Weakness in Europe is partly due to the fact that Ukraine is included in this country

*Cont'd on pg. 21*



Volume of world merchandise trade, 2015Q1-2023Q4

forecast of 4.7% — and 3.4% in 2023, but these estimates are less certain than usual due to the fluid nature of the conflict (Table 1).

The most immediate economic impact of the crisis has been a sharp rise in commodity prices. Despite their small shares in world trade and output, Russia and Ukraine are key suppliers of essential goods including food, energy, and fertilizers, supplies of which are now threatened by the war. Grain shipments through Black Sea ports have already been halted, with potentially dire consequences for food security in poor countries.

The war is not the only factor weighing on world trade at the moment. Lockdowns in China to prevent the spread of COVID-19 are again disrupting seaborne trade at a time when supply chain pressures appeared to be easing. This could lead to renewed shortages of manufacturing inputs and higher inflation.

“The war in Ukraine

higher prices for food mean that the world's poor could be forced to do without. This must not be allowed to happen. This is not the time to turn inward. In a crisis, more trade is needed to ensure stable, equitable access to necessities. Restricting trade will threaten the wellbeing of families and businesses and make more fraught the task of building a durable economic recovery from COVID19,” the Director-General went on to say.

She said governments and multilateral organizations must work together to facilitate trade at a time of sharp inflationary pressures on essential supplies and growing pressures on supply chains.

“History teaches us that dividing the world economy into rival blocs and turning our backs on the poorest countries leads neither to prosperity nor to peace. The WTO can play a pivotal role by providing a forum

WTO Global Trade Model capture (1) the direct impact of the war in Ukraine, including destruction of infrastructure and increased trade costs; (2) the impact of sanctions on Russia, including the blocking of Russian banks from the SWIFT settlement system; and (3) reduced aggregate demand in the rest of the world due to falling business/consumer confidence and rising uncertainty.

Under these assumptions, world GDP at market exchange rates is expected to grow by 2.8% in 2022, down 1.3 percentage points from the previous forecast of 4.1%. Growth should pick up to 3.2% in 2023, close to the average rate of 3.0% between 2010 and 2019. Output in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region — which excludes Ukraine — is expected to see a sharp 7.9% drop, leading to a 12.0% contraction in the region's imports.

Chart 1 shows quarterly world

could be issued if incoming data warrant it. The forecast takes into account higher frequency data for selected economies, including monthly statistics on container throughput of U.S. and Chinese ports in order to capture port congestion in these

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# Autism NGO's advocate Inclusive Education

By William Ysaguirre



Christy Almeida of Autism Belize

The Caribbean has a regional need for more institutional support for children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), was the universal consensus among the parents, advocates and service providers who shared their experiences in a webinar hosted by the Department of Special Education of the MICO University College in Kingston, Jamaica on Tuesday and Wednesday, April 19-20.

April is Autism Awareness month, and the United States' Center for Disease Control (CDC) has cited that one of every 250 children will be born with some form of autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The MICO University hosted the webinar to help teachers, school administrators, parents and pre-service teachers increase their knowledge and understanding of inclusive educational practices. The aim is to influence regional government policy so that all children can become productive citizens of their countries.

Inclusive education as a fundamental human right to ensure that students with special needs have equitable access to relevant education, declared MICO University president Dr. Ashburn Pinnock in his opening remarks. This inclusivity means ensuring that teachers are adequately trained to deliver learning to special needs children, and that the school buildings also have the access ramps, toilets and other infrastructure to cater to students with physical

disabilities. This means providing appropriate learning materials to create a psycho-social environment free of discrimination and stigma, in line with UNCEF guidelines, where all learners are recognized, valued and respected. The first 1,000 days of a child's life are especially critical, as 80 percent of the brain development happens in the first three years, he said.

"A Belize that is educated and accepting of differences will be a stronger, kinder transformed Belize," Christy Almeida of the Autism Belize, a non-governmental organization, told other Caribbean autism support groups.

Almeida is the mother of an autistic son, but when she found there was no institutional support for the care of autistic children in the U.S. Virgin Islands, she decided to launch her own autism support group when she returned home to Belize. Since then she has been teaching and providing services for children with ASD.

Almeida was not alone in her call for help, as parents of children with autism spectrum disorder

face many challenges, such as discrimination when they attempt to enroll their children in schools. Frank Johnson of Barbados is the father of a 33-year-old autistic son, and he is concerned about how his son will fare after he is gone. The disabled are regarded as basically unemployable, and employers often give only lip-service to offering jobs to a disabled person. He called for an end to this discrimination, as the last thing a disabled person wants is to be asking for a hand-out; rather they want to be recognized that they do have employable job skills, and to be allowed to earn an income like any other person.

He lamented the lack of any sort of institutional support services in the island's health and education system. Unless the child is blind or mute, the Barbadian government offers no form of financial support for the parents and families of autistic children, but both parents and siblings find themselves having to take time off from work to volunteer as care-givers for autistic support groups. Single parents with an autistic child are especially

challenged, and Johnson called for free day care for autistic children.

Early intervention was also the recommendation of psychologist Deborah London of Guyana's Special Education Needs Diagnostic Treatment Center, which was established in 2018 through a partnership agreement signed with Cuba in 2015. The Cuban government helped trained the staff of the center. With this support, Guyana has

made great strides in autism awareness, and today, persons with ASD get more attention than any other disability in Guyana.

Deputy principal Deniece Williams and Sloan Pharr of the Lighthouse School established in 1976 described the journey to provide Special Education Needs for the Disabled (SEND) for children with ASD in the Cayman Islands, with the establishment

of the Sunrise Adult Training Center by the Cayman Islands government in 1986. Maia Chung of Jamaica, Symonette Greer Bain of The Bahamas' REACH charity organization established in 1999, and Georgia Pitzold of Anguilla also shared their experiences. Michelle Foreman and Tracy Hutchinson-Wallace of the Autism Spirit shared what has been the ASD experience in Trinidad and Tobago.

## Department of Fisheries Warns Against Extracting Starfishes to Snap Photos

By Michelle Sutherland

Several photographs of what appears to be a couple extracting a starfish out of the water in Caye Caulker to capture what can only be presumed to be a social media moment has led environmentalist to remind the public that such acts are illegal in Belize.

When we contacted the Department of Fisheries to get their comment on the matter, they indicated to us that they were not aware of the incident but after furnishing them with pictures, the Department assured that they would be launching an investigation into the matter, since starfish are protected under the Fisheries and Resource Act of 2020.

Kirah Forman, technical manager for Hol Chan Marine Reserve, indicated to the Reporter that while such acts are not only limited to Belize, and have been happening around

the world, there needs to be more education so that the general public could be aware of how much impacts their actions can cause on the environment and delicate species that live within.

Foreman reiterated, "Starfish can't breathe out of water. Imagine someone holding you down underwater and you can't breathe. That is what it is like for a starfish when you take it out of the water. So while it may be able to survive for a little it will die. Also, consider the sun and in the case of the picture the hot cement that they had it on. All these factors will cause stress. People sometimes get caught up in the excitement of seeing things for the first time and want to have the experience but they don't often think of the damage they are causing to the animal and the environment."

While Foreman claimed that the law doesn't specifically say that you can't

extract starfishes out of the water it clearly states that possession and fishing of starfish are illegal. That would then need to be argued in the court that at some point the culprits were holding it in their possession.

Foreman said that while starfishes used to be common in the past around Belize they can now be spotted occasionally in sea grass areas. Additionally, she noted that starfishes can only survive for up to 30 seconds outside of the water, hence the need for them to remain in their ecosystem at all times.

According to what we have been made to understand, despite several warnings from the public, the couple pictured in the photographs still went ahead and took the starfish out of the water so that they could take pictures of it. Reports are that the male individual had even placed the starfish inside a plastic bag when they were finished taking photos of it.

### STATUTORY NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the Estate of HECTOR MANUEL PEREZ, a.k.a. HECTOR PEREZ, a.k.a. HECTOR MANUEL PERES, deceased

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 36 of the Administration of Estate Act, Chapter 197 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2000, that all creditors and other persons having any claims or demands upon or against the Estate of HECTOR MANUEL PEREZ, a.k.a. HECTOR PEREZ, a.k.a. HECTOR MANUEL PERES, late of Santa Teresita Village, Cayo District, Belize, who died intestate on the 9th day of December, 2020 in whose estate Grant of Administration has been granted to EDWIN PEREZ and MARLIN NATALI PEREZ, both of Santa Teresita Village, Cayo District, Belize are required to send particulars in writing of their claims or demands to the said Administrators, c/o of ORLANDO ANTONIO FERNANDEZ, Attorney-at-Law, P.O. Box 236, #193 George Price Highway, Santa Elena, Cayo District Belize, and to send such particulars not later than within (3) three months from the date of the 1st publication of the notice, AND NOTICE IS HEREBY ALSO GIVEN that at the expiration of last mentioned date, the Administrators shall proceed to distribute the assets of the said Estate amongst the parties entitled thereto having regard only to the claims or demands of which particulars have been delivered and the Administrators will not be liable for the asset or any part thereof so distributed to any persons of whose claims or demands they shall not then have had notice.

DATED this 21st day of April, 2022

ORLANDO ANTONIO FERNANDEZ  
Attorney-at-Law  
for Administrators of the Estate

### NOTICE OF COMMENCED DISSOLUTION

Sormax Group Ltd.  
("the Company")

"Notice is hereby given to all interested parties that Sormax Group Ltd. a Company incorporated under the IBC Act of Belize commenced dissolution on 31st March 2022.

And

Mr. Michel Andrew Brutus of Foret Noire P.O.Box 1136, Victoria, Mahe, Seychelles, is the liquidator of the company.

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# Scientists map Caribbean coral reef systems that are likely to survive climate change

By Javan Flowers

Scientists recently identified and mapped "Climate Priority" sites among coral reef systems in the Caribbean that will be more likely to survive past the effects of climate change.

Climate change has become the greatest threat to the world's ecosystems, and locating and managing areas that contribute to species' survival under climate change is critical for the persistence of ecosystems in the future.

Under The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) model of Coral Climate Refugia, researchers analyzed reef systems and provided a report which aimed to "guide investments in coral restoration and conservation to the reefs most likely to survive the impacts



of climate change."

According to the research article published in Wiley: Global Change Biology early this week, the research team compared different climate models and examined hurricane damage and

heat stress factors.

Additionally, with information gathered from TNC, each site using environmental characteristics associated with a higher chance of persistence was also considered. These included

hurricane influence and acute and chronic temperature conditions in the past and the future – among others.

From the factors mentioned above, the report concluded that "Corals with the highest

potential to escape destruction from marine heatwaves are predominantly located along the northern shoreline of Cuba."

Other promising sites are clustered around the Bahamas, Dominican Republic, Guadeloupe, Haiti,

eastern Jamaica, and the US state of Florida.

According to the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) latest report, at up to 1.5C of warming, only 10 to 30% of coral reefs are expected to survive. However, if warming is above that, survival prospects plummet drastically.

The insights are shaping reef conservation efforts "to deliver durable, climate-smart protection for those ecosystems most likely to survive this century," added Ximena Escobar-Fadul, of TNC.

But the scientists say their research - in line with other studies - shows coral reefs will not survive 2oC of warming, meaning urgent greenhouse gas emission reductions are needed to save them for future generations.



U.S. Embassy Belmopan, Belize  
Office of Public Affairs

For Immediate Release

April 12, 2022

Press Release

## Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI) 2022 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

The U.S. Embassy in Belmopan, Belize announces a notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) for Strengthening Government through Civil Society Engagement. For more information and eligibility requirements, please visit [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and search for "Belmopan." All grant proposals MUST be submitted on the grants.gov website. **Closing date for proposal submission: June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022.**

Contingent upon the availability of funds and quality of proposals, U.S. Embassy Belmopan intends to issue two to three awards in an amount not to exceed \$500,000 USD in total funding. Each award will be for an amount between \$100,000 and \$250,000. Project periods should not exceed two years, and the anticipated start date for successful proposals is September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

This funding will support U.S. Government objectives under the Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI) to support democracy and good governance efforts in Belize and is part of the Economic Support Funds (ESF) grants program. Project proposals should address **one or more** of the following project objectives:

- 1) To develop and strengthen mechanisms that improve coordination and cooperation among key stakeholders to curb human trafficking and improve services to vulnerable and marginalized populations especially women and children. Proposals should focus on increased public awareness about the social impacts of human trafficking and building the capacity of individuals such as civilian frontline personnel and institutions to identify, respond to, and serve victims of human trafficking.
- 2) To support civil society efforts in working with government to institute reforms to reduce corruption and impunity. Proposals should support the reduction of corruption and the promotion of transparency and accountability across all levels to create strong, capable, and accountable governments.
- 3) To strengthen civil society and government collaboration to improve service delivery at the local, municipal, or national levels. Proposals should focus on activities by civil society organizations leveraging government, private and civil society resources, and network opportunities to jointly strengthen, expand or complement service delivery particularly in areas related to COVID response.

View the full 2022 CARSI-ESF NOFO under the "Related Documents" tab at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

The U.S. Embassy in Belmopan will host a CARSI-ESF Grants Question & Answer Session on Facebook Live **Wednesday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 10:30 a.m.** Interested applicants are also encouraged to send any related questions or queries to [BelmopanCARSI@state.gov](mailto:BelmopanCARSI@state.gov).



## VACANCY MARKET ECONOMY RESEARCH ANALYST

*Interested applicants must possess the following skills and qualifications:*

### REQUIREMENTS AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

#### Education and Experience:

- Bachelor's Degree in Economics, Business Administration, Accounting or Finance with five years' experience in banking and in the collection, analysis, presentation, and preparation of reports on qualitative and quantitative data.
- Experience in financial analysis and credit administration and analysis.

#### Knowledge, Skills and Competencies:

- Excellent analytical skills, time management and organizational skills
- Ability to conduct in depth financial analysis and draft concise reports.
- Highly dedicated and motivated and work well under pressure.
- Proactive and takes initiative while exercising good judgment.
- Uphold the Bank's standards and values and maintain strict confidentiality.

#### General Responsibilities:

- Conduct quantitative and qualitative research on relative industries and market trends.
- Collect useful economic data from relevant organizations and/or agencies.
- Produce reports, presentations, analysis, and executive summaries of the macro and micro economy.
- Engage in meeting with local and/or international organizations and business agencies to determine macro and micro economic statistics.
- Identify commercial opportunities for potential investments for the bank.
- Create clear and useful reports and recommendations for internal use.
- Prepare quarterly and annual reports of the bank's performances based on the data provided.
- Continuous research, seminars, conferences to remain informed on new and updated market trends.

**DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS IS FRIDAY, MAY 6, 2022**

*Interested applicants may submit application letter, résumé, and two reference letters to:*

**Chief Human Resources Officer  
Human Resources Department  
Atlantic Bank Ltd.**

**Cor. Cleghorn Street / Freetown Road, P.O. Box 481, Belize City, Belize**

# Financial Stability Risks Grow as War Complicates Push to Contain Inflation

By Tobias Adrian

Russia's invasion of Ukraine raises financial stability risks for the world and poses questions about the longer-term impact on economies and markets. The war, amid an already slowing recovery from the pandemic, is set to test the resilience of financial markets and poses a threat to financial stability as discussed in our latest Global Financial Stability Report.

Ukraine and Russia face the most pressing risks. Yet it is already clear that the severity of disruptions in commodity markets and to supply chains are creating downside risks by weighing adversely on macrofinancial stability, inflation, and the global economy.

Since the beginning of the year, financial conditions have tightened significantly across most of the world, particularly in Eastern Europe. Amid rising inflation, expected interest-rate hikes have led to a notable tightening in advanced economies in the weeks following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Even with that tightening, financial conditions are close to historical averages, and real rates remain accommodative in most countries.

Tighter financial conditions help to slow demand, as well as to prevent an unmooring of inflation expectations (that is, where anticipation of continued price increases in the future becomes the norm) and to bring inflation back to target.

Many central banks may have to move further and faster than what is currently priced in markets to contain inflation. This could bring policy rates above neutral levels (a "neutral" level is one at which monetary policy is neither accommodative nor restrictive and is consistent with the economy maintaining full employment and stable inflation). This is likely to lead to even tighter global financial conditions.

The new geopolitical reality complicates the

work of central banks, which already faced a delicate balancing act with stubbornly high inflation. They must bring inflation back to target, mindful that excessive tightening of global financial conditions hurts economic growth. Against this backdrop, and in light of heightened financial stability risks, any sudden reassessment and repricing of risk resulting from an intensification of the war in Ukraine, or from an escalation of sanctions on Russia, may expose some of the vulnerabilities built up during the pandemic (surge in house prices and stretched valuations), leading to a sharp decline in asset prices.

## Shock transmission

Repercussions of the war and ensuing sanctions continue to reverberate. The resilience of the global financial system will be tested through various potential amplification channels. These include the exposures of financial institutions to Russian and Ukrainian assets; market liquidity and funding strains; and the acceleration of cryptoization—residents opting to use crypto assets instead of the local currency—in emerging markets.

Europe bears a higher risk than other regions due to its geographic proximity to the war, reliance on Russian energy, and the non-negligible exposure of some banks and other financial institutions to Russian financial assets and markets. Moreover, ongoing volatility in commodity prices may severely pressure commodity financing and derivatives markets and could even cause more disruptions like the wild swings that halted some nickel trading last month. Such episodes, amid heightened geopolitical uncertainty, may weigh on liquidity and funding conditions.

Emerging and frontier markets now face higher risks of capital outflows, with differentiation across countries between commodities importers and exporters. Amid geopolitical uncertainty, the

interplay of tighter external financial conditions and the US Federal Reserve normalization (first rate increase delivered in March and unwinding of the balance sheet expected to be faster), is likely to increase the risk of capital flight.

Following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the number of emerging and frontier market sovereign issuers trading at distressed levels (that is, spreads above 1,000 basis points) has surged higher to more than 20 percent of issuers, surpassing pandemic-peak levels. While worrisome, this has a limited impact on systemic concerns given these issuers account for a relatively lower proportion of total outstanding debt, to date.

In China, the recent equity sell-off, particularly in the technology segment, combined with ongoing stress in the real estate sector and renewed lockdowns, have raised concerns about a growth slowdown, with possible spillovers to emerging markets. Financial stability risks have risen amid ongoing stress in the battered real estate sector. Extraordinary financial support measures may be needed to ease balance sheet pressures, but these would add to debt vulnerabilities down the road.

## Policy actions

In the near term, central banks should take decisive action to prevent inflation from becoming entrenched and keep expectations of future price increases in check. Interest rates might have to rise beyond what is currently priced in markets to get inflation back to target in a timely manner. This may entail pushing interest rates well above their neutral level. For advanced-economy central banks, clear communication is crucial to avoid unnecessary volatility in financial markets, by providing clear guidance about the tightening process while remaining data dependent.

In emerging markets, many central banks have already significantly tightened policy. They should continue to do so—depending on individual circumstances—to preserve their inflation-fighting credibility and anchor inflation expectations.

Policymakers should tighten selected macroprudential tools to tackle pockets of elevated vulnerabilities (for example, to lean against the surge in house prices), while avoiding a broad tightening of financial conditions. Striking the right balance here is important given uncertainties about the economic outlook, the ongoing monetary policy normalization process, and limits on post-pandemic fiscal space.

Policymakers will also face structural issues such as fragmentation in capital markets, which would have implications for the role of the US dollar. Payment systems face similar risks as central banks seek to establish their own digital currencies that are independent of existing international networks. Regulators will also be under pressure to narrow regulatory gaps to ensure integrity and protect consumers in the fast-evolving world of crypto assets.

At the same time, tradeoffs between energy security (adequate, affordable supplies) and climate (regulatory mechanisms intended to increase oil and gas prices) are being laid bare as supply and price effects of international sanctions on Russia ripple across Europe and beyond. There may be some setbacks in the climate transition in the immediate future, but the impetus to reduce energy dependency on Russia could be a catalyst for change. Policymakers should, therefore, strive to honor commitments on climate and intensify their efforts to achieve net-zero targets, while taking additional appropriate steps to address energy security concerns.

## Lender linkages

European banks had the most direct exposure to Russia and Ukraine, but aggregate exposures seem to be relatively modest.  
(billions of US dollars)



Source: BIS, Consolidated Banking Statistics; and IMF staff calculations.

IMF

# Mexico co-hosts "Tradewinds" for 1st time

By William Ysaguirre

The Belize Defence Force will once again be hosting "Operation Tradewinds 2022", sponsored by the United States Army Southern Command (US SouthCom) from May 7 - 21, which Mexico is co-hosting for the first time since it began participating in 2014.

The exercise will include air, land and sea operations, including cyber defense, underwater dives, medical operations, and the integration of women in peace and security missions.

To this end, Mexico's President Andrés Manuel López Obrador requested permission from the Mexican Senate on Tuesday, April 19, for foreign troops and vessels to enter the State of Quintana Roo for the joint regional security training exercise which will be held in the coastal wetlands and seas of Quintana Roo. The official communiqué also requested



Mexico is co-hosting the exercise for the first time since 2014.

permission for Mexican armed forces to leave Mexican territory to participate in the training exercises to be held in Belizean territory. Mexico's contingent will number 128 troops, including an infantry company of 100 and 16 Special Forces, along with two T-6C Texan military aircraft and a Mi-17 helicopter, with pilots and crew.

Mexico has participated six times from 2014 to 2019 in this annual, multinational exercise which is held to develop and strengthen regional security in the Caribbean against all common external threats, such as trans-national crime and natural disasters. The aim is to strengthen regional partnerships, increase readiness,

and promote human rights and the adherence to internationally recognized laws and agreements.

Other countries invited to participate include Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, Brazil,

Dominica, France, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Dominican Republic, St. Kitts & Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago. In all, some 1,500 total uniformed and civilians are expected to participate in the exercise.

**Keep Calm  
and  
Read**



## Damaged vessel defies prohibition to sail order

By Javan Flowers

The landing barge "Lowen's Barge" captured on film drenching the Caribbean Sea near Placencia with soot, has defied the order given by the Belize Coast Guard to remain at the directed place of berthing.

In response to "Lowen's Barge" leaking soot into the sea, the Coast Guard directed the ship to a docking facility and subsequently issued an order that prohibited it from sailing until its engine issues had been resolved.

This week, it was reported that the ship had left the docking facility defying the order and thus breaking numerous laws made pursuant to the ENVIRONMENTAL

PROTECTION ACT (REVISED EDITION 2011).

Port Commissioner Major Gilbert Swazo confirmed that the vessel had left a trail of soot between two to three miles long.

As to how the vessel moved without the authorities noticing, Swazo detailed that maritime enforcement officers were checking periodically to ensure that the vessel remained where it was ordered to be. However, sometime before daybreak, "it was reported to us that the vessel left its location and then ascertained that the vessel had sailed."

Subsequently, the relevant authorities immediately reached out to the operators and advised them that the prohibition on sailing remains in

effect.

As of this report, the Coast Guard, in collaboration with the Department of Environment, has deployed troops and personnel in a concerted effort to ensure that the barge remains at the docking facility

The Port Commissioner also confirmed that the Port Authority and the Department of the Environment "will be bringing charges on the owner and the vessel's captain."

Adding that "The vessel is not to move until it is certified that the engine has been properly rectified by a certified engineer mechanic which will be verified by Port Authority and the Department of the Environment even before it will be authorized to sail."

## NOTICE

### Estate of Bernard Bertran Santos Deceased STATUTORY NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Pursuant to section 36 of the Administration of Estates Act, Chapter 197 of the Laws of Belize Notice is hereby Given that all creditors and other persons having any claims or demands upon or against the Estate of Bernard Bertran Santos deceased late of #22 Haulover Creek Street, Belmopan City, Cayo District, Belize are required to send particulars in writing of their claims or demands addressed to the Administrators of the estate Bernard Bertran Santos, P.O. Box 442, Belmopan City, Cayo District, Belize and to send such particulars on or before the expiration of three months from the first publication hereof and notice is further given that at the expiration of the said three months the Administrators will proceed to distribute the assets of the said estate amongst the parties entitled thereto having regard only to the claims or demands of which particulars have been delivered and the Administrators will not be liable for the assets or any part thereof so distributed to any person or persons of whose claims or demands he shall not then have had notice.

Dated this 8th day of April 2022

Administrators Estate Bernard Bertran Santos

## Notice of Dissolution

Notice is hereby given that the following company have been dissolved and struck off the International Business Companies Register with effect from the date indicated below:

COMPANY NAME

TEASTAR HOLDINGS LIMITED

DISSOLUTION DATE

15-April-22

**Interconsult Belize Limited**  
Registered Agent



**Institution:** Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)  
**Country:** Belize  
**Project:** Solid Waste Management Project II (SWMP II)  
**Sector:** Waste Management  
**Abstract:** Individual Consulting Service for the Development and Implementation of a Public Education, Communication and Campaign Strategy.

The objective of this consultancy is to assist the Belize Solid Waste Management Authority (BSWaMA) to develop and implement a comprehensive Public Education, Communication and Campaign Strategy to (1) Promote and educate stakeholders and the public on SWMP II & BSWaMA (2) promote source separation and the reduction and recovery of eligible recyclable material from municipal solid waste generated in line with the operationalization of the new transfer stations. (3) Enable open and effective communication between all relevant stakeholders at all levels for the introduction and implementation of the target areas and (4) Establish lines of communication through transparency with all beneficiary communities and stakeholders to maintain interest and participation in the BSWaMA strategic vision.

**Loan No.:** BL-L1021  
**Deadline:** May 6th, 2022

The Government of Belize (GOB) has received financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), towards the cost of the Solid Waste Management Project II and intends to apply part of the proceeds for an Individual Consultant for the **Development and Implementation of a Public Education, Communication and Campaign Strategy.**

The consulting services ("the Services") include the following activities:

**A) SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES**  
 Specific responsibilities will include:

**Phase I -** Conduct activities detailed below and make available to the BSWaMA information as a result of

- (i) The revision of data on the general status of source separation and resource recovery; review previous work that was done in source separation and resource recovery; project and awareness within and through the BSWaMA.
- (ii) Manage and conduct consultation (meetings, workshops, interviews) with various stakeholders, within the sector to determine the current status of source separation and resource recovery. All key stakeholders are to be identified but particular effort should be made to consult with persons/business from tourist destination such as the Cayes and Placencia. Document consultations and make available to BSWaMA minutes and notes of the consultation sessions.
- (iii) Engagement with stakeholders who can champion and support the public education and communication initiative.

**Phase II-** Develop a comprehensive Public Education, Communication and Campaign Strategy and an associated action plan for its effective implementation.

**Develop complete Implementation Action Plan for the PECCS through all its phases (design, implementation, and operationalization):**

- (i) Develop a complete 5-year Strategy, with timelines, guidelines, and budgets for all phases.
- (ii) provide Drafts of content for Public Education, Communication and Campaign strategy activities.
- (iii) identify and engage groups of key persons and organizations to be directly involved in the public education and awareness campaign activities which include modalities to engage individuals with diverse abilities.
- (iv) Laise with the Ministry of Education to develop or incorporate Solid Waste Management sensitization in school's curriculum from primary school. Prepare draft material.
- (v) identify opportunities for involvement of media groups via multimedia platforms.
- (vi) identify groups to be targeted with specific messages.
- (vii) create an action plan that details the goals and activities attached to each component, along with timelines for implementation.
- (viii) identify cost-effective and feasible options for executing of each component of the campaign.
- (ix) devise an appropriate monitoring and evaluation framework to determine the effectiveness of the campaign, inclusive of key performance indicators.

**Phase III-** Present the Public Education, Communication and Campaign Strategy and Action Plan to stakeholders for review, feedback, and finalization.

- (i) procuringsamplesofpromotionalmaterialsfortheimplementationofactivities where necessary.
- (ii) Capacity building including training, coordinating, and promoting activities that highlight the relevance and importance of project with the Communication Officer at BSWaMA and
- (iii) Prepare instruments for evaluating initial knowledge of solid waste and at completion to determine the effectiveness of the activities.

**Phase IV**

- (i) Manage the implementation of the approved Public Education, Communication, and Campaign Strategy.
- (ii) The consultant will undertake the timely completion of all the campaign activities including the production of all communication materials, organize logistics, applicable events, etc. Before the period of their contract comes to an end the consultant will organize the smooth transition of the remaining activities and implementation of the strategy to the BSWaMA.
- (iii) The consultant will be responsible to undertake the timely completion of all campaign activities assigned during the duration of their contract, including the production of communication materials, organizing logistics and applicable events. Before the period of their contract comes to an end the consultant will organize the smooth transition of the remaining activities and implementation of the strategy to the BSWaMA.

**Phase V**

- (i) Evaluate the response to the implementation of the Campaign with a focus on behavioral changes, utilizing the monitoring and evaluation framework to determine the need for recommendations and adequate corrective measures and actions.

**B) QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

- A Masters' Degree in a Social Science discipline with emphasis on Communications, Marketing, or a related field with a minimum of three years' experience in Communications and Marketing. Or a bachelor's degree in social science discipline with emphasis on Communications, marketing, or a related field with a minimum of five years' experience;
- Exceptional conceptualization and execution skills with demonstrated working experience in strategy development in a lead role, project management or related experience.
- Experience in product, project and campaign development, marketing, and promotions to multi-dimensional target groups will be an asset.
- Proven interpersonal skills; excellent spoken and written communication skills (English; Spanish would be an advantage); prepare concise and clear reports; Ability to impart complex concepts and controversial topics in clear, compelling, and palatable style.
- Experience working in Belize, Latin America and the Caribbean regions would be an advantage

**C) TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT**

- **Type of contract and modality:** Individual Consultant
- **Length of contract:** 8 months
- **Estimated start date:** June 2022

The Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum and Mining now invites eligible individual consultants to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested individual Consultants may send their application letter and Curriculum Vitae (CV), and other relevant supporting documentation (inclusive of previous graphic design and videography work)/ comprehensive catalogue in a non-protected accessible virtual folder to the email address listed below.

Consultants will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the Inter-American Development Bank: **Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank - GN-2350-15**, and is open to all eligible candidates as defined in the policies.

The individual consultant will be selected in accordance with the Selection of Individual Consultants method set out in the Consultants Policies.

Further information and a copy of the Terms of Reference can be obtained via the email address below during office hours: **Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. local time.**

Expressions of interest should be submitted to the email address below by **Friday May 6th, 2022, at 2:00 p.m.**

(Submission must be made in an organized manner-One complete PDF file for application letter and CV and a folder containing sample of previous work).

**Belize Solid Waste Management Authority**  
**Attn: Mrs. Melanie Gladden, Procurement Officer**  
 3013 Bougainvillea Street, Orchid Garden Area  
 City of Belmopan, Belize, C.A.  
 Tel: (501) 802 1527  
 PO Box 285  
 E-mail: [GladdenM@gobmail.gov.bz](mailto:GladdenM@gobmail.gov.bz)

# PM Briceño to Co-host Second Global COVID-19 Summit

By Javan Flowers

Prime Minister of Belize John Briceño, in his capacity as Chair of CARICOM, will co-host the Second Global COVID-19 Summit, which aims to redouble a collective initiative to end the acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare for future health threats.

The Summit is intended to build on the themes and commitments made at the first Summit and will emphasize supporting locally led solutions to both immediate and long-term challenges, including getting shots

into arms; deploying tests and treatments; enhancing access to medical countermeasures, including research and development and scaling and diversifying local and regional manufacturing; and generating sustainable financing for pandemic preparedness, health security, and health systems.

The Summit will also seek to galvanize further commitments and actions from governments, NGOs, philanthropists, and the private sector to achieve these objectives.

In advance of the May 12 Summit,

The White House invited world leaders, members of civil society, non-governmental organizations, philanthropists, and the private sector to "make new commitments and bring solutions to vaccinate the world, save lives now, and build better health security for everyone, everywhere."

Joining the PM as co-chair will be the United States as the first COVID Summit Chair; Germany, holding the G7 Presidency; Indonesia, holding the G20 Presidency; and Senegal, as African Union Chair.

## NEAB: Voters trigger a referendum, not Cabinet

The triggering of a referendum has nothing to do with Cabinet, National Evangelical Association of Belize (NEAB)'s Pastor Louis Wade told The Reporter today.

Responding to our question regarding the comments made earlier in the week by Minister of New Growth Industries Hon. Kareem Musa, Wade emphasized, "The thing that triggers a referendum is the 10 percent of signatures from those on the electoral list, and whose signatures have been vetted and approved by the Elections and Boundaries Department, after submission to the Governor-General. So it does not have anything to do with ministers or Cabinet."

Wade spoke in reference to section 2 of The Referendum Act which only lays out obligatory functions for the Governor-General and the Chief Elections Officer as it pertains to receiving and verifying the signatures on the petition. Section 2 of the Act reads:

"Subject to the provisions of this Act, a referendum shall be held in any of the following circumstances ... where a petition is presented to the GovernorGeneral signed by at least ten percent of the registered electors in Belize whose names appear in the approved voters' list existing at the time of presentation of the petition."

The law would proceed to delineate the duties to be executed by the Governor-General and the Chief Election Officer as it pertains to verifying the signatures on the petition. The Referendum

Act likewise sets the timeline within which the Governor-General is to issue the Writ of Referendum. Section 3 states:

"The Governor-General shall, within thirty days ... of the receipt of the certificate from the Chief Elections Officer pursuant to section 2(4), verifying that the petition has been duly signed by the requisite number of electors as specified in section 2(3) ... issue a Writ of Referendum in a form similar to the Writ of Elections in the Schedule V to the Representation of the People Act."

Wade opined that the comments from the minister, in his view, could "frustrate" the process by leading people to believe two incorrect ideas: First that there is a fixed deadline within which to obtain the requisite number of signatures, and, second, that Cabinet has the power to veto the petition.

"People will say, 'The Minister already said that it's too little too late. That this should have been done before,'" Wade shared. "Now, the person out there has to be convinced that it matters. That their signatures still matter. So, when someone refers to the minister's words, it is more than just an intent to frustrate the process, but they have actually and already frustrated it."

Regarding the supposed timeline, the NEAB member stressed that the law lays out no such timelines. "It is for this reason we only refer to NEAB's internal timelines," Wade underscored.

The Reporter also spoke with Wade on

the argument that the referendum petition is coming too late, given that the Cannabis and Industrial Hemp Control and Licensing Bill (2022) has already gone through both the lower and upper houses of Parliament.

"It does not matter if it relates to a law that is already in existence, or pending legislation, or a Bill in any form, or even if it is only an idea that is taking root in society," Wade replied. It was pointed out that Section 2(b) of the Referendum Act only speaks to the petitioners' "opinion on a certain issue or matter" that they (the petitioners) deem as having "sufficient public importance that it should be submitted to the electors for their views through a referendum."

Wade was responding to the statement made by Minister Musa who, when answering the media's questions earlier this week, said that the Cabinet had to decide what would happen with the signatures. "It's not my decision. It is up to Cabinet to decide on what we do if it is that they come with a petition like that."

It must be noted that a referendum can, however, be called by the National Assembly under section 2(a) of the Referendum Act. The Act states:

"Subject to the provisions of this Act, a referendum shall be held in any of the following circumstances ... where the National Assembly passes a resolution declaring that a certain issue or matter is of sufficient national importance that it should be submitted to the electors for their view through a referendum."

# Governments Need Agile Fiscal Policies as Food and Fuel Prices Spike

By Jean-Marc Fournier, Vitor Gaspar, Paulo Medas and Roberto Accioly Perrelli

Just as increasing vaccinations offered hope, Russia's invasion of Ukraine disrupted the global economic recovery. One of the most visible global effects has been the acceleration of energy and food prices, triggering concerns about episodes of food shortages and increasing the risks of malnutrition and social unrest. World food prices surged by 33.6 percent in March from a year earlier, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Our latest Fiscal Monitor discusses how governments, faced with record debt and rising borrowing costs, can best respond to the urgent needs. It stresses the call for greater global cooperation.

## Highly uncertain fiscal outlook

Economies around the world have accumulated layer upon layer of legacies from past shocks since the global financial crisis. Extraordinary fiscal actions in response to the pandemic led to a surge in fiscal deficits and public debt in 2020.

Moreover, the outlook remained uncertain as the world navigated an unprecedented environment, with rising inflation and increasing divergence in recoveries—and then Russia invaded Ukraine, pushing geopolitical risks sharply up.

Global deficits and debt are falling from record levels, but the risks around the outlook are exceptionally high and vulnerabilities are rising. Global public debt is expected to fall in 2022 and then stabilize at about 95 percent of gross domestic product over the medium term, 11 percentage points higher than before the pandemic. Large inflation surprises in 2020-21 helped reduce debt ratios, but as monetary policy tightens to curb inflation, sovereign borrowing costs will rise, narrowing the scope for government spending and increasing debt vulnerabilities.

In advanced economies, deficits are projected to decline and policies are shifting from pandemic support to structural transformation. Fiscal outlooks in Europe face exceptional uncertainty given the war in Ukraine and its spillovers. In most emerging markets, deficits will narrow, but with large variations across countries. Low-income countries, already suffering with scarring from the pandemic, have very limited fiscal space as they are hard hit by spillovers from the war.

The different shocks have also brought new risks to public finances. Governments are under pressure to deal with the rising energy and food prices. To alleviate the burden on households, ensure food security, and preempt social unrest, most governments have announced measures to limit the rise in domestic prices. However, such actions could have large fiscal costs and exacerbate global demand and supply mismatches, putting further pressure on international prices and possibly leading to energy or food shortages. This would further hurt low-income countries that rely on imported energy and food.

Moreover, the fight against poverty has suffered a setback, especially in emerging markets and low-income countries. Relative to pre-pandemic trends, the COVID-19 crisis pushed 70 million more people worldwide into extreme poverty in 2021. In many advanced economies, households were protected by direct government support or job-retention schemes. Households spent less and saved more because of social distancing, mobility restrictions, and uncertainty about the future.

These excess savings are an important buffer but, if spent quickly, they could further add to the inflation momentum. The situation is much more dire in other countries with large numbers of poor people—where rising inflation could push more into poverty and exacerbate the food crisis.

## Managing crisis upon crisis

Governments face difficult choices in this highly uncertain environment. They should focus on the most urgent spending needs and raise revenue to pay for them.

We recommend agile fiscal strategies tailored to individual country circumstances:

In the economies hardest hit by the war in Ukraine and sanctions on Russia, fiscal policy needs to respond to the humanitarian crisis and economic disruptions. Given rising inflation and interest rates, fiscal support should be targeted to those most affected and priority areas.

In nations where growth is stronger and inflation pressures remain elevated, fiscal policy should continue its shift from support to normalization.

In many emerging markets and low-income economies facing tight financing conditions or the risk of debt distress, governments will need to prioritize spending and raise revenues to reduce vulnerabilities.

Commodity exporters that benefit from higher prices should seize the opportunity to rebuild buffers.

Government responses to the surge in

international commodity prices should give priority to protecting the most vulnerable. A critical objective is to avoid a food crisis while keeping social cohesion. Countries with well-developed social safety nets could deploy targeted and temporary cash transfers to vulnerable groups while allowing domestic prices to adjust. This will limit budgetary pressures and create the right incentives to increase supply (such as investing in renewable energy). Other countries could allow a more gradual adjustment of domestic prices and use existing tools to help the most vulnerable during this crisis, while taking steps to strengthen safety nets.

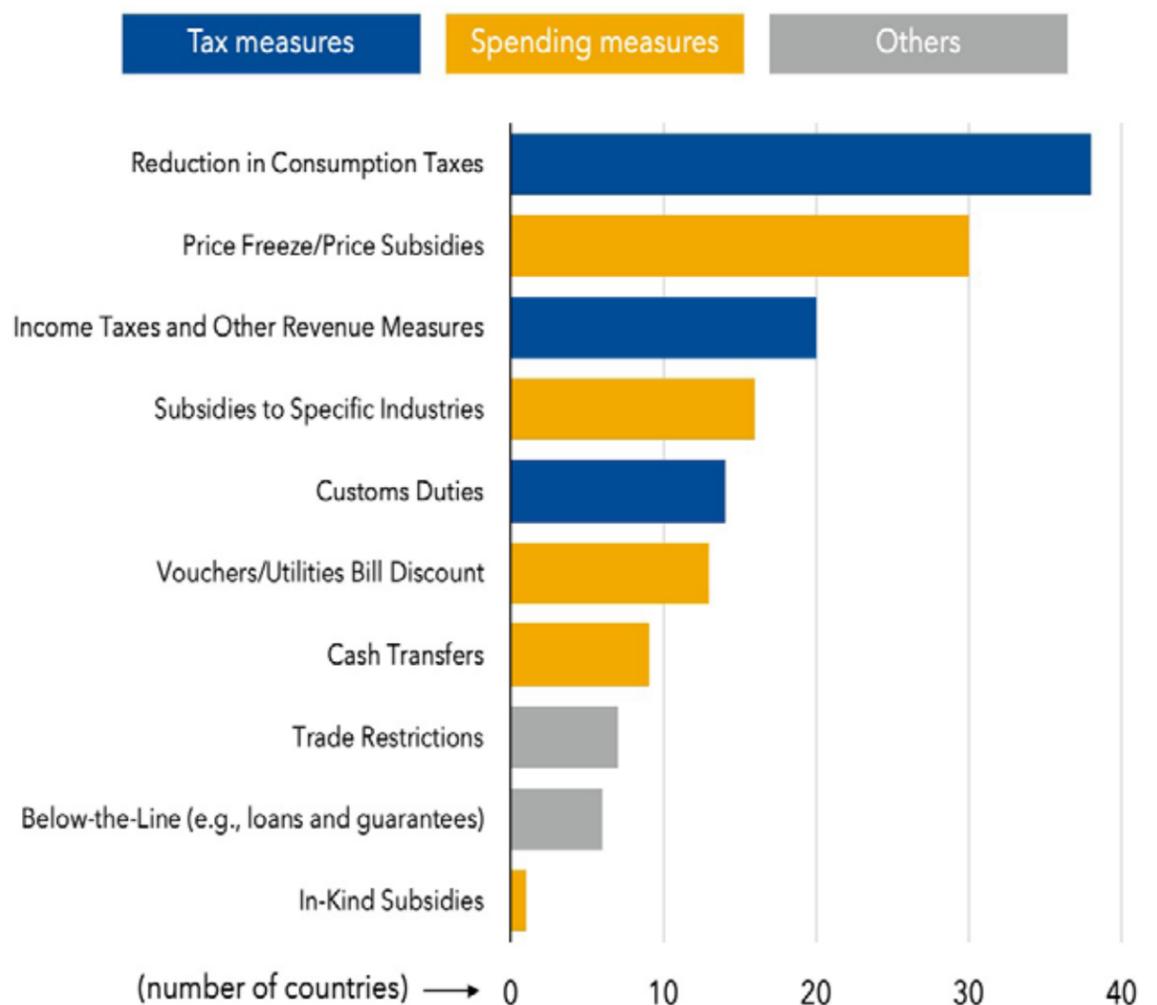
Fossil-fuel price hikes further highlight the urgency in accelerating the transition to clean and renewable energy, which would increase energy security and help meet the urgent climate agenda—we are dramatically off-track to limit global warming to 2 degrees Celsius.

About 60 percent of low-income countries are either at high risk of debt distress or already experiencing it. They face persistent scarring from COVID-19. They are especially vulnerable to food price rises, given the large share of food spending in their households' budgets. These countries need support from the international community.

But the need for collective action is broader. Global cooperation is necessary to tackle pressing and urgent problems that the world is facing: energy and food crises, current and future pandemics, debt, development, and climate change.

## Coping with higher energy and food prices

To lessen the burden on households, most governments have announced measures to limit the rise in domestic energy and food prices this year.



Source: IMF desk survey based on inputs for 134 countries (responses received as of March 31, 2022).

Note: This graphic includes measures announced after January 1, 2022.



## REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST Development of Maintenance Plans and Manuals for Recreation Infrastructure in the MPR

**Institution:** MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND DIASPORA RELATIONS (MTDR)  
**Country:** BELIZE  
**Project:** SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PROGRAM II (STPII)  
**Sector:** SUSTAINABLE TOURISM  
**Operation No.:** 3566/OC-BL  
**Project ID No.:** CS-42  
**Deadline:** Wednesday, May 4th, 2022, at 4:00 pm, local Belize time

The Government of Belize has received financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) toward the cost of the "Sustainable Tourism Program II" (STPII), and intends to apply part of the proceeds for this consulting service.

The purpose of this consultancy is to develop maintenance plans for the recreation infrastructure implemented at the Rio Frio Cave Complex and Rio On Pools, in the Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve. Also, to develop maintenance manuals and training of staff.

**This consultancy should not exceed a period of ten weeks.**

Candidates must demonstrate successful experience with the development and implementation of maintenance plans, including aspects related to training and capacity building. The Consultant must have experience in developing maintenance plans for Protected Areas or other types of recreation natural areas.

**The Consultant must possess the following qualification and experience necessary to complete this consultancy:**

- Language: English (Oral and Written)
- Education: Minimum of Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering or other related Engineering degrees.
- General Experience: Minimum of 5 years from obtaining the academic title.
- **Specific Experience 1:** Minimum of three years working experience corrective, preventive and predictive maintenance of different type of facilities especially recreational facilities or related field.
- **Specific Experience 2:** Demonstrated experienced in the development of maintenance plans or guidelines for maintaining facilities.
- **Specific Experience 3:** Demonstrated experience working on projects with both virtual and on-site modes of training and capacity building.
- Course or Training - training, capacity building, management, facility maintenance, or other related field would be a plus.
- Knowledgeable of Belize's laws, regulations, and policies.

The individual consultant will be selected based on the Comparison of Qualification for Individual Consultants procurement method in accordance with the procedures set out in the Inter-American Development Bank: [Policies for the selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank \(GN-2350-15\).](#)

The Ministry of Tourism and Diaspora Relations, now invites eligible individuals to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested persons should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services.

Interested individual consultants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours of **09:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday to Friday, local Belize time.** Expressions of interest must be delivered via direct mail or e-mail at the address indicated below by **4:00 pm on Wednesday, May 4th, 2022, local Belize time.**

**Ministry of Tourism and Diaspora Relations**

**Attn: Tamara Tingling-Cano  
Procurement Specialist, STPII  
106 South Street, Belize City,  
Tel: 501-227-1760**

**E-mail: [tamara.cano@tourism.gov.bz](mailto:tamara.cano@tourism.gov.bz), [ceo@tourism.gov.bz](mailto:ceo@tourism.gov.bz)**

# Head, Tails, Roulette Wheels and COVID

If you've played roulette before, you'll be familiar with the table layout - the numbers 1 to 36 with half on a red background and half on a black ground. There is also a 0 and a 00 on US tables, but just a 0 on European tables. But let's just focus on the red and black numbers, and the fact that you can bet on which colour the ball will land - and the stake is usually even money - you win twice your stake or lose your stake. So essentially your chances of winning are just under 50% or every other bet - it's not exactly 50% because of the 0 or 0 and 00 in the games. So what happens if you watch the first game, and a ball lands a black square - what do you place your bet on in the next game?

Probably red right? And if the next 10 games the ball landed on black every single time, what would you bet on in the 11th game? Most certainly red - after 10 blacks, a red must be more likely to play now, right? And if after 25 black numbers came out in a row then the 26th game must be red this time! Well it might surprise you that even after 25 games of black numbers winning, the chances of the next game being a red is exactly the same as it was in the first! You still have the numbers 1-36 (again ignoring the 0 or 0 and 00) and half of them are red and half of them are black - so the odds are exactly the same as they were before, and will be after this game!

This misunderstanding cost gamblers in Monte Carlo a fortune one night in 1913. As the winning black streak continued, more and more people started to bet on red thinking it's more likely to play - and the casino won a fortune until the 26th game, when a red finally broke the streak.

Not much has changed since then. This type of thinking continues today, and in general our under-

standing of data and numbers is very poor - not just in Belize, but across the world. For instance in the UK politicians were asked about tossing a coin... if it's a fair coin, what's the probability of tossing 2 heads in a row? The list of possible answers was 15%, 25%, 40%, 50%, 75% or Other. How would you answer? (Answers at the bottom of this article) Unfortunately, only 52% of politicians answered correctly. Now this is quite a simple question, but how about a more complicated question, but one which is incredibly relevant to all our lives these days because of COVID.

Let's say you have taken a diagnostic test for COVID, and the result was positive. You are clever enough to know that not all tests are 100% accurate, because sometimes you can be positive and get a negative result, and sometimes negative and get a positive result. So you ask about the false-positive rate (the chances of a negative person testing positive) and are told it's 1 in a 1,000 - in other words, for every 1,000 results there is one positive result for someone who actually doesn't have the virus. So what is the probability that you have the virus? You can choose your answer from 99.9%, 99%, 1%, 0.01%, or say there's not enough information to work out your probability. Again, the UK politicians failed miserably, with less than 1 in five answering correctly. And remember these are the people setting health policy on everything COVID, from the availability of tests, to treatments, to setting the curfew at 6, 8 or 12 at night.

Now I'd love to know how our area reps would answer these questions, but I fear they would do even worse than their UK colleagues. An indication of this was given in the senate recently, where someone was speaking about the debt to GDP ratio - "A

reduction from 133%, which is widely unsustainable, to 108%, which is a reduction of 25%. By any measure, that would be substantial." Substantial it may be, but it's not 25%... it's 25 percentage points lower, but it's actually only a reduction of 18.8%.

Data, and the decisions we make from that data, are increasingly important for all of us. In the coming weeks we'll have the largest data collection exercise ever undertaken in Belize - the 2022 census. And as we continue to debate about whether to have a referendum on the legalisation of marijuana or not, and discuss the evidence both for and against its use, we have to be really clear about who's saying what, whether we understand it, and ultimately whether it makes any sense. It's only when we have processed all of this, can we say we are making an informed decision - one that should be better for us.

One example already on the topic of marijuana, is the BCCI survey that has been covered in the last few days. Pastor Louis Wade was reported saying "The BCCI's results show the split. And that is what we have been saying. The nation is split." citing the preliminary results of the poll which showed that exactly half of the respondents said no, they do not support the legalisation of recreational cannabis via the Cannabis and Hemp Control and Licensing Bill 2022. Of course these results show absolutely nothing about the nation. Wade is completely wrong when he says the results show the nation is split (of course the nation may be split, but these results do not provide any evidence of this). The poll only includes private sector businesses, not the general public, so by definition it tells us nothing about what the nation thinks. It might tell us what the pri

*Cont'd on pg 12*

## Days later, police officer still unconscious

By Michelle Sutherland

Days after he was knocked unconscious, inside a popular establishment in Placencia, by a civilian, police officer Christopher Martinez, who is attached to a specialized unit, remains in a critical condition, while his attacker remains on the run.

On Tuesday, Public Relations Officer for the Belize Police Department ASP Fitzroy Yearwood told the media that since he was hospitalized at a medical facility in Belize City, Martinez's condition has not improved and that he "he has been slipping in and out of consciousness since then."

Police have started an investigation into the incident and are seeking the civilian identified as Majestic Alley resident Michael Francis, 32, for questioning in relation to the assault of a police officer.

Following the incident which happened in Placencia on Sunday night, Francis took to social media to take responsibility for the incident, but claimed that he did not do it intentionally.

Instead, he claimed that he was at the said establishment socializing with friends when a police officer approached one of his companions "aggressively" and attempted to detain him. Francis said that he attempted to intervene by asking the officers why they were detaining his



Michael Francis says he unintentionally hit the police officer

friend at which time one of them took out a pepper spray and aimed it directly in his eye.

"They spray nearly the whole can in my eye, while I was blind I swung my hand in the air because of the burn, unfortunately, the Sergeant was hit. I did not intentionally hit the police. I am not stupid, but because I am from Majestic I should be disrespected by the law," wrote Francis.

But while that is Francis's version of what happened, Yearwood said that whether or not the strike was by reflex or intended, it resulted in injuries to the officer, and based on the classification by a medical officer, that will determine if and what type of charges will be laid against Francis.

"We will be looking at this investigation with an open mind and he will be allotted all his

rights. But at the end of the day, he assaulted a police officer whether the officer initiated contact. That will be proven by investigators. The fact remains that the officer had some reason to approach him and he can insist that that person approached wrongfully, but whether or not he did will be proven. But if the police approach you and ask for a search the best thing is for you to cooperate," said Yearwood.

Yearwood said the Professional Standards Branch has also launched investigations into the behavior of several police officers, who, following the incident, took to social media to issue "threats" publicly. That, according to Yearwood, goes in contravention of the department's social media policy and as such the department will be holding the officers responsible for their irresponsible behavior.

# Head, Tails, Roulette Wheels and COVID

Cont'd from pg 11

ivate sector as a whole thinks, but we can't be sure - because we know nothing about those who responded. As any cook will tell you, to know how good your soup is, you have to taste it. But first you have to give it a good stir, so you get a good mix of the flavours. This is how a good poll or survey should be, it should represent those you are reporting on. For example if the 76 BCCI responses came only from males, then it's not representative of the private sector either. You also have to review how the poll was conducted - it was probably sent to the whole membership, and so it's likely to have attracted

responses from two types of people - those with strong views either way (which may include those who have a potential vested interest in the industry), and those who are simply active in the Chamber. Either way, this does not allow you to project any results from the poll - until you know just how well your respondents represent the wider membership. As it stands, the results are almost meaningless, although I look forward to the final results, which will hopefully be a lot more detailed.

There's been a lot of publicity surrounding financial literacy programs in recent years, most recently an effort supported by

the US Government which saw 117 students learn practical tips for responsible money management and for setting realistic and constructive financial goals. This is all well and good, but 117 is a drop in a very large ocean of students, and I'd love to see a stronger focus on data literacy - the ability to read, write, understand, and communicate data in context. It would mean we all make better decisions in our lives, on an almost daily basis.

Finally, the answers! The chances of tossing 2 heads (or 2 tails) in a row is 25%, and the COVID answer is "there's not enough information" - hopefully we'll revisit this in a future column.

## Notice of Dissolution

"Notice is hereby given to all interested parties that **CAMBURY SERVICES LIMITED** a Company incorporated under the IBC Act of Belize commenced dissolution on **April 19th, 2022.**

And

**Mr. Paraskevas Zacharoulis of Agiou Pavlou 15, Ledra House, Agios Andreas, 1105 Nicosia, Cyprus** is the Liquidator of the Company. Any claims against this Company should be forwarded to the liquidator within 30 days from commencement."

**Interconsult Belize Limited**  
Registered Agent

# S U D O K U

Medium Puzzle

		1	5					
7	8		4		9			1
					6	9		
		6	1	2		3		
						4	7	
			3		4			2
	9	3					2	
1				8			3	

Answer to Puzzle

6	8	9	5	8	2	7	1	4
9	3	6	5	8	2	7	1	4
4	1	7	3	6	9	8	5	2
8	2	5	1	4	7	3	9	6
2	8	1	4	9	3	6	7	5
9	7	4	8	5	6	2	3	1
6	7	4	8	5	6	2	3	1
5	9	3	7	2	1	6	4	8
7	5	6	9	1	8	4	2	3
1	6	2	9	3	4	5	8	7
3	4	8	2	7	5	1	6	9

Sudoku rules are extremely easy: Fill all empty squares so that the numbers 1 to 9 appear once in each row, column and 3x3 box.  
Tip: Use a soft erasable pencil. Start with the easy puzzles, then move on to the harder ones. Make small pencilmarks to show which numbers are allowed in empty squares. This will come handy when analyzing techniques are used. Never guess! Only make moves based on logical deductions. There is only one unique solution for each puzzle.



# STRENGTHENING OF TAX ADMINISTRATION PROJECT

## REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

**Consulting Services for Consulting firm to Prepare, Implement and Execute a New Audit Model, making use of the wider range examination and risk-based techniques (to include analytical tools for audit)**

**Institution:** The Ministry of Finance (MOF)

**Country:** Belize

**Project:** Strengthening of Tax Administration (STA)

**Abstract:** Consulting Services for Consulting Firm to Prepare, Implement and Execute a New Audit Model, making use of the wider range examination and risk-based techniques (to include analytical tools for audit).

**Loan No.:** 4839/OC-BL

**Deadline:** April 29th, 2022, Belize Local Time

The Government of Belize (GOB) has received financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for the execution of a five-year tax modernization project entitled "Strengthening of Tax Administration" (BL-L1031). The main beneficiaries of the Project are: (a) the Government, which will have more revenues to implement its public policies; (b) taxpayers, who will have more support and a digital environment to fulfil their tax obligations; and (c) the population, from the government policies implemented. Through this project, the Belize Tax Service Department (BTSD) has procured a **Modern Integrated Tax Administration System (the Revenue Management System (RMS))** and is presently in the implementation process. This new system will be used in the management of the **Belize Tax Administration**.

The BTSD management has identified the need for a modern audit approach based on risk analysis. The BTSD Strategic Plan states that:

*"BTSD will explore the introduction of a Risk Management Plan (RMP) to properly respond to the risks identified on a timely basis, to minimize overall compliance burden for both the taxpayers and the tax administration. As an important aspect of the RMP, risk mitigating strategies will be proposed for application against potential and existing risks. The plan will highlight all areas of risks including risk-based assessments, risk-based audits, risk-based sector and taxpayer segmentation, compliance risks (registration, filing, reporting and payments) and international risks. Risk mitigation reduces the extent of exposure and ensures that the strategic objectives are achieved."*

The consulting services ("the services") includes the contracting of a consulting firm for a period of ten (10) months to Prepare, Implement and Execute a New Audit Model, making use of the range examination and risk-based techniques (to include analytic tools for audit). **The main activities of the consultancy include:**

- To assess the status of BTSD taxpayer audit strategies and operations for all tax type.
- To review the Audit Division organization and resources, as well as the staff skills.
- To suggest the strategy for centralization/decentralization of the audit.
- To propose a new organization area (if required).
- To propose the staff composition by area and by location.
- To propose the different audit programs taking into consideration taxpayer segments and different audit locations (central, districts).
- To propose a system of massive audit based on IT verification of returns against risk factors and third-party information. The selected cases should be resolved very quickly (4 cases a day) as they are based on firm verification.
- To propose modern analytical tools for tax auditing suitable for Belize's environment by conducting a SWOT analysis to support the audit work.
- Once the proposal of the modern analytical tools is approved, the consulting firm will procure the Analytical tools software for auditing with 50 licenses with subscription for 3 years, implement, and train auditors in its utilization for adoption.
- To execute onsite Pilot audit (for at least one month in duration) with the audit team to plan, execute and report on randomly selected taxpayers.
- To develop training materials and manuals in hard copies and digital copies in Microsoft Word format.

The consulting firm should have a minimum of five (5) years' experience in similar assignment. In addition, the consulting firm should have a minimum of three (3) years specific experience in the following areas (\* are must):

- Tax administration taxpayer audit and risk analysis. (\*)
- Conducting design of modern taxpayer audit programs. (\*)
- Conducting design of risk-based audit programs. (\*)
- Training tax administration staff in audit techniques (\*)
- Using modern audit analytic tools. (\*)
- Developing programs for organizational strengthening for tax administration.
- Developing modern taxpayer audit programs.
- Conducting design of modern information crosschecking programs.
- Business Strategy (supporting business and organization goals).

The firm should prove ability to identify strategic issues, opportunity and risks. As well as have knowledge and experience working in Belize and or the Caribbean environment in a similar assignment.

The Ministry of Finance now invites eligible consulting firms ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested eligible Consultants must submit

an Expression of Interest providing information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments specifying start and end dates of assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills, etc.). *The term "consultant" means a legally-established professional consulting firm or an entity that may provide the services.*

#### Expression of Interest package should contain:

- Document explaining interest, experience, and competence of the consulting firm.
- Firms experience in the assignment of similar consultancy services during the past five years. Description of similar assignments specifying start and end dates of assignments.
- Firms evidence of past jobs. (This includes letters from the respective client on the job (s) carried out, or a copy of contract or agreement with the client including copy of the TOR).
- Two references
- Proof of nationality:** Copy of certificate of incorporation, information of shareholders of company specifying the shares owned by each respective shareholder of the company and a copy of documentation of nationality of the shareholders of the company.

#### Additional documentation required for National Consultants:

- Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from Belize Company Registry
- Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from the Social Security Board
- Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from the Belize Tax Service
- Copy of Current Trade License

The total estimated contract price for this consultancy inclusive of taxes is **US\$ 451,328.00.**

Consulting firm will be selected in accordance with the Quality and Cost-Based Selection (QCBS) method set out in the **Inter-American Development Bank: Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank (GN-2350-15, May 2019 edition)** and is open to all eligible consultants as defined in the IDB policies. The selection of the successful firm will be based on a competitive process among short-listed firms that takes into account the quality of the proposal and the cost of the service. **Only the short-listed firms will be notified and will be asked to submit a technical and price proposal.**

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications. For the purpose of establishing the short list, the nationality of a firm is that of the country in which it is legally incorporated or constituted and in the case of Joint Venture, the nationality of the firm appointed to represent it.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours **Monday to Friday 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** Expressions of interest must be delivered via direct mail or e-mail at the address indicated below by **4:00 p.m. (Belize local time) on Friday, April 29th, 2022.**

Interested consulting firms are asked to submit their expression of interest via e-mail to [Michelle.Longsworth@bts.gov.bz](mailto:Michelle.Longsworth@bts.gov.bz) marked **STAP- Consulting Firm to Prepare, Implement and Execute a New Audit Model** in the subject header, or submit on or before **4:00 p.m. (Belize local time) on Friday, April 29th, 2022** to the following address:

**Director General  
Belize Tax Service  
Strengthening of Tax Administration Project  
Charles Bartlett Hyde Building  
Mahogany Street, Belize City  
Tel: 501-222-5114**

**For clarifications kindly contact:**

**Procurement Officer  
Project Executing Unit  
Strengthening of Tax Administration Project  
Charles Bartlett Hyde Building  
Mahogany Street, Belize City  
Tel: 501-222-5114/E-mail: [Ian.Ramirez@mof.gov.bz](mailto:Ian.Ramirez@mof.gov.bz)**



## Rejuvenation of woman's skin could tackle diseases of ageing

Researchers have rejuvenated a 53-year-old woman's skin cells so they are the equivalent of a 23-year-old's.

The scientists in Cambridge believe that they can do the same thing with other tissues in the body.

The eventual aim is to develop treatments for age-related diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and neurological disorders.

The technology is built on the techniques used to create Dolly the cloned sheep more than 25 years ago.

The head of the team, Prof Wolf Reik, of the Babraham Institute in Cambridge, told BBC News that he hoped that the technique could eventually be used to keep people healthier for longer as they grow older.

"We have been dreaming about this kind of thing. Many common diseases get worse with age and to think about helping people in this way is super exciting," he said.

Prof Reich stressed though that the work, which has been published in the journal *eLife*, was at a very early stage. He said that there were several scientific issues to overcome before it could move out of his lab and into the clinic. But he said that demonstrating for the first time that cell rejuvenation is possible was a critical step forward.

The origins of the technique stem from the 1990s, when researchers at the Roslin Institute just outside Edinburgh developed a method of turning an adult mammary gland cell taken from a sheep into an embryo. It led to the creation of Dolly the cloned sheep.

The Roslin team's aim was not to create clones of sheep or indeed humans, but to use the technique to create so-called human embryonic stem cells. These, they hoped, could be grown into specific tissues, such as muscle, cartilage, and nerve cells to replace worn-out body parts.

The Dolly technique was made simpler in 2006 by Prof Shinya Yamanaka, then at Kyoto University. The new method, called IPS, involved adding chemicals to adult cells for around 50 days. This resulted in genetic changes that turned the adult cells into stem cells.

In both the Dolly and IPS techniques, the stem cells created need to be regrown into the cells and tissues the patient requires. This has proved difficult and despite decades of effort, the use of stem cells to treat diseases is currently extremely limited.

Prof Reik's team used the IPS technique on 53-year-old skin cells. But they cut short the chemical bath from 50 days to around 12. Dr Dilgeet Gill was astonished to find that the cells had not turned into embryonic stem cells - but had rejuvenated into skin cells that looked and behaved as if they came from a 23-year old.

He said: "I remember the day I got the results back and I didn't quite believe that

some of the cells were 30 years younger than they were supposed to be. It was a very exciting day!"

The technique cannot immediately be translated to the clinic because the IPS method increases the risk of cancers. But Prof Reik was confident that now it was known that it is possible to rejuvenate cells, his team could find an alternative, safer



method.

"The long-term aim is to extend the human health span, rather than the lifespan, so that people can get older in a healthier way," he said.

Prof Reik says some of the first applications could be to develop medicines to rejuvenate skin in older people in parts of the body where they have been cut or burned - as a way to speed up healing. The researchers have demonstrated that this is possible in principle by showing that their rejuvenated skin cells move more quickly in experiments simulating a wound.

Prof Melanie Welham, who is the executive chairman of the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council, which part-funded the research that led to Dolly the

sheep, told BBC News that the long-stalled clinical benefits of the technology may not be that far away.

"If similar approaches or new therapies could rejuvenate immune cells, which we know become less responsive as we age, then in the future it might be possible to boost people's response to vaccination as well as their ability to fight infections."

The big question is whether research efforts in this area would lead to a method of whole-body regeneration, an elixir of youth or an anti-ageing pill. Prof Reik said this idea was not completely far-fetched.

"The technique has been applied to genetically modified mice and there are some signs of rejuvenation. One study showed signs of a rejuvenated pancreas, which is interesting for its potential to tackle diabetes."

But Prof Robin Lovell-Badge, of the Crick Institute in London,

believes that the scientific hurdles between Prof Reik's result in the lab and even the simplest clinical applications are considerable. Nor does he think it will be a trivial process to translate the rejuvenation process to other types of tissue or indeed an anti-ageing pill.

"If you find other chemicals to do the same thing, then that would be good, but they may be just as bad. So it is ambitious to think you are going to find these chemicals easily and that they are going to be safer.

"It is also quite possible that other types of cells would require different conditions that may be hard to control. And whether you could do it with the whole body safely would be such a long way off, that I would think it would be pure speculation."



### Public Notice of Investment

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the Social Security Act, Chapter 44 of the Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011, that the Social Security Board, as per its Investment Framework, Section 49, has proposed to lend the amount of **One Million Dollars (BZ\$1,000,000.00)** to Marie Sharp's Fine Foods Limited for capital expenditures. The new loan facility will be consolidated for a term of six (6) years. Principal and interest payments will be paid quarterly on the declining balance.



# FUN FACTS!

## The Accidental Invention of Bubble Wrap



Bubble Wrap's original purpose was far from what we use the product for today.

In 1957, engineer Al Fielding and Swiss inventor Marc Chavannes were trying to create a textured wallpaper. To do so, they sealed two shower curtains together in such a way that air bubbles were captured, giving the wallpaper a textured appearance.

But the wallpaper idea didn't sell too

well.

Undeterred, Fielding and Chanvannes decided to market their invention as greenhouse insulation. Though the material did offer somewhat of an insulating effect, this idea didn't pan out popularly, either.

It wasn't until three years after the origination of their invention that Frederick W. Bowers, a marketer at Sealed Air, which made the product,

finally came up with the perfect use for it. On October 5, 1959, IBM had announced their new 1401 variable word length computer. Bowers got the idea that Bubble Wrap could be used as a good packaging material to protect the computer while it was being shipped. He pitched the idea to IBM and demonstrated Bubble Wrap's protective abilities. His demonstration went over

well, and IBM began purchasing Bubble Wrap to protect their 1401 and other fragile products they sold and shipped.

From those humble beginnings, Sealed Air has grown to annual sales of around \$4 billion, with a net profit of around \$255 million. About 10 percent of its revenue comes from Bubble Wrap, so around \$400 million worth of Bubble Wrap is sold annually.



### Nerd!

The word "nerd" was first coined by Dr. Seuss in "If I Ran the Zoo."



### Loud Cats!

A lion's roar can be heard from 5 miles away.



# COLOR ME

African lions are mostly found in sub-Saharan Africa. They used to be found all over Africa but now they have mostly disappeared from North Africa and are at risk of extinction in West Africa. Lions live in savannahs and grasslands, where some cover and plenty of water can be found.



If lions are your favourite animal you can adopt a lion for a one off payment that includes a cuddly lion toy, an adoption certificate, a lion fact sheet and the name of the adopter displayed at the lion enclosure.

Lions hunt for food every few days. They will feed from their kill and then rest until they hunt again. They usually kill medium sized mammals, such as zebra, deer and wildebeest. They often eat animals which have been killed by another hunter, such as hyenas.

On a Folly Farm lion experience you enter the lion's yard, spend time with our lion keepers, and feed the lions meat on skewers through the fence – this is the perfect experience for any lion fan and is not to be missed.

Both male and female lions roar. They usually start off with a few long, deep roars followed by shorter, faster ones. Lions also make other noises.

They meow, hiss and snarl, like domestic cats, but louder.



# STRENGTHENING OF TAX ADMINISTRATION PROJECT

## REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

### Consultancy Firm to prepare and implement the Belize Tax Service Department (BTSD) Enforcement Collection Model based on risk criteria

**Institution:** The Ministry of Finance (MOF)  
**Country:** Belize  
**Project:** Strengthening of Tax Administration (STA)  
**Abstract:** Consulting Services – Consultancy Firm to prepare and implement the Belize Tax Service Department (BTSD) Enforcement Collection Model based on risk criteria  
**Loan No.:** 4839/OC-BL  
**Deadline:** April 29th, 2022, Belize Local Time

The Government of Belize (GOB) has received financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for the execution of a five-year tax modernization project entitled “Strengthening of Tax Administration” (BL-L1031). Through this project, the Belize Tax Service Department (BTSD) has procured a Modern Integrated Tax Administration System (the Revenue Management System (RMS) and is presently in the implementation process. This new system will be used in the management of the Belize Tax Administration.

The authorities’ concerns on the growth of the arrears balance are reflected in the BTSD strategic plan; “The stock of debt has been steadily increasing throughout the years, with the largest increase recorded between 2017 and 2018. The respective annual increases from 2016 to 2018 were 4%, 7% and 23%. There is a need to institute a mechanism to facilitate monitoring and timely enforcement actions to collect and recover revenues.”

The consulting services (“the services”) includes the contracting of a Consultancy Firm for a period of **five (5) months**. The main activity of the consultancy includes:

1. To assess the current situation of BTSD enforcement collection and review the organization and resources of the collection area as well as their skills
2. To assess the potential sources for information on taxpayer transactions and assets that could be used as arrears payments (Customs, social security, immovable property registration department, Bank accounts, City Council’s Traffic Departments, etc.)
3. Propose a strategy for enforcement collections and prioritization based on risk analysis, define risk parameters and relevant mitigation measures as well as special procedures according to taxpayer segments
4. Establish a system of payment by instalment via Internet, with parameters defined by BTSD with payments through automatic debit in the taxpayer bank account and to freeze delinquent taxpayers’ bank accounts via Internet
5. Establish rules for writing off uncollectable debts and modify ITAS to incorporate them
6. Update the BTSD Enforcement Collection manual defining the procedures to select the debts to be enforced, the task to collect the debt, the identification, and procedures to put a lien on debtors’ properties, the rules, and procedures for agreements for payment by instalment, etc.
7. Propose performance indicators for monitoring the enforcement collection
8. Deliver workshops and train the collection staff in the new procedures
9. Implement the new procedures
10. Conduct Pilot with the designated BTSD staff to plan, execute and report on randomly selected taxpayers.

The Consultancy Firm should have a minimum of **five (5) years’** relevant working experience in the following areas:

- **Organizational development and design;**
- **Enforced arrears collections;**
- **Tax administration training**

As well as minimum of five (5) years relevant assistance to tax administrations, particularly in the arrears collection areas. In addition, the Consultant firm should have at least three (3) years of previous experience specifically in conducting programs on arrears collection with the use of risk analysis techniques or similar programs and consultancies between the calendar years 2015 to 2020, as well as experience in Belize, and Caribbean environment.

The Ministry of Finance now invites eligible Consultancy Firms (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested eligible Consultants must submit an Expression of Interest providing information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services (description of similar assignments specifying start and end dates of assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills, etc.). *The term “consultant” means a legally established professional consulting firm or an entity that may provide the services.*

**Expression of Interest package should contain:**

- (i) Document explaining interest, experience, and competence of the consulting firm.

- (ii) Firms experience in the assignment of similar consultancy services during the past five years. Description of similar assignments specifying start and end dates of assignments.
- (iii) Firms evidence of past jobs. (These includes letters from the respective client on the job (s) carried out, or a copy of contract or agreement with the client including copy of the TOR).
- (iv) Two references
- (v) **Proof of nationality:** Copy of certificate of incorporation, information of shareholders of company specifying the shares owned by each respective shareholder of the company and a copy of documentation of nationality of the shareholders of the company.

**Additional documentation required for National Consultants:**

- (vi) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from Belize Company Registry
- (vii) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from the Social Security Board
- (viii) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from the Belize Tax Service
- (ix) Copy of Current Trade License

The total estimated contract price for this consultancy inclusive of taxes is US **\$133,555.00**.

A Consulting firm will be selected in accordance with the Quality and Cost - Based Selection (QCBS) procurement method set out in the Inter-American Development Bank: *Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank* (GN-2350-15, May 2019 edition) and is open to all eligible consultants as defined in the IDB policies. The selection of the successful firm will be based on a competitive process among short-listed firms that takes into account the quality of the proposal and the cost of the service. **Only the short-listed firms will be notified and will be asked to submit a technical and price proposal.**

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications. For the purpose of establishing the short list, the nationality of a firm is that of the country in which it is legally incorporated or constituted and in the case of Joint Venture, the nationality of the firm appointed to represent it.

**Further information** can be obtained at the address below during office hours **Monday to Friday 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** Expressions of interest must be delivered via direct mail or e-mail at the address indicated below by **4:00 p.m. (Belize local time) on Friday April 29th, 2022.**

Interested eligible Consultants are asked to submit their expression of interest via e-mail to [Michelle.Longsworth@bts.gov.bz](mailto:Michelle.Longsworth@bts.gov.bz) marked STAP-Consultancy Firm to prepare and implement the **Belize Tax Service Department (BTSD) Enforcement Collection Model** based on risk criteria in the subject header, or submit on or before **4:00 p.m. (Belize local time) Friday April 29th, 2022** to the following address:

**Director General**  
**Belize Tax Service**  
**Strengthening of Tax Administration Project**  
**Charles Bartlett Hyde Building**  
**Mahogany Street, Belize City**  
**Tel: 501-222-5114**

**For clarifications kindly contact:**

**Procurement Officer**  
**Project Executing Unit**  
**Strengthening of Tax Administration Project**  
**Charles Bartlett Hyde Building**  
**Mahogany Street, Belize City**  
**Tel: 501-222-5114/E-mail: [Ian.Ramirez@mof.gov.bz](mailto:Ian.Ramirez@mof.gov.bz)**



**Institution:** Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)  
**Country:** Belize  
**Project:** Solid Waste Management Project II (SWMP II)  
**Sector:** Waste Management  
**Abstract:** Design and Implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan.  
**Loan No.:** 3684/OC-BL  
**Deadline:** May 6th, 2022

The Government of Belize (GOB) has received financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), towards the cost of the Solid Waste Management Project II and intends to apply part of the proceeds towards the hiring of a consultant for the Design and Implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

The objective of the consultancy is to develop a comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan that will ensure that a consistent, comprehensive and coordinated approach is taken to effectively engage solid waste management related stakeholders in Belize.

The Belize Solid Waste Management Authority, the Executing Agency, now invites interested eligible individual consultant to submit Expressions of Interest indicating qualification and experience required to provide these consultancy services listed below.

**A) SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES**  
**The Consultant shall:**

- 1) **Stakeholder Mapping** - Undertake a stakeholder mapping analysis to engage solid waste management stakeholders effectively and to ensure that a range of diverse participants including marginalized groups are involved. The mapping exercise should prioritize and classify stakeholders by their expected level of engagement.

A complete stakeholder directory is to be developed and should include municipalities, private sector non-governmental or community-based organizations and any other waste management related entity. The specific activity that the stakeholder engages in i.e. collection, exporting, repurposing or value adding among others, should be clearly outlined. The material type they handle should also be outlined.

- 2) **Stakeholder Engagement Plan** - This comprehensive plan will outline the processes necessary to allow for an improved coordination between the BSWaMA and solid waste management stakeholders and will be aligned with the priority areas as outlined in the BSWaMA's strategic vision. It will clearly outline the purpose and objectives of the plan, including activities, success indicators, timelines, and resources needed. It will state responsibilities related to the stakeholder engagement activities, and any other elements that communicate the goals, structure and requirements of the stakeholder engagement and information disclosure.
- 3) **Stakeholder Terms of References** - Based on the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, terms of references will be developed that will be used in the coordination of committees or collaborative working groups to be developed.
- 4) **Action Plan** - Develop an action plan for the successful implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan. The implementation plan should provide a clear description of the commitments and the explanations of the rationale behind commitments and decisions, budget requirements, timelines and the roles and responsibilities of the BSWaMA personnel and other interest groups responsible for its implementation.
- 5) **Implementation and Transition** - During the period of contract the consultant is expected to implement activities outlined by the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and the Action Plan; this will be done in close collaboration with BSWaMA personnel. Furthermore, they will ensure an efficient transition to BSWaMA for further implementation. Any relevant training must be delivered to designated BSWaMA personnel before the end of the contract term.

**B) QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**  
**The Consultant shall have the following:**

- A Master's degree in Social Science, International Relations, Communications, Community Development or a similar or related field from a recognized institution.
- Strong interpersonal skills with proven experience working with cross section of stakeholders including senior government officials, NGO's, CBO's private sector, local communities, marginalized populations, and donor agencies.
- At least seven years of experience in stakeholder engagement, communication, and consultation and focus group related activities.
- Experience in the development of Stakeholder Engagement Plans with international organizations is an asset.
- Familiarity with solid waste management sector will be an asset.
- Excellent analytical, data gathering, writing, advocacy, presentation, and communications skills are required.
- Excellent communication skills in English language both written and oral. Knowledge of Spanish will be an advantage

The Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum and Mining now invites eligible individual consultants to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested individual Consultants must provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualification and relevant experience to perform the Services.

Consultants will be selected in accordance with the Selection of Individual Consultants method and other procedures set out in the Inter-American Development Bank: **Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank - GN-2350-15**, and is open to all eligible candidates as defined in the policies.

Further information can be obtained at the email address below during office hours: **Monday to Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. local time.**

Expressions of interest must be submitted electronically and must include a signed application letter, Curriculum Vitae (CV), copies of academic qualification, and the names and contact information of two professional references no later than **Friday May 6th, 2022, at 2:00 p.m. local time.**

**Application must be submitted via one consolidated PDF document; only complete packages will be processed.** Packages must be sent to the address below:

**Solid Waste Management Authority**  
**Attn: Procurement Officer**  
**3013 Bougainvillea Street, Orchid Garden Area**  
**City of Belmopan, Belize, C.A.**  
**Tel: (501) 802 1527**  
**PO Box 285**  
**E-mail: [GladdenM@gobmail.gov.bz](mailto:GladdenM@gobmail.gov.bz)**

# 79% and counting! So far, 15,000 Belizeans call for 'Ganja' Referendum

By Michelle Sutherland

Belize City, Monday, April 18th—A total of 15,000 Belizeans have signed a petition asking the Government of Belize to consider holding a referendum to ask Belizeans to decide on whether or not they agree with the legalization of marijuana in Belize, NEAB's Pastor Louis Wade told the Reporter Friday.

Wade also opined that the speed at which citizens are willing to sign the petition should communicate Belize's views on the referendum. "Actually, just the number of votes that came in within a short period of time should inform the government to hold back on the legislation," Wade said.

The NEAB member also referenced the results of a poll being conducted by the Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI). "I have seen the results, for example, of the Chamber's poll," Wade added. "They don't look good. I think only 37 percent are saying 'yes' to legalization. But another 50 percent say 'no,' with another 13 percent 'neutral' on the matter."

Citing the BCCI's results, Wade stressed that this supports NEAB's point. "The BCCI's results show the split. And that is what we have been saying. The nation is split."

The BCCI's survey also asked respondents if they support a referendum, to which 65 percent of the respondents said they support the matter being put to a referendum. "That question, in my opinion, is even

more important than the 'legalization' question," Wade enthused. "I believe in democracy. That second question does not test the marijuana issue. That second question tests an even more important issue: Whether or not people should have a voice."

The petition, which was launched two weeks ago by the National Evangelical Association of Belize (NEAB), the Belize Council of Churches, and several other church bodies across the country, was distributed in schools, homes, businesses, and churches, and even on the streets. The aim of the petition is to garner at least 19,000 signatures, which is representative of 10 percent of registered voters necessary to trigger a referendum under the Referendum Act, Chapter 10 of the Laws of Belize.

Last Tuesday, following the counting of the signatures, NEAB sent out a press release outlining the results:

"In only six days, 70% of the required petitions to trigger a Referendum have been collected. To God be all the glory! It's a Miracle to have reached 13,000 plus signatures in just 6 days, never before attempted, much less accomplished."

But while NEAB was not successful in meeting its goal of 19,000 signatures, NEAB's Vice President Pastor Scott Stirm told the Reporter last Tuesday that the outcome is an "amazing effort and success" and, according to him, in the majority of the locations across the country almost 95 percent of persons, who walked by,

stopped in to sign the petition calling for a referendum. Something which he says is quite extraordinary.

Stirm remained optimistic that they will get the requisite number of signatures. "We did 13,000 in six days; I think we should be able to do it."

The petition for a referendum is in relation to the Cannabis and Industrial Hemp Control and Licensing Bill 2022, which passed both the House and Senate recently. The Bill seeks to provide for the control and licensing of the cannabis industry in Belize, by establishing the necessary legislative framework to govern and regulate the cultivation, processing, distribution, and delivery of cannabis products for adult use, was to officially be signed into law on Monday, April 11th the Governor-General H.E. Froyla Tzalam. The last known petition of this nature to have occurred in Belize was in February 2012 when 18,000 people signed a petition to trigger a referendum on offshore drilling. The official referendum, however, did not happen, as the Election and Boundaries had rejected 8,000 signatures on the grounds that they did not match what was in their records.

We asked Wade as to their strategy if history repeats itself. He informed that NEAB is conducting its own verification and quality-control processes to minimize the likelihood of this present petition suffering the same fate as Oceana's did close to a decade ago.



# The Righters Write

## The Right to a Fair Trial

Contributed by the Human Rights Commission

In the past weeks the Human Rights Commission of Belize, HRCB, has been actively involved in defending the human rights of Cuban nationals who have been detained and jailed in Belize. A third group of Cuban nationals are still pending a court hearing. The HRCB's actions have been met with rejection and criticism from not only government offices but from some members of the public. The fact remains, the Commission's focus is the defence of the basic human rights of persons, citizens or migrants, and that these be upheld as per the law of Belize.

Readers should note that the Constitution of Belize provides for the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms of all persons in Belize, citizen, migrant, or refugee. "All persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law", it states. In a previous article submitted to the Commission titled "Know Your Constitution", the writer stated that "PART 2 of the Constitution has 22 Sections. The heading is "Protection of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms". This is what is considered one of the most important contents of any Constitution. It protects all the human rights of citizens in any democracy. We quote from the opening of Section 3: "Whereas every person in Belize is entitled to the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual, that is to say, the right, whatever his Race, place of origin, political opinions, color, creed, or sex, but subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest, to each and all of the following, namely". and then the Section lists the rights in(a) (b) (c) and (d), life, liberty security of the person, protection of the law, freedom of conscience and expression, freedom of assembly and association, protection of family life, personal privacy, privacy of home and property. Recognition of human dignity and

protection from arbitrary deprivation of property. Each of these individual rights are dealt with in details from Section 4 to Section 17."

This same section speaks to the right to a fair trial, "(7) Any court or other authority prescribed by law for the determination of the existence or extent of any civil right or obligation shall be established by law and shall be independent and impartial; and where proceedings for such a determination are instituted by any person before such a court or other authority, the case shall be given a fair hearing within a reasonable time."

This is also a clearly defined right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 6 states that "Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law", regardless of whether they are citizens or immigrants, or refugees, or any other group for that matter. ALL human beings are entitled to this right. The Equality and Human Rights Commission explains that "You have the right to a fair and public trial or hearing if: you are charged with a criminal offence and have to go to court, or a public authority is making a decision that has an impact upon your civil rights or obligations."

It further explains that a fair and public hearing is one which "is held within a reasonable time, is heard by an independent and impartial decision-maker, gives you all the relevant information, is open to the public (although the press and public can be excluded for highly sensitive cases), allows you representation and an interpreter where appropriate, and is followed by a public decision. You also have the right to an explanation of how the court or decision-making authority reached its decision."

If a person is facing a criminal charge, that person has the right to "be presumed innocent until you are proven guilty, be told as early as possible what you are accused of, remain silent, have

enough time to prepare your case, legal aid (funding) for a lawyer if you cannot afford one and this is needed for justice to be served, attend your trial, access all the relevant information, put forward your side of the case at trial, question the main witness against you and call other witnesses, and have an interpreter, if you need one."

Persons detained for any offense have a right to due process. When that process is not upheld, their human rights are violated. This was clearly

defined in the court judgment on March 18 in the case of the first group of 7 Cuban nationals and two minors that the HRCB assisted. Their detention was found unlawful as "The applicant's detention is not authorized by law because the respondents have failed to comply with subsection 5(2)(a), (b), and (c) of the Belize Constitution. The applicants were interviewed by the police, charged, arraigned, and appeared before the Magistrate where they pled guilty to a charge under the Immigration Act and

received a removal order without the opportunity to speak with a lawyer. Much of this also occurred without the right to translation being offered to the applicants. It is not clear to this court that the applicants fully understood the legal significance of these events or the options available to them to challenge the removal order."

It is not a matter of the Commission against the government but simply a matter of the Commission defending and upholding the human rights of all persons in Belize that are

also clearly stipulated in the Constitution of Belize. We all have a right to protection under the law and that also includes the right to a fair trial.

**Disclaimer: the opinions expressed by our columnists are theirs alone, and are not necessarily reflective of the newspaper's stance on the issues touched. We believe it is critical that our columnists be allowed freedom to generate discussion through their expressions on any number of topics.**



Our National Telecom

is looking for a qualified candidate to fill the post of:

## Chief Commercial Officer

in its Commercial Division with duty station in "Belize City"

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### ABOUT DIGI

Digi owns and operates an extensive telecommunications network throughout the country of Belize in wireline, wireless and data services. The company offers and uses a wide range of products and technologies that include fixed line telephone service, fixed wireless, national and international calling services, prepaid services, an advanced LTE mobile network, international voice and data roaming, Fiber internet and data services.

### ABOUT ROLE

The Chief Commercial Officer (CCO) is responsible for the commercial strategy of the company which includes marketing, business ideation/development, sales, customer service end to end including the current thirteen (13) Retail Store Channels and a technical team for Service Operations to drive business growth and market share. He/She leads and decides on all major market communications' initiatives and is responsible for the overall customer management of the network operator.

### QUALIFICATIONS & SKILL REQUIREMENTS

- An MBA or equivalent degree
- An experienced and highly capable leader with a minimum of 10 years' experience with Sales (B2B, B2C, Carrier Sales), Marketing, Product Development, Service Operations and Customer Service working in a leadership role in Telecom or a similar industry
- Must have experience in leading a team to achieve "best practice" in commercial processes and systems
- Must possess creative, strategic, organizational and personal negotiation skills
- Must possess capacity to conceptualize as well as operationalize commercial and customer service strategies
- Must possess superior research and analytical skills to track and predict trends
- Must possess strong business knowledge, understanding of a variety of business practices, and familiarity with the company's industry
- Must have excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to persuasively sell ideas
- Must have basic financial knowledge such as P&L, Forecasting, CAPEX etc

### MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDES BUT NOT LIMITED TO

#### Sales & Marketing

- Formulate, communicate and implement the short- and long-term Marketing Strategies, Customer Service, Field Service Operations, Business Ideation/Development, and Company Communication Plans.
- Formulate, communicate and implement the Sales Strategies (direct and indirect sales channels).
- Enhance the company's sales and service position.
- Conceptualize and develop marketing channels and pricing that are customer-oriented and relationship-driven.
- Ensure the use of diverse marketing methods and tactics including advertising campaigns, public relations, internal and external marketing

#### Customer & Partner Management

- Define and monitor commercial metrics and measures.
- Take ownership of the customers' needs and the customer interfaces, making sure that all functions of the organization are aligned to meet its strategic commercial objectives.
- Ensure the installation and maintenance of residential and business customers are streamlined for efficient and effective deployment of Technicians in order to meet deliverables;
- Strengthen the carrier services line of business by maintaining good relationships, manage contract and rate negotiations with carriers to secure efficient capacity to meet the company's business needs and accelerate growth plans;

#### Staff Management & Leadership

- Coach management team to enhance overall performance at individual and team levels;
- Ensure compliance of human resources activities including but not limited to recruitment, performance management, and learning and development for the entire Commercial division;
- Succession Plan to fill the role of CCO and other key positions within the CCO division before end of contract period.
- Cultivate a customer-centric corporate culture.

### PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES:

- Strong interpersonal skills, ability to communicate and manage well at all levels of the organization and with staff.
- High level of integrity and dependability with a strong sense of urgency and results-orientation.
- Agile, collaborative, and accountable in the execution of job functions.

### ABOUT OUR OFFER

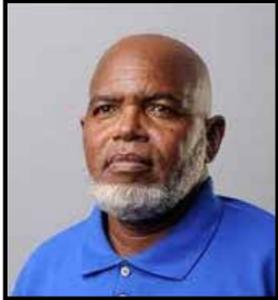
Attractive compensation and benefits package commensurate with experience and qualifications.

If you are interested in joining our team, letter of application accompanied with detailed Curriculum Vitae and contact details of three (3) recent professional references should be submitted electronically no later than **Wednesday, May 4th, 2022**, and addressed to:

**Chief Human Resources Officer, Belize Telemedia Limited**  
hr@livedigi.com

# GRASSROOTS

## Goff's Caye- One of Belize's Best Tourist Sites



By Hon. Gilroy Usher

*“ With age, comes wisdom. With travel, comes understanding ” – Sandra Lake*

Goff's Caye is small but scenic island 12 miles from Belize City. Under the Belize Coastal Management Authority its many

features include a friendly and knowledgeable staff, coconut trees and other plants that provide excellent shade, crystal clear water for a depth of 3.5 ft. with pure sand, an attractive sandbar that is unique to the island, several sheds and outdoor benches, a bar-b-q area with grill, comfortable changing rooms, and a small fee per adult visitor for the upkeep of the wonderful tourist site.

A visitor can enjoy seeing the island's flora and fauna by walking around its perimeter in

fifteen minutes. Nevertheless the facilities of Goff's Caye including a long decking area and very large swimming area can easily accommodate scores of visitors at the same

*Being much closer to Belize City than the larger and popular tourist destinations of Caye Caulker and San Pedro Town, the cost of a round trip to Goff's Caye is manageable for most families. With its size and facilities the island is also excellent for fishing, camping, retreats and meetings as well as for the celebration of birthdays, weddings, and social events.*

time.

Being much closer to Belize City than the larger and popular tourist destinations of Caye Caulker and San Pedro Town, the cost of a round trip to Goff's Caye is manageable for most families. With its size and facilities the island is also excellent for fishing, camping, retreats

and meetings as well as for the celebration of birthdays, weddings, and social events.

Congestion with buildings and traffic is not on issue on Goff's Caye. There are no houses or large buildings on island. There aren't any golf carts or other vehicles at the tourist site either. Just the sunshine and beautiful clear shallow waters for visitors to enjoy.

If there is an emergency on the island help is just a phone call away. The tourist location has excellent telephone signal. Visitors communicate with relatives and friends throughout the world 24 hours on social media with ease.

Additionally Goff's Caye is not a beautiful but isolated island in the deep blue sea. English Caye is visible about three to four miles away. On the boat trip to Goff's Caye visitors past near Stake Bank / Port Coral Tourist Resort and Caye Chapel, which are private developments. And the island is only few miles from both Caye Caulker and San Pedro. From Goff's Caye visitors can also enjoy the beautiful view of large cruise vessels and huge cargo ships making their way through the channel to as near as possible to the Port of Belize for their passengers to embark or to unload the containers.

Although it is a small island without electricity, portable water, or any permanent structures, with modern technology Goff's Caye is still one of the best vacation places for persons from all walks of life including the young, who are into music.

If the need arise most tourist vessels can provide electricity to power a few light bulbs, a sound system, or a cooking device. And with modern technology many of those appliances can be operated with batteries for a number of hours.

This writer and family visited Goff's Caye Easter, and it was a really enjoyable vacation.

If your family would like to have an enjoyable time in Belize as tourist in your country or as visitors from abroad, Goff's Caye is one of the best places to have that wonderful experience.

**Disclaimer: the opinions expressed by our columnists are theirs alone, and are not necessarily reflective of the newspaper's stance on the issues touched. We believe it is critical that our columnists be allowed freedom to generate discussion through their expressions on any number of topics.**



Belize Electric Co. Ltd.  
1 Caracol St.  
San Ignacio Town  
Cayo District  
Belize, Central America  
Telephone: 501-824-3016  
Facsimile: 501-824-4512

### PRESS RELEASE

The Belize Electric Company Limited (BECOL), in collaboration with the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO), the Department of Environment (DOE), and the Ministry of Health (MOH) will host a virtual public discussion for communities downstream of the BECOL hydroelectric facilities and the general public on Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The virtual public meeting will take place from 2pm to 4:30pm and will be live-streamed on the Government of Belize Press Office Facebook page, the Love FM Facebook page, and on Love TV. This interactive discussion is aimed at educating and informing residents and stakeholders on issues such as the Early Warning System (EWS) and related emergency procedures, mercury-in-fish data, water quality of the Macal, and other topics that may be of concern to stakeholders.

This exercise is an ongoing effort by BECOL/NEMO/DOE/MOH to inform and educate the public and to safeguard the wellbeing of the communities along the Macal River. All stakeholders and the general public are encouraged to tune in to the live broadcast.

### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The U.S. Embassy Belmopan is seeking eligible and qualified applicants for the following position:

**Position Name:** Mail Room Clerk  
**Vacancy number:** Belmopan-2022-09  
**Closing date:** April 23rd, 2022

Interested applicants must submit their application via the Electronic Recruitment Application (ERA) system, a web-based system. To view and apply for this vacancy, visit the ERA site at: <https://erajobs.state.gov/dos-era/blz/vacancysearch/searchVacancies.hms>

Please visit the Embassy's website for instructions on how to apply via the ERA system: <https://bz.usembassy.gov/embassy/jobs/>

**Note 1:** Resumes will not be considered. Candidates must note all work experience when completing the ERA application. Insufficient or incomplete information will result in an ineligible application.

**Note 2:** Candidates must submit applicable required documentation by the closing date of this announcement. Failure to provide the required documentation will result in an ineligible application.

### Notice of Dissolution

Notice is hereby given that **PALISADE GLOBAL INVESTMENTS LTD., No. 135,888** has been dissolved and struck off the International Business Companies Register with effect from the **9th day of April, 2022.**

**MICHAEL KANEVSKY**  
Liquidator



# STRENGTHENING OF TAX ADMINISTRATION PROJECT

## REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

**Consultancy Firm to prepare and implement a Taxpayer Account Model to allow for fast taxpayer centric overview**

**Institution:** The Ministry of Finance (MOF)

**Country:** Belize

**Project:** Strengthening of Tax Administration (STA)

**Abstract:** Consulting Services – Consultancy Firm to prepare and implement a Taxpayer Account Model to allow for fast taxpayer centric overview

**Loan No.:** 4839/OC-BL

**Deadline:** April 29th, 2022, Belize Local Time

The Government of Belize (GOB) has received financing from the **Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)** for the execution of a five-year tax modernization project entitled “**Strengthening of Tax Administration**” (BL-L1031). Through this project, the Belize Tax Service Department (BTSD) has procured a **Modern Integrated Tax Administration System (the Revenue Management System (RMS))** and is presently in the implementation process. This new system will be used in the management of the **Belize Tax Administration**.

The consulting services (“**the services**”) includes the contracting of a Consultancy Firm for a period of six (6) months. The main activity of the consultancy includes:

1. To assess the current situation of BTDS taxpayer account in Integrated Tax Administration System (ITAS).
2. Develop a model for a new taxpayer account in ITAS. The model should specify the entities dealing with the taxpayer account, the information that flows to and from the account, and the transactions that will be allowed with the taxpayer account (e.g., debt from tax returns, debts from refunds, debts from adjustments, debts from audits, debts from payment by instalment agreements, credits from regular payment, credits for adjustments in appeals cases, credit from payments of payment by instalment agreements, etc.). The account will be organized by Taxpayer Identification Numbers (TIN), tax type and period
3. Define the procedures for taxpayer access to his account via Internet
4. Define which transactions taxpayers would be allowed to perform through the Internet
5. Define the changes to be made in ITAS for the introduction of the new model
6. Prepare the taxpayer account manual
7. Implement the new taxpayer centric current account
8. Train BTS staff in the new taxpayer account design and operation

**The Consultancy Firm should have a minimum of five (5) years’ relevant working experience in the following areas:**

- **Designing modern taxpayer account**
- **Preparing taxpayer account procedures and manuals**
- **Training enforcement agents in taxpayer account;**

As well as minimum of five (5) relevant working experience in enforcement of arrears payment and design of modern taxpayer current account. In addition, the Consulting firm should have at least three (3) years of previous experience conducting consultancies to countries implementing modern taxpayer accounts.

The Ministry of Finance now invites eligible Consultancy Firms (“**Consultants**”) to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested eligible Consultants must submit an Expression of Interest providing information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services (description of similar assignments specifying start and end dates of assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills, etc.).

**Expression of Interest package should contain:**

- (i) Document explaining interest, experience, and competence of the consulting firm.
- (ii) Firms experience in the assignment of similar consultancy services during the past five years.  
Description of similar assignments specifying start and end dates of assignments.
- (iii) Firms evidence of past jobs. (These includes letters from the respective client on the job (s) carried out, or a copy of

contract or agreement with the client including copy of the TOR).

(iv) Two references

(v) **Proof of nationality:** Copy of certificate of incorporation, information of shareholders of company specifying the shares owned by each respective shareholder of the company and a copy of documentation of nationality of the shareholders of the company.

**Additional documentation required for National Consultants:**

(vi) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from Belize Company Registry

(vii) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from the Social Security Board

(viii) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from the Belize Tax Service

(ix) Copy of Current Trade License

The total estimated contract price for this consultancy inclusive of taxes is **US \$133,555.00**.

A Consulting firm will be selected in accordance with the Quality and Cost - Based Selection (QCBS) procurement method set out in the Inter-American Development Bank: ***Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank*** (GN-2350-15, May 2019 edition) and is open to all eligible consultants as defined in the IDB policies. The selection of the successful firm will be based on a competitive process among short-listed firms that takes into account the quality of the proposal and the cost of the service. **Only the short-listed firms will be notified and will be asked to submit a technical and price proposal.**

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications. For the purpose of establishing the short list, the nationality of a firm is that of the country in which it is legally incorporated or constituted and in the case of Joint Venture, the nationality of the firm appointed to represent it.

**Further information** can be obtained at the address below during office hours **Monday to Friday 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** Expressions of interest must be delivered via direct mail or e-mail at the address indicated below by **4:00 p.m. (Belize local time) on Friday April 29th, 2022.**

Interested eligible Consultants are asked to submit their expression of interest via e-mail to [Michelle.Longsworth@bts.gov.bz](mailto:Michelle.Longsworth@bts.gov.bz) marked **STAP-Consultancy Firm to prepare and implement a Taxpayer Account Model to allow for fast taxpayer centric overview** in the subject header, or submit on or before **4:00 p.m. (Belize local time) on Friday April 29th, 2022** to the following address:

**Director General  
Belize Tax Service  
Strengthening of Tax Administration Project  
Charles Bartlett Hyde Building  
Mahogany Street, Belize City  
Tel: 501-222-5114**

**For clarifications kindly contact:**

**Procurement Officer  
Project Executing Unit  
Strengthening of Tax Administration Project  
Charles Bartlett Hyde Building  
Mahogany Street, Belize City  
Tel: 501-222-5114/E-mail: [Ian.Ramirez@mof.gov.bz](mailto:Ian.Ramirez@mof.gov.bz)**

# Russia-Ukraine conflict puts fragile global trade recovery at risk

Cont'd from pg. 4

dragging down the regional average. The low level of imports in

for Least-Developed Countries (LDCs).

The year 2021 saw a sharp rebound in trade volumes after

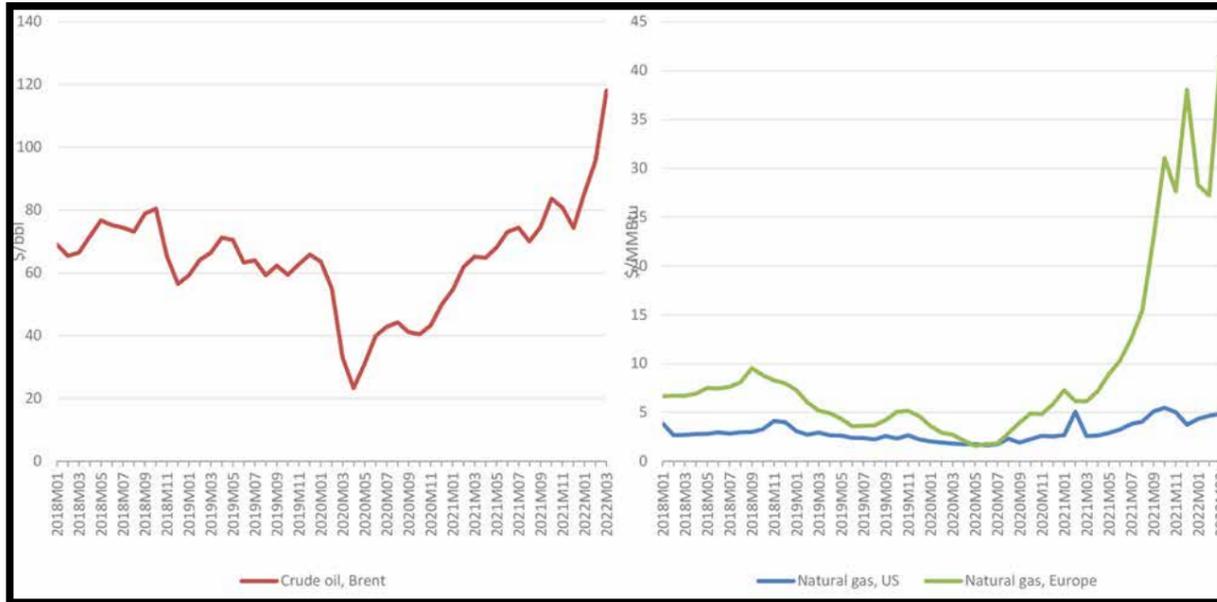
in Europe, -12.0% in the CIS, 2.5% in Africa, 11.7% in the Middle East and 2.0% in Asia. LDCs

Trade costs should rise in the short run as a result of sanctions, export restrictions, energy costs and

The dollar value of trade in fuels and mining products was up 59%, agricultural products were up 19%, and manufactures were up 21%.

Chart 4 shows estimated year-on-year and 24-month growth rates for selected categories of manufactured goods in 2021. Quarterly developments show steady year-on-year growth in certain products (iron and steel, chemicals, integrated circuits) and weaker growth for others (clothing, machinery). Trade values for pharmaceuticals, computers and integrated circuits were actually higher in 2021 than before the pandemic, probably due to high demand

the previous year. Western sanctions on Russian businesses and individuals are likely to have a strong effect on commercial services trade. Russia is a net services importer, with imports in 2021 valued at US\$ 74 billion and exports totalling US\$ 55 billion. Russia is ranked 24th among services exporters (13th excluding intra-EU trade), with a share in world trade of 0.9%. It is ranked 19th among importers (11th excluding intra-EU) with a 1.4% share in world trade. In 2019, the European Union accounted for more than 42% of Russia's services imports and 31.1% of its services exports. In the same year Russia also sourced services



Monthly average prices for crude oil and natural gas, January 2018 – March 2022

Africa is partly due to unexpected declines in the second half of 2021, which are projected forward into the future.

Export volumes show slow growth in most regions, including the CIS, since Russia is still able to export fuels. If the situation were to change, we might see stronger export volume growth in other fuel producing regions.

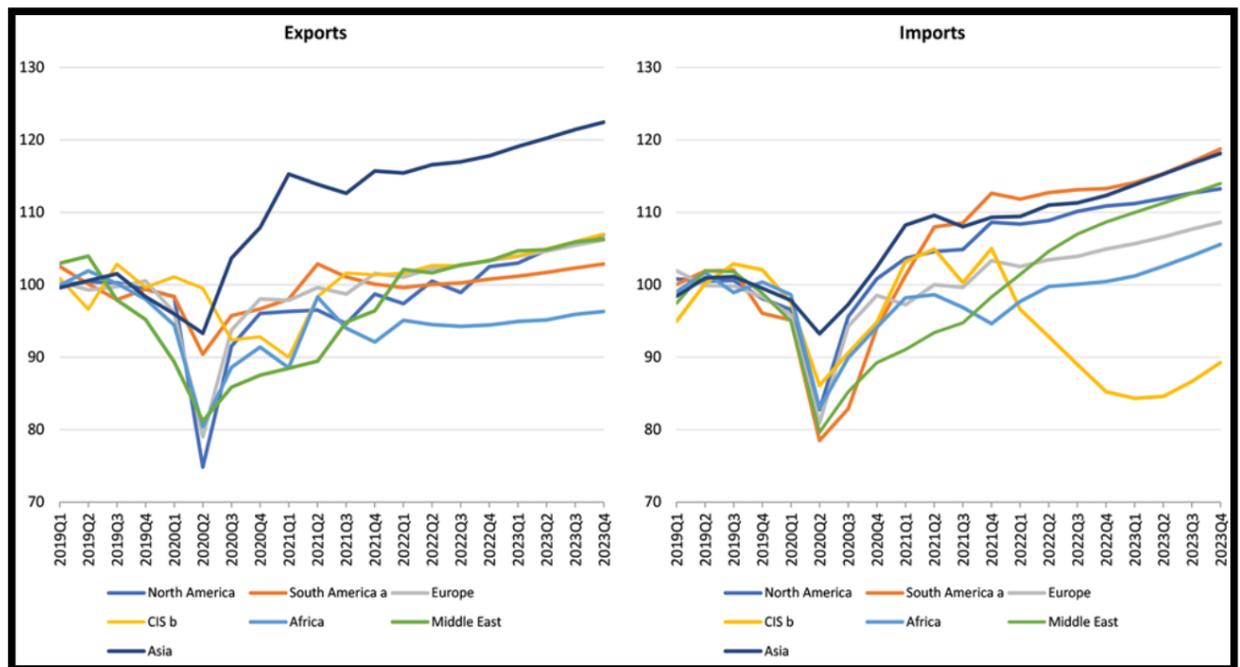
Table 1 summarizes annual merchandise trade volume growth since 2018 and projections for 2022 and 2023. Annual volume indices sometimes differ slightly from the quarterly indices due to differences in methodology, but they generally tell the same story. In addition to the standard WTO regions, the table also includes experimental forecasts

the pandemic-induced slump of 2020, but growth might have been stronger without recurring waves of COVID-19 during the year. Every region had export growth below the world average of 9.8% except for Asia, which saw its exports increase by 13.8%. The situation was reversed on the import side, where North America, South America, the CIS and Asia all recorded above average growth.

The forecast foresees 2022 export volume growth of 3.4% in North America, -0.3% in South America, 2.9% in Europe, 4.9% in the CIS, 1.4% in Africa, 11.0% in the Middle East, and 2.0% for Asia. It also anticipates import growth of 3.9% in North America, 4.8% in South America, 3.7%

should see their export and import volumes increase by 3.5% and 6.6% respectively in

disruptions in transport due to COVID-19. Trade developments in value terms



Merchandise exports and imports by region, 2019Q1-2023Q4

The WTO's trade forecast is released in conjunction with annual merchandise and commercial services trade statistics in current U.S. dollar terms. These figures can be downloaded from the WTO's online database at stats.wto.org. Merchandise trade growth in nominal terms diverged strongly from growth in (real) volume terms in 2021 due to strong price fluctuations over the course of the year. World merchandise trade as measured by the average of exports and imports rose 26% in 2021, which implies that export and import prices jumped 15% for the year on average.

for COVID-19 vaccines and increased prevalence of remote working. In contrast, trade in automotive products was up 14% year-on-year in 2021 but down 4% compared to 2019.

World trade in commercial services was up 15% year-on-year in 2021, boosted by demand for transport services, which grew 33% (Chart 5). Growth of travel exports was positive but it remained weak, as travel restrictions were only partially eased during the year. The category Other services, which includes financial and business services, was up 12% compared to

from Turkey (7.7%), the United Kingdom (5.1%), the United States (4.0%), China (3.7%), and Switzerland (3.3%), among others. The United States (6.5%), China (6.2%), Switzerland (6.1%), and the United Kingdom (4.8%) were main non-EU destinations for Russian services exports.

Prior to the pandemic, travel/tourism and air transport services were the largest traded services by Russia, accounting for 46% of its exports and 36% of its imports. These services, already hit hard by the pandemic,

Cont'd on pg. 22

**RF&G LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY LTD.**

Date: April 20, 2022

Sustenes Canuto Alpuche of *Chan Chen Village, Corozal District, Belize C.A.* having made written declaration that Policy A3103485 under RF&G Life Insurance Company Ltd has been lost and having made request to the Company for a duplicate of the Policy, notice is hereby given that unless objection is raised within one month of the date herein, the requested duplicate policy will be issued.

**RF&G LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY LTD.**

Date: April 20, 2022

Santiago Hernandez of *Lomas Del Rodeo, Benque Viejo, Cayo District, Belize C.A.* having made written declaration that Policy 5400000580 under RF&G Life Insurance Company Ltd has been lost and having made request to the Company for a duplicate of the Policy, notice is hereby given that unless objection is raised within one month of the date herein, the requested duplicate policy will be issued.

# Russia-Ukraine conflict puts fragile global trade recovery at risk

Cont'd from pg. 21

may be heavily affected by economic sanctions. Ireland is exposed due to the prominent role of the country in operational leasing of aircraft. Overall, Russian payments for operational leasing of aircraft, boats, etc. from the EU reached \$3.9 billion in 2019, of which \$2.6 billion were for leasing services from Ireland. In 2020, Russian operational leasing imports fell 44% due to pandemic-related travel restrictions.

Intellectual property services were the third biggest category of services imported by Russia. The European Union, Switzerland, the United States, the United Kingdom, the Republic of Korea, and Japan together provided 96% of Russia's imports in 2019, worth some US\$ 6.6 billion. This includes fees for the use of patents, outputs from research and development, industrial processes/designs, franchises and trademarks, among others.

Detailed quarterly and annual statistics on merchandise and commercial services trade can be downloaded from stats.wto.org. A statistical supplement showing country ranks and shares in world trade can be downloaded here.

Supplemental Indicators

The WTO tracks a number of timely, high-frequency trade-related indicators to better understand trends in merchandise and commercial services trade. A selection of these is presented below to provide additional context to the trade statistics and forecast.

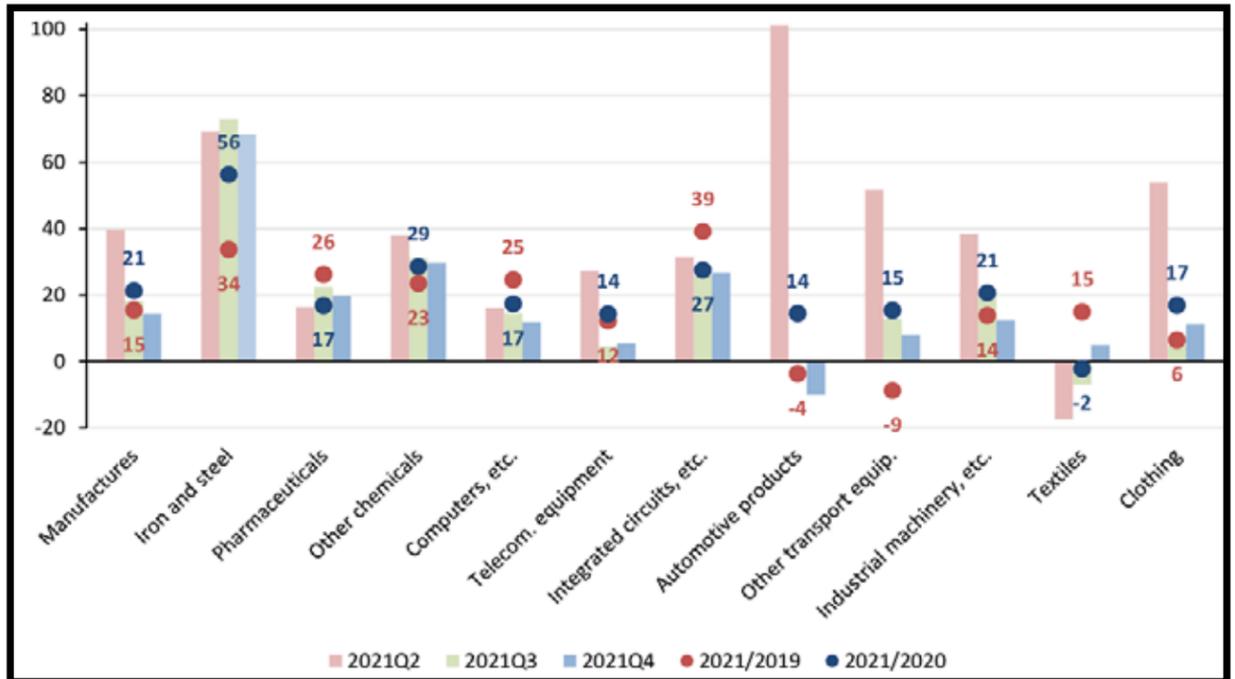
The latest RWI/ISL container throughput index showed seasonally-adjusted throughput declining 3.6 points to 117.1 in February (Chart 6). The index incorporates container data on 94 international ports, accounting for 64 percent of the global total. Chinese ports saw

the biggest decline in March, but European ports also registered a substantial decline. The data could be influenced by seasonal adjustments, but it could also reflect the early stages of the conflict in Ukraine. The fact that the shipping rates have been steady or declining at the same time suggest that the dip in throughput represents falling demand for shipping services rather than reduced supply.

Purchasing managers' indices (PMIs) from IHS-Markit are based on surveys of hundreds of businesses in more than 40 countries. These are aggregated into a global index and several sub-indices, with values greater than 50 indicating expansion and values less than 50 denoting contraction (Chart 7). The Headline Global PMI (53.0) remained above the threshold value of 50 in March, suggesting that manufacturing output may still be expanding but at a reduced pace. Meanwhile, New Export Orders fell to 48.2, its lowest level since July 2020, signalling slower growth or possibly contraction in world trade. Supply chains have been hampered in recent months by long delivery times and shortages of production inputs such as semiconductors. The indices shown in the right panel of Chart 7 suggest that these issues are not yet resolved. A rise in input and output prices and an uptick in delivery times in March 2022 suggest continued supply-demand imbalances that could contribute to inflation in the coming months.

Finally, Chart 8 below shows the daily volume and average tone of news reports containing phrases related to economic activity, as monitored by the GDELT Project Summary Service. Although the intensity of reporting on these issues remained flat in recent weeks, the tone took a negative turn in late February. The fact that that this downturn

coincided with the start of hostilities in Ukraine suggest that the conflict may be damaging



Year-on-year growth in manufactured goods trade, 2021

**CAREER OPPORTUNITY**

**Belize Sugar Industries Ltd.**  
Invites qualified and self-motivated individuals to submit applications for the post of:  
**Financial Planning & Analysis Supervisor**  
Tower Hill, Orange Walk

The **Financial Planning & Analysis Supervisor** should be knowledgeable of management and financial reporting and data analysis. This position will also drive a culture of continuous improvement within the Finance team to improve KPIs, planning and forecasting, return on investment and reporting systems and processes.

**Qualifications and Experience:**

- Bachelor's Degree in Finance, Accounting, Statistics, Business Management or related field
- 5 years work experience in Financial or Accounting related field
- Possession of MA, CPA, ACCA or FP&A certification is an asset

**Skills and Competencies:**

- Proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite
- SAP or other ERP system experience
- On top of Business, Industry & Economic trends
- Self-motivated with exceptional work ethic
- Proactive, organized and dependable
- Strong analytical skills with desire to continuously learn, change and adapt
- Good interpersonal skills, team oriented

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

- Creating, updating & maintaining financial models and detailed forecasts of the Company's operations
- Preparation of financial statements for management and statutory reporting
- Prepare management information including variance analysis, sensitivities and commentary based on monthly financial reports.
- Assist with the preparation and review of the annual operating budget, monthly financial planning and analysis for consolidation into the annual master budget.
- Assist with development & review of capital projects, cost saving/efficiency initiatives & continuous improvement programs
- Review operating reports and participate in management discussions to drive operational excellence.
- Assist in coordinating year-end audit
- Preparing other internal reports for executive leadership.

**Letter of application accompanied by a Résumé, Police Record, recent transcript and two letters of reference should be submitted to:**

Human Resources Manager  
P.O. Box 29, Tower Hill, Orange Walk  
Or email  
HR.Belize@asr-group.com

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION FORM AND ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS IS MAY 6, 2022.**



**Background:**

The Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT) is a statutory organization established in 1996 as a Trust Fund under the Protected Areas Conservation Trust Act, No.15 of 1995. PACT contributes to the financing, sourced nationally and internationally, of the Belize National Protected Areas System - a system that is managed by Government Agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations, and Community Based Organizations.

**Position Description:**

The Accountant is responsible for applying the principles of accounting by recording all financial transactions, analyzing accounting data and preparing applicable financial reports by compiling information, preparing profit and loss statements, assist in audit and statutory reporting and utilizing appropriate accounting control procedures in the Finance and Accounting Department of PACT. The position is also responsible for supporting the budget preparation and monitoring processes and to provide direct oversight for the collection and tracking of revenues.

**Core Competency Requirements:**

- Bachelor's degree in accounting (Minimum)
- QuickBooks certification is required
- Relevant qualification and certification are an asset – Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) (Preferred)
- 7 or more years of working experience in accounting is required
- Previous experience in auditing is required

Remuneration: Compensation package commensurate with qualification and experience within a designated salary scale.

The full job description is available upon request. Packages must be submitted electronically and must include signed application letter, resume, certified copies of academic certificates, current police record (receipt can be submitted initially) and a list of two professional references (names and contact information only) no later than Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup> 2022. Only complete packages will be processed. Packages should be addressed to:

Executive Director  
[ed@pactbelize.org](mailto:ed@pactbelize.org) with \_\_\_\_\_ copy to  
[hramanager@pactbelize.org](mailto:hramanager@pactbelize.org)  
 Re: Accountant Vacancy

*PACT is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate against protected characteristics (gender, age, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnicity, religion, disability). PACT is not liable for any costs incurred by applicants in submission of their application.*

**EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

The U.S. Embassy Belmopan is seeking eligible and qualified applicants for the following position:

**Position Name:** Supply Clerk  
**Vacancy number:** Belmopan-2022-11  
**Closing date:** April 23rd, 2022

Interested applicants must submit their application via the Electronic Recruitment Application (ERA) system, a web-based system. To view and apply for this vacancy, visit the ERA site at: <https://erajobs.state.gov/dos-era/blz/vacancysearch/searchVacancies.hms>

Please visit the Embassy's website for instructions on how to apply via the ERA system: <https://bz.usembassy.gov/embassy/jobs/>

**Note 1:** Resumes will not be considered. Candidates must note all work experience when completing the ERA application. Insufficient or incomplete information will result in an ineligible application.

**Note 2:** Candidates must submit applicable required documentation by the closing date of this announcement. Failure to provide the required documentation will result in an ineligible application.

**EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

The U.S. Embassy Belmopan is seeking eligible and qualified applicants for the following position:

**Position Name:** Supervisory General Services Assistant  
**Vacancy number:** Belmopan-2022-10  
**Closing date:** April 23rd, 2022

Interested applicants must submit their application via the Electronic Recruitment Application (ERA) system, a web-based system. To view and apply for this vacancy, visit the ERA site at: <https://erajobs.state.gov/dos-era/blz/vacancysearch/searchVacancies.hms>

Please visit the Embassy's website for instructions on how to apply via the ERA system: <https://bz.usembassy.gov/embassy/jobs/>

**Note 1:** Resumes will not be considered. Candidates must note all work experience when completing the ERA application. Insufficient or incomplete information will result in an ineligible application.

**Note 2:** Candidates must submit applicable required documentation by the closing date of this announcement. Failure to provide the required documentation will result in an ineligible application.



For more information or appointments contact us at 630-8703 or visit us on Cemetery Road next to Rogers Stadium.

 **Anodyne Therapy**  
**Center of Belize**

**Now Open:**

Experiencing any of the following symptoms?

- Arthritis
- Bursitis
- Tendonitis
- Carpal tunnel syndrome
- Sprains
- Slow healing wounds
- Diabetic ulcers
- Stress Fractures
- Diabetic peripheral neuropathy  
 (loss of sensation or feeling)

**Anodyne Therapy can help you.**

**How?** Anodyne is a unique therapy that harnesses the healing power of infrared light. It emits special wavelengths of energy which dramatically increase circulation to injury sites and areas of chronic pain. The result is rapid relief of discomfort and pain.



# STRENGTHENING OF TAX ADMINISTRATION PROJECT

## REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

### Consulting Services to design and implement an Internal Control Model including the implementation of a system to support internal control processes

**Institution:** The Ministry of Finance (MOF)  
**Country:** Belize  
**Project:** Strengthening of Tax Administration (STA)  
**Abstract:** Consulting Services to design and implement an Internal Control Model including the implementation of a system to support internal control processes

**Loan No.:** 4839/OC-BL  
**Deadline:** April 26th, 2022, Belize Local Time

The Government of Belize (GOB) has received financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for the execution of a five-year tax modernization project entitled "Strengthening of Tax Administration" (BL-L1031). Through this project, the Belize Tax Service Department (BTSD) has procured a Modern Integrated Tax Administration System (the Revenue Management System (RMS) and is presently in the implementation process. This new system will be used in the management of the Belize Tax Administration.

BTSD staff integrity is a concern for its management. The BTSD strategic plan indicates that: "Corruption has devastating effects on the integrity of any organization. At the BTSD the effects would be particularly harmful as corrupt activities could compromise the collection of revenue; impede tax compliance; negatively impact the image of the Agency and reduce the public's confidence in the Agency's ability to objectively administer taxes.

As such, an Internal Audit Division will be executed to conduct investigations into alleged employee misconduct and ensure that commensurate disciplinary actions are taken when staffers are found culpable. Additionally, a new Employee Code of Conduct will be drafted, which will be instructive on the standards of Professional Conduct. Given that partnerships with the public are important in combating corruption, Outreach Programs will be utilized to engage civil society and to aid in deterring and reporting immoral activities."

Management is also concerned about internal audit. They have identified the need for regular reviews the compliance with the department's regulations, operations, procedures, and controls and if they comply with the international goods practices and operate effectively.

So, BTSD is looking for reorganizing its Internal Audit Division into an Internal Control Division with the view of improving both, the control of staff integrity and the internal audit. This consultancy is intended to address this concern.

Consequently, the BTSD will explore the introduction of a Risk Management Plan (RMP) to properly respond to the risks identified on a timely basis, to minimize overall compliance burden for both the taxpayers and the tax administration. As an important aspect of the RMP, risk mitigating strategies will be proposed for application against potential and existing risks. The plan will highlight all areas of risks including risk-based assessments, risk-based audits, risk-based sector and taxpayer segmentation, compliance risks (registration, filing, reporting and payments) and international risks. Risk mitigation reduces the extent of exposure and ensures that the strategic objectives are achieved."

Management is also concerned about internal audit. They have identified the need for regular reviews the compliance with the department's regulations, operations, procedures, and controls and if they comply with the international goods practices and operate effectively.

So, BTSD is looking for reorganizing its Internal Audit Division into an Internal Control Division with the view of improving both, the control of staff integrity and the internal audit. This consultancy is intended to address this concern.

The consulting services ("the services") includes the contracting of a Consulting Firm for a period of eight (8) months is to design and implement an Internal Control Model including the implementation of a system to support internal control processes. The main activity of the consultancy includes:

- 1 Prepare the action plan for implementation of the new Internal Control function includes:**
  - a. Detailed project, its outcomes and success indicators
  - b. Intended results and their justification
  - c. The consultancy risk assessment and mitigation
  - d. Cost and other detailed resource requirements, if necessary
  - e. Schedule for implementation
- 2 Carry out an assessment**
  - a. Review BTSD current practices and recent events regarding Internal audit and integrity investigation
  - b. Review BTSD Internal Audit Division organization, staff, and legal framework
  - c. Review the BTSD current regulations, operations, procedures, and controls with a view to prepare internal audit and integrity investigation plans
  - d. Review BTSD compliance with the new ITAS procedures
  - e. Review recent cases of BTSD staff integrity issues
  - f. Interview relevant stakeholders to determine the general perception on the BTSD staff integrity
- 3 Draft Internal Control Model**
  - a. Outline the guidelines and policies to the implementation and operation of the BTSD Internal Control Model including internal audit and integrity investigations
  - b. Define the Internal Control procedures inclusive case selection and processing
  - c. Define the necessary changes in, or queries to ITAS to provide information on potential integrity deviations and for case selection
- 4 Design and implement the BTSD Internal Audit organizational structure**
  - a. Propose the organizational structure of the BTSD Internal Division including the internal audit and integrity investigation units
  - b. Prepare the job descriptions, including competencies, for staff of the BTSD Internal Audit Division
  - c. Estimate the necessary HR for the unit
  - a. Define the required BTSD Internal Control staff skills, knowledge, and abilities,
  - b. Define the requirements for the Internal Control staff training
  - c. Train the Internal Control Division staff
- 5 Development of the Internal Control Manuals, handbooks, and Code of Conduct**
  - a. Draft the Internal audit manual
  - b. Draft the integrity investigation manual
  - c. Draft the necessary handbooks for both areas
  - d. Draft the BTSD staff Code of Conduct
  - e. The Internal Audit manual should include at least:
    - i. The Internal Audit mission and strategies
    - ii. The Internal Audit procedures
    - iii. The Internal Audit organizational structure as part of the Internal Control Division
    - iv. The job descriptions for the Internal Audit staff

- v. The estimation of Internal Audit staff by function
  - vi. The applications/software needs.
  - vii. The Internal Audit's performance indicators and targets
- f. The Integrity Investigation manual should include at least:**
- i. The Integrity Investigation mission and strategies
  - ii. The Integrity investigation procedures
  - iii. The Integrity Investigation organizational structure as part of the Internal Control Division
  - iv. The job descriptions for the Integrity Investigation staff
  - v. The estimation of Integrity Investigation staff by function
  - vi. The Integrity Investigation applications/software needs.
  - vii. The Integrity Investigation's performance indicators and targets

#### 6 Execute dissemination sensitization workshops on the Internal Control model and manuals, including Internal Audit and Integrity Investigations

- a. Deliver seminar for the BRS managers
- b. Deliver seminars for the Internal Control staff
- c. Deliver seminars for the BTSD staff
- d. Deliver seminars to other authorities
- e. Deliver seminars for main stakeholders
- f. Train the Internal Audit Staff
- g. Train the Integrity Investigation Staff

The consulting firm should have a minimum of five (5) years' experience in similar assignment. In addition, the consulting firm should have a minimum of five (5) years specific experience in the following:

- Organizational development and design
- Development of internal audit and staff integrity investigation systems
- Development of internal audit and staff integrity investigation organizations
- Development of internal audit and staff integrity investigation procedures and manuals
- Job analysis and job evaluation
- Training needs analysis, and;
- Staff training capacity

The firm will need to have or demonstrate expertise in internal audit and integrity investigation, communication and interpersonal skills, business Strategy (supporting business and organizational goals), Presentation and facilitation skills, flexibility and adaptability, time management skills, fluency in written and spoken English is essential, and highly motivated and committed. As well as have knowledge and experience working in Belize and or the Caribbean environment in a similar assignment.

The Ministry of Finance now invites eligible Consulting Firms ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested eligible Consultants must submit an Expression of Interest providing information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services (description of similar assignments specifying start and end dates of assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills, etc.). **The term "consultant" means a legally established professional consulting firm or an entity that may provide the services.**

#### Expression of Interest package should contain:

- (i) Document explaining interest, experience, and competence of the consulting firm.
- (ii) Firms experience in the assignment of similar consultancy services during the past five years. Description of similar assignments specifying start and end dates of assignments.
- (iii) Firms evidence of past jobs. (These includes letters from the respective client on the job (s) carried out, or a copy of contract or agreement with the client including copy of the TOR).
- (iv) Two references
- (v) **Proof of nationality:** Copy of certificate of incorporation, information of shareholders of company specifying the shares owned by each respective shareholder of the company and a copy of documentation of nationality of the shareholders of the company.

#### Additional documentation required for National Consultants:

- (vi) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from Belize Company Registry
- (vii) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from the Social Security Board
- (viii) Copy of Certificate of Good Standing from the Belize Tax Service
- (ix) Copy of Current Trade License

#### The total estimated contract price for this consultancy inclusive of taxes is US \$ 319,805.00

Consultants will be selected in accordance with the with the Quality and Cost - Based Selection (QCBS) procurement method set out in the Inter-American Development Bank: **Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank** (GN-2350-15, May 2019 edition) and is open to all eligible consultants as defined in the IDB policies. The selection of the successful firm will be based on a competitive process among short-listed firms that takes into account the quality of the proposal and the cost of the service. **Only the short-listed firms will be notified and will be asked to submit a technical and price proposal.**

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications. For the purpose of establishing the short list, the nationality of a firm is that of the country in which it is legally incorporated or constituted and in the case of Joint Venture, the nationality of the firm appointed to represent it.

**Further information** can be obtained at the address below during office hours **Monday to Friday 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** Expressions of interest must be delivered via direct mail or e-mail at the address indicated below by **3:30 p.m. (Belize local time) on Tuesday April 26th, 2022.**

Interested consulting firms are asked to submit their expression of interest via e-mail to [Michelle.Longsworth@bts.gov.bz](mailto:Michelle.Longsworth@bts.gov.bz) marked **STAP- Consulting firm to design and implement an Internal Control Model including the implementation of a system to support internal control processes** in the subject header, or submit on or before **3:30 p.m. (Belize local time) on Tuesday April 26th, 2022** to the following address:

**Director General**  
**Belize Tax Service**  
**Strengthening of Tax Administration Project**  
**Charles Bartlett Hyde Building**  
**Mahogany Street, Belize City**  
**Tel: 501-222-5114**

**For clarifications kindly contact:**

**Procurement Officer**  
**Project Executing Unit**  
**Strengthening of Tax Administration Project**  
**Charles Bartlett Hyde Building**  
**Mahogany Street, Belize City**  
**Tel: 501-222-5114/E-mail: [Ian.Ramirez@mof.gov.bz](mailto:Ian.Ramirez@mof.gov.bz)**