



BELIZE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

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BCCI calls on GOB and Unions to Urgently Settle Outstanding Issues in ‘Good Faith’

- For Immediate Release-

The Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) notes with great concern that the present standoff between the Government of Belize (GoB) and the Joint Public Sector Unions (“Unions”)—if left to continue on its current trajectory—will add more strain to an economy already under severe stress.

Belize’s economy declined by more than 14% last year, and with forecasts estimating only 2% recovery for the Belizean economy in 2021, the BCCI cautions against either side taking actions that could worsen that dismal outlook, following the steepest recession this country has seen in its modern history. These economic numbers represent people’s jobs, livelihoods, household incomes, and the overall social welfare of our communities.

As we stated earlier this year, while “the economy may need the preservation of as much spending power as possible [to help in the speed of the recovery]” at the same time “it must also be acknowledged that Belize’s fiscal space is especially constrained.” These are inescapable realities, the solutions to which cannot be found if negotiations break down.

To that end, the BCCI, whose vision is geared towards “promoting economic vitality and quality of life in Belize,” calls on both the Government and the Unions to return to the negotiating table so as to resolve the differences and find solutions that not only “do no further harm” to an already devastated economy but that in fact address its long-developing ills with a view to bringing Belize back to real and sustainable growth. The BCCI has been engaging with the leaders of both sides with the hope of bringing closure to the impasse and believes that there is still room for feasible solutions if the negotiations continue in good faith. The BCCI remains ready and willing to assist in the mediation of such settlement.

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