NATIONAL SECURITY

AND DEFENCE STRATEGY

2017 | 2020

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Mandate

The global security environment is faced with a complex set of threats that, to a large extent, is common to both the Central American and Caribbean regions. By extension, Belize is faced with similar threats to our national security emanating from local and foreign actors. The most troubling are threats to our sovereignty and territorial integrity, our prosperity, and law and order.

Over the past year the nation and, indeed the world, bore witness to the Republic of Guatemala's claim that it possesses sovereignty to parts of our territory. This is despite the demarcation executed by the British and Guatemalan Boundary Commissioner in the 1859 Treaty which clearly shows what comprise the 8867sq miles of Belizean territory – a demarcation that has since been observed and accepted in published maps and State practice. The Government of Belize is particularly concerned about the activities of the Guatemalan Authorities along the Sarstoon River in Southern Belize. The Government of Belize has been calling for the Republic of Guatemala and the Organization of American States (OAS) to join the effort to develop confidence building measures for the Sarstoon River. Guatemala has resisted this but Belize will continue to insist since such an agreement is absolutely necessary for citizens from both sides to co-exist in a fashion of good neighborliness pending a final resolution of Guatemala's claim to Belize.

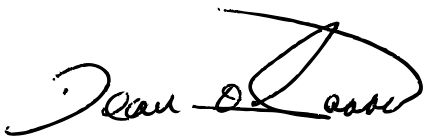
The Government of Belize must also continue to provide the enabling environment for a prosperous and stable Belize. One such way is to strengthen governance structures and develop a strong market-based economy that will provide for a better standard of living for Belizeans. We are very mindful of the fact that for this to happen we must protect our natural resources. While our green forested areas are protected under law for their ecological diversity of rich flora and fauna that provides a multiplicity of vital benefits for Belizeans and Guatemalans alike, the border area referred to as the Adjacency Zone has become increasingly dangerous with the illegal harvesting of our natural resources and the increase of armed civilians engaged in transnational criminal activities with no respect for law enforcement authorities.

Law and order continues to be a subject of concern for Belize. It is expected that arising out of this strategy will be action points to better incorporate technology, forensics and a strengthened justice system into the efforts to improve law and order. There will have to be an integrated approach to provide the capacities necessary to address the wide range of challenges facing our small nation.

Prioritization and making strategic choices will be necessary to work within the economic framework of the budgetary space to maximize the benefits of all interventions.

It is our sincere hope that the National Security and Defence Strategy (NSDS) will serve to provide guidance to the whole of society as we combine our collective effort to ensure Belize's security. It was pleasing to note the wide range of consultations that was conducted and that influenced the contents of this Strategy. We must now ensure that stakeholders are kept abreast of the implementation of this Strategy. In this regard, Cabinet Ministers, Government ministries, departments, and statutory bodies are expected to critically examine this document and take necessary actions, where practical, for its implementation.

On behalf of the Government and people of Belize, I take this opportunity to thank all of you who participated in the process of developing this NSDS. Your efforts have resulted in a document which provides a clear vision for the improved security of Belize.



Rt. Hon. DEAN O BARROW
Prime Minister of Belize

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Executive Summary

Our national vision is for a Belize *"of peace and tranquility, where citizens live in harmony with the natural environment and enjoy a high quality of life. Belizeans are an energetic, resourceful and independent people looking after their own development in a sustainable way"*. This vision requires a broader understanding of national security to include the defence of our territorial integrity, fighting criminality locally and transnationally, and providing a stable and enabling environment for the prosperity of Belize. The comprehensive approach adopted within reflects the interconnected nature of the goals which must be pursued in synergy to create optimal results for national security and defence.

The National Security and Defence Strategy (NSDS) 2018-2021 aims to rise to the challenge of guiding overall national security and defence for the period. It builds on previous documents including *Horizon 2030: National Development Framework for Belize 2010-2030, the Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy for Belize 2016-2019, and the National Security Strategy of Belize 2009.* At the core are the National Security and Defence Pillars that originated with the Chief Executive Officers Caucus, these are:

1. Maintain the Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity of Belize;

2. Reduce Local and Transnational Crime; and,

3. Provide the necessary environment for a prosperous and stable Belize.

These contribute to the achievement of Belize's National Vision.

These pillars must be pursued in synergy to increase our security and safeguard our prosperity. The strategic concepts and objectives described within aim to contribute to the achievement of the national vision of Belize. As such, the strategy is a *"living document"* and will be updated as necessary.

Chapter One

THE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

Belize is a nation that shares location and identity with both the Caribbean and Central America. It is critical for us to have a clear sense of who we are and where we want to go. We aim to develop a realistic sense of the challenges before us and a clear perception of the conduits that we must navigate. This is vital for the advancement of Belize's national interests in a rapidly changing world.

Diplomacy, then, is an essential tool that a small state like Belize needs to optimize our participation in the global system. "Diplomacy is not the instrument of last resort for small Caribbean states, but the primary instrument. Neither its relevance nor its function in international politics can be overstated" (Saunders, 2005 pp.135). To this end, Belize aims to employ the strategies herein to be an active, effective participant on the global stage, with group diplomacy offering one of the most efficient means of amplifying our influence.

The international political system has evolved into an era of international organizations. Belize's size, population, and resources demand that larger challenges are addressed cooperatively, thus we participate in regional bodies as a way to magnify our power projection (although the economic demands of membership often limit us from full participation). To this end, Belize prioritizes national security concerns into three pillars: maintaining the country's territorial integrity, confronting transnational and local crime, and providing the necessary environment for a prosperous and stable Belize which are national security and defence priorities that, if not adequately addressed, have major implications on the stability of this country.

While engaging international partners, we acknowledge ultimate responsibility for our own continued existence. This strategic direction builds on the overarching documents of *Horizon 2030: National Development Framework for Belize 2010-2030 and The Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy of Belize 2016-2019*. It also refers to and includes other sectorial and ministerial planning documents. This National Security and Defence Strategy (NSDS) aims to rise to the challenge of guiding the national security and defence of the nation for the period 2018-2021. This is the nation's primary security and defence document, providing guidance on priorities and on specific objectives to be undertaken during the period.

This strategy is the result of extensive consultation with government officials, non-governmental organizations, external experts and stakeholder interest groups. Consultations which not only brought out valuable insights at the frontline and operational level but also engaged stakeholder commitment from government, private sector and interest groups to achieve the vision and goals of this National Security and Defence Strategy 2018-2021.

Chapter Two

NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE: VISION AND VALUES

The Horizon 2030 Vision

Belize is a country of peace and tranquility, where citizens live in harmony with the natural environment and enjoy a high quality of life. Belizeans are an energetic, resourceful and independent people looking after their own development in a sustainable way.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE STRATEGY PILLARS

The National Security and Defence Strategy Pillars are specific priority areas whose achievement will contribute to Belize's National Security and Defence vision and core values. These are:

1. Maintain the Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity of Belize;

2. Reduce Local and Transnational Crimes;

3. Provide the necessary environment for a prosperous and stable Belize.

National security issues greatly affect Belize's chances of attaining and achieving its social and economic goals and maintaining stability. This National Security and Defence Strategy (NSDS) cohesively integrates the country's major security goals, policies, responsibilities and actions into one overall master plan for the fulfillment of a National Security and Defence Vision. The concept of the NSDS encompasses all factors identified to be essential to the security, stability and prosperity of Belize and the protection of the geopolitical space of Belize as defined by the Belize Constitution.

The NSDS seeks to support the national effort to achieve and maintain a democratic, peaceful, prosperous and stable Belize that maintains human rights and provides the security conditions necessary for social and economic development. It is a catalyst to fulfill the National Security and Defence Vision through the combined use of political, social, economic, security and defence instruments of national power. Government ministries, departments and agencies must critically examine their directives and conduct their own internal appraisals of the implications on their roles and configurations. Similarly, citizens and members of civil society groups should scrutinize this strategy and take the necessary steps to contribute to the accomplishment of Belize's national security and defence priorities. The National Security Council (NSC) shall provide necessary and timely guidance to relevant stakeholders.

The NSDS shall serve to provide strategic guidance to the Cabinet and generate public awareness. It defines the roles of organizations and stakeholders in order for them to synchronize their own strategies and policies to support the NSDS through the formulation of a variety of sector specific plans.

CORE NATIONAL VALUES

It is in Belize's interest to continue to ensure all citizens understand and support these core national values:

1. TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY

Belize is a sovereign and independent nation and will defend its territorial integrity in the face of external aggression. The outstanding territorial differendum with Guatemala has moved away from being resolved using armed force in favor of bilateral negotiations through the Organization of American States. This is now passing into history and, if referendums in each country are in agreement, the matter will be placed before the International Court of Justice or an international tribunal.

The Belize Defence Force (BDF) and the Belize Coast Guard (BCG) supported by all other security entities play a key role in maintaining the physical integrity of the nation. It is therefore in Belize's interest to ensure that the security forces of an appropriate size relative to its neighbors and is properly equipped to fulfill its mission to ensure the physical integrity of the nation. In broad terms, the security forces should be capable enough to prevent a security vacuum. As part of its regional commitments, Belize should also be able to articulate the purpose of its military force as a moderate and positive force for cooperation in the region. Without security, there is no stability or prosperity; therefore, there is a need for continued investment in security and defence.

2. RESPECT FOR THE RULE OR THE LAW

Defending Belizean citizens and visitors against external and internal armed threats and local and transnational organized crime is a fundamental commitment of the government. Cooperation with international allies with interest in regional security and stability will be required. At the institutional level, Belize must further strengthen the judiciary by ensuring its continued independence and professionalism, including providing the resources necessary to investigate and successfully prosecute all types of criminal activity. As well, there must be respect for the law and individual law-abiding behaviour remains a key component to national development. Through the consistent application of the law, respect for the rule of law will be realized.

3. FAIRNESS AND EQUITY

It is important to reassess the responsibilities and rights of individuals as efforts to combat crime and corruption in the society are strengthened. The protection of these rights and freedoms is of immense importance both for the individuals affected and for the development of Belizean society as a whole. The Belizean state remains the primary guarantor of democracy, freedom, and equal treatment of all Belizeans regardless of their ethnic background, gender, religion, and political beliefs. Freedom to seek a life of peace and prosperity is the foundation of our national interest.

4. ECONOMIC FREEDOM

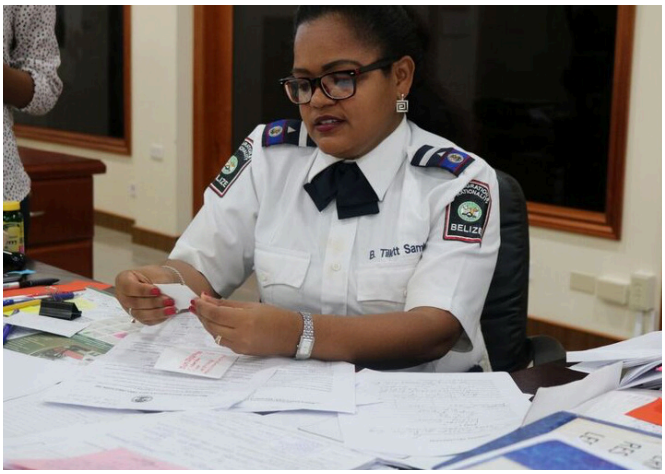
A strong market-based economy free of corruption will enhance our national security. Economic growth, supported by trade and free markets, creates employment, improves income levels, and increases the standard of living of all Belizeans. It is in Belize's national interest for the state to promote economic growth through public sector support of viable private sector economic activities. Self-reliant private sector participation remains crucial to the medium and long-term economic sustainability of the nation.

5. EMPLOYMENT

We must implement measures to increase employment in accordance with the Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy (GSDS) 2016-2019, since poverty and inequality breed crime, violence, and social unrest. According to a World Bank Study of Labour Force Growth in the Caribbean region, Belize by the year 2020 will have one of the highest average percentage increases per annum in the labour force. In the year 2000, it was estimated at 82,000. By the year 2020 this will rise to 146,000 or a 2.9 percent rise per year. For us to take advantage of this demographic bonus, we will have to continue to expand the economic opportunities and improve our productivity and competitiveness in order to generate enough jobs for our young population.

6. NATURAL RESOURCES

Belize's future prosperity is inextricably linked to its natural resources and assets. They include our oil reserves, agricultural capacity, archaeological heritage and above all, our land and maritime areas. The proceeds of natural resources are for the benefit of all Belizeans.



7. IMMIGRATION

The Ministry with responsibility for Immigration in Belize must formulate a comprehensive migration policy. This will not only counter the threat from the migration of criminal groups from the Central American Region, but also ensure that all immigrants are integrated into Belizean society. There is also a need to raise the profile of the migration topic on the national agenda and the need to build the capacity and accountability of the Department of Immigration and Nationality. There is also a need for policies to limit the areas in which immigrants may be employed to protect the Belizean labour force. The importation of unregulated labour also retards development because they overwhelm our social services, which lead into a "race for the bottom" with other developing countries.

Chapter Three

NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE STRATEGY

This strategy aims to develop an economically prosperous and stable sovereign state with full-undisputed control over its territory, with reduced levels of local and transnational crime. This chapter outlines the National Security and Defence Strategy (NSDS). It focuses on the prioritized national strategic concepts and takes into consideration the strategic objectives that will be required to achieve the three national security and defence pillars. The National Security and Defence strategic concepts and objectives provide the road map for achieving the National Security and Defence vision.

CONCEPTS AND REQUIRED CAPABILITIES

Resources available to Central Government are limited; therefore, pooling is required, and expenditure prioritized to ensure the greatest positive impact on the national goals being pursued. To assist in planning for the execution of this national security strategy, the identified national goals are prioritized as to their perceived impact on the identified security threats. In order for the strategy to be effective, a multi-agency approach is required.

1 MAINTAIN THE SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF BELIZE

STRATEGIC CONCEPT

In order for Belize to guarantee its territorial integrity, it must continuously engage the international community at the diplomatic level and seek security cooperation with its regional neighbours and other friendly nations and international organizations. In respect of the border dispute with Guatemala, the confidence building measures presently in place require expansion to include a variety of levels of exchange. The mixed commission should be the vehicle for further cooperation with Guatemala.

There needs to be continued efforts to comply with international treaties and agreements which aim to promote and ensure peace and security such as arms control, counter-terrorism, extradition and mutual legal assistance treaties to enhance regional stability and facilitate law enforcement efforts. The adoption and implementation of laws to counter illicit activities over Belize's land, air, maritime, and cyber spaces also need strengthening. As well, Belize must maintain control of the borders with Mexico and Guatemala. To support this concept, there is a need to maintain modern, professional, balanced security forces (law enforcement and defence) that are prepared to cooperate and contribute to national and regional security.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Maintaining the integrity of our national borders involves reducing illegal border incursions, encroachments, unauthorized immigration and human trafficking that can erode environmental, social, and economic development. These strategic objectives are intended to reduce such occurrences and the resulting harm to Belize's sustainable development aspirations. These include:

1. Continue diplomatic engagement regionally and internationally on threats to sovereignty,
2. Develop a public information campaign to advance Belize's cause;
3. Increase border patrols and border control of our territory;
4. Encourage and recognize volunteerism in the monitoring of protected areas;
5. Develop civilian border management to facilitate discussions with neighboring counterparts at a non-military level;
6. Continue the formulation of a national comprehensive migration policy;
7. Improve the professional development and training programs for Belize's Foreign Service personnel and members of the security forces;
8. Provide basic equipment and capacity to effectively manage and control Belize's land, sea, air, and cyber spaces;
9. Establish protocol that will enable effective coordination of intelligence gathering arms of the security forces that will foster efficient and the timely dissemination of national and regional information and intelligence to the Joint Intelligence Operations Center (JIOC) and related agencies;
10. Support the improvement of the defence system to a combat-ready status capable of defending Belize's sovereignty and territorial integrity;
11. Continue to improve security cooperation with partner nations.

2 REDUCE LOCAL AND TRANSNATIONAL CRIME

STRATEGIC CONCEPT

Many of the criminal organizations that existed around the world and in the region years ago have been dismantled, proving that it is possible to constrain, shrink, and disrupt criminal groups once considered to be untouchable. The threat from transnational crime is also more complicated now because criminal networks are more fluid and are using increasingly sophisticated tactics and technology. These organizations then can exploit the interconnected nature of trade, transportation, and transactional systems. Therefore, countering transnational crime requires an integrated and comprehensive approach.

This strategy sets out an approach to raise awareness about the reality of the threat to regional security and motivate multilateral action to limit the reach and influence of transnational crime. It aims to cut off its enabling means and infrastructure, minimize the threat it poses to citizen safety and governance, and ultimately, to defeat the transnational criminal networks that pose the greatest threat to national security and defence.

The sophisticated and multi-faceted threats of transnational crime cannot be addressed through law enforcement action alone. Accordingly, there has arisen the need to establish a Joint Intelligence and Operations Center (JIOC) with an interagency working group capable of identifying those transnational criminal networks that present a sufficiently high national security and defence threat as to merit the focused use of complementary assets that create a coordinated whole-of-government response. The JIOC was formed to ensure the coordination of all elements of national power to effectively protect our borders, people, economy, and financial system from the threats posed by the most dangerous and sophisticated of these transnational criminal networks.

An independent judiciary is the cornerstone of the criminal justice system and serves as a guarantor of individual freedoms and equal treatment of all Belizeans regardless of their ethnic background, gender, religion, or political beliefs. This will foster public confidence in the system and, at the level of the individual, respect for and simple obedience to the law. These efforts require support through education programs directed at the youth. Moreover, a comprehensive and fair criminal justice system provides redress and mitigates the likelihood of revenge and retribution crimes and civil unrest caused by social grievances thus a strong criminal justice system promotes social order and rule of law.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

This section sets out seven objectives that are consistent with the priority of reducing local and transnational crime:

1. Protect Belizeans from the harm, violence, and exploitation of transnational criminal networks. Our priority is the safety, security, and prosperity of Belizean citizens. We will target the networks that pose the gravest threat to citizen safety and security, including those that traffic illicit drugs, arms, and people, especially women and children; those that sell and distribute substandard, tainted and counterfeit goods and rob Belizeans of their prosperity; and those that seek to terrorize and intimidate through acts of torture and murder. Moreover, the maintenance of an updated counter-terrorism policy with relevant legislation to prepare our capabilities to respond to any likely threat of terrorism is a necessary part of this objective.

2. In order to strengthen governance and transparency and interrupt the corruptive power of transnational criminal networks, Belize aims to combat the corruption and instability generated by transnational criminal networks and related threats to governance. We aim to strengthen legitimate and effective public safety, security, and justice institutions and promote universal values. To break the economic influence of transnational criminal networks and protect Belize's financial system from abuse (including bribery, fraud, and violence) which has the capacity to disrupt economic activity and put legitimate businesses at a distinct competitive disadvantage, we aim to attack the financial underpinnings of the top transnational criminal organizations, cutting off their access to and through our financial system and expose their criminal activities hidden behind legitimate fronts.

3. We aim to defeat transnational criminal networks that pose the greatest threat to national security by targeting their infrastructures, depriving them of their enabling means. These criminal networks include local gangs with links to transnational criminal gangs, those that traffic drugs, bulk cash, arms, people and contraband. Further, we will seek to prevent collaboration between transnational criminal networks and local gangs and to deprive them of their critical resources and infrastructure, such as funding, logistical support for transportation, arms, safe havens for illicit activities, and the facilitation of services and materials.

4. In order to build public consensus, multilateral cooperation, and public-private partnerships to defeat transnational organized crime and local gangs, we aim to build new partnerships with industry, private sector, academia, civil society and non-governmental organizations to combat these networks that operate in the illicit and licit worlds. We will also fight criminal networks with an alliance of legitimate networks, and ensure the freedom of the press so that the media and journalists may safely expose the harm inflicted by these crimes. We will also expand and deepen our understanding, cooperation, and information sharing with national and regional agencies, with foreign partners, and with multilateral institutions. Regionally, we will further international norms against tolerating or sponsoring crime in all its forms, including in cyberspace especially as it relates to prostitution and sexual abuse. We will address local gangs from the preventative

aspect through human development, family and parenting support as well as youth delinquency prevention and rehabilitation or reform programs to improvement in their social bonding and social inclusion.

5. Amelioration of Social Issues that Fuel Crime. There is a need to improve coordination amongst stakeholder agencies to address social issues that fuel crime. Actions that are closely tied to this includes:

    a. Increase access to relevant education and training in high crime areas;
    b. Identify sustainable gainful employment opportunities for at-risk youth;
    c. Review the potential for conscription (to national service) as an alternative approach to address youth unemployment; and, promoting positive social values through social communication and education.

6. Effective Policing. The Police Department is at the forefront of efforts to ensure citizen security and public safety. To do so there is a need to:

    a. Provide adequate basic equipment;
    b. Deploy CCTV cameras to aid police surveillance; and,
    c. Continue to pursue community policing and promote neighborhood watch programs.

7. Better Administration of Justice. The justice system includes the Caribbean Court of Justice, the Appellate Court, the Supreme Court, Magistrate's Courts and the Director of Public Prosecution (DPP). An independent judiciary is the cornerstone of the criminal justice system and serves as a guarantor of individual freedoms and equal treatment of all Belizeans regardless of their ethnic background, gender, religion, or political beliefs. This will foster public confidence in the system and, at the level of the individual, respect for and simple obedience to the law. These efforts require support through education programs directed at the youth. Moreover, a comprehensive and fair criminal justice system provides redress and mitigates the likelihood of revenge and retribution crimes and civil unrest caused by social grievances thus a strong criminal justice system promotes social order and rule of law. In order to facilitate better administration of justice, there is the need to:

    a. Continue efforts to strengthen and reform the criminal justice system;
    b. Prepare a strategy to ensure adequate capacity for prosecution;
    c. Continue the provision of incentives to secure legal representation for those on remand due to lack of representation; study the feasibility of a witness protection program; and, increase the use of alternative sentencing.

3 PROVIDE THE NECESSARY ENVIRONMENT FOR A PROSPEROUS AND STABLE BELIZE

STRATEGIC CONCEPT

The concept is to enhance our national security through economic growth supported by improved economic opportunities that allow people to raise themselves out of poverty. It also aims to develop a socially cohesive nation, one in which individuals feel a sense of belonging and civic pride that builds fellowship and mutual sympathy resulting in lower crime and improved quality of life.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Strengthen the institutions of democratic governance
2. Improve healthcare
3. Improve and expand nationwide access to education
4. Protect Belize's natural resources
5. Achieve food, water and energy security
6. Improve investment in gender equity and youth development
7. Reduce the risks associated with rapid and slow onset of natural and human-caused hazards.

1. INSTITUTIONS OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

Good governance is a central theme in the Horizon 2030 vision and is essential to attain sustainable development in Belize. Democratic governance creates a prosperous and stable Belize contributing to political accountability and transparency and provides for equal opportunity for each citizen regardless of age, creed, ethnicity and gender. In the medium term, Belize needs to take practical steps to reduce wastage, abuse of government resources, and inappropriate procurement while improving public sector management and accountability.

2. HEALTHCARE

Providing access to modern, efficient, and affordable healthcare is the duty of the state. The physical health of the Belizean people is an indispensable element for the immediate, medium and long-term development of the country. Nationwide access to primary medical care and specialist care provide the foundation for a modern, national healthcare system.

3. EDUCATION

The Government of Belize's vision for education is grounded in three basic principles:

a. Education for Self: Education must prepare each child to be the best he/she can be to create meaningful and happy lives;
b. Education for the Strength of the Nation (The Common Good): Education must prepare all Belizeans to enter, participate and contribute ethically to an economically strong, socially rich, culturally proud, politically just society; and
c. Education for Life and Change: In a changing world, we must provide opportunities for life-long learning no matter why or when a person leaves formal schooling. We are never too old to learn or too old to start. Belizeans of all ages must enjoy educational opportunities as we create a country founded on the intelligence and education of its greatest assets, the people who are ready, willing and able to lead and confront changes in our world.

4. NATURAL RESOURCES

Belize must preserve and sustainably utilize its rich natural resources by enacting, strengthening, and enforcing legislation and implementing programs that promote the sustainable use and conservation of Belize's natural resources while supporting the country's development goals. By promoting awareness on environmental issues early in the education curriculum, Belizeans will gain a greater appreciation for the near pristine environment that characterizes much of Belize. Strengthening our engagement with non-governmental organizations locally and regionally to manage Belize's natural resources is equally important and should be encouraged and supported at all levels to complement our national development efforts.

5. FOOD, WATER AND ENERGY SECURITY

The intrinsic value of Belize's natural and environmental assets cannot be overstated with their economic and social importance upon which agriculture and tourism are founded. Ultimately the sustainable use of and care for our food, water and energy sources contributes to the health and quality of life of all Belizeans. There is a need to maintain a balance between economic growth and the integrity of the environment.

6. GENDER EQUITY AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Achieving gender equity focuses on access of education, healthcare and the right to equal employment opportunities for women and men. Addressing issues of equal pay for equal work, access to employment, maternity leave, maternal access to healthcare, gender-based violence and women's access and participation in the legal and political spheres removes barriers from half the

population fully participating in Belizean society. This builds the family structure, reduces early youth exposure to crime and fosters an atmosphere that optimizes economic participation and human resource contribution of the population, which is especially important in small nations such as Belize.

Ensuring that no child is left behind is instrumental to a stable and prosperous Belize. A medium to achieve this, which is noted in the GSDS and reiterated in the Interest Groups Stakeholders Consultation in the development of NSDS, was the introduction of the concept of a national service program[1]. National Service would require one year of service in any of the government departments or agencies for a period of one year. Youth development was also noted to include national security and defence awareness from as early as primary education level.

7. REDUCE THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH RAPID AND SLOW ONSET OF NATURAL AND HUMAN-CAUSED HAZARDS

Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM), addressing all hazards at all times involving all sectors of the society is the key to mitigating known and probable non-traditional threats. Risk management for disasters and climate change is incorporated into this strategy, as Belize is vulnerable to a variety of threats from changes in precipitation on agriculture to frequent and intense tropical storms and hurricanes with broader economic impact. Disaster risk management is coordinated by the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) through a committee system to the Office of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet. Existing emergency action plans developed by the National Operational Committees must be refined, tested and cross-fertilized with the District and Special Committees plan of action. These could include the implementation of a national alert or warning system, the promotion of disaster mitigation awareness through schools, key private and public sector stakeholders, and the promotion of legislation to allow the participation of lending institutions in the development of infrastructure to contribute to the mitigation of natural hazards. There is a need for the strengthening of NEMO's capacity and enabling its strategic authority to influence sustainable development and natural resource management through analysis and prediction of disasters thereby reducing the risk of disasters for vulnerable communities.

[1]Conscription exists legally in Belize and is possible in emergency if volunteers are insufficient. Conscription has never been implemented as volunteers typically outnumber available positions by 3:1 (Military Conscription Policy by Country 2008)

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

a. Fully implement program budgeting, and seek budget efficiencies and synergies
b. Continue implementation of other public finance reform initiatives
c. Strengthen and broaden the Economic Development Council (EDC) which aims to further the national consensus vision in Horizon 2030

2. HEALTHCARE

a. Educate and influence young people to change eating habits for improved nutrition (targeting communities where poverty and high rates of crime are challenging concerns)
b. Strengthen services to deal with pathologies

3. EDUCATION

a. Reduce the dropout and repetition rates at the primary and secondary education levels
b. Increase enrollment at Institutes for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (ITVET)
c. Improve linkages between programs offered and the needs of the economy
d. Promote an entrepreneurial culture and inculcate desired social values

4. PROTECT BELIZE'S NATURAL RESOURCES

a. Improve sustainable environmental management based on scientific and integrated approaches
b. Sustain biodiversity through ecosystems management

5. ACHIEVE FOOD, WATER AND ENERGY SECURITY

a. Strengthen water resource management by establishing a National Integrated Water Resources Authority (in accordance with the 2010 Act), completing a Water Master Plan for Belize and Water Vulnerability Profile, and an assessment of water supply and related infrastructure needs.
b. Implement the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan (ICZMP), including the development of a marine spatial plan
c. Design incentives to encourage household investment in renewable energy
d. Promote and facilitate other potential opportunities for the generation of electricity from renewable sources
e. Continue efforts towards attaining universal access to potable water
f. Strengthen the policy framework for land-based and marine pollution management in order to mitigate the impacts on food security and human health and well being.

6. IMPROVE INVESTMENT IN GENDER EQUITY AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

a. Integrate gender into development policies and programs for agriculture and rural development through the analysis of disparities that affect people's access to resources and of issues that threaten rural livelihoods
b. Expand support to training in gender mainstreaming, and the collection, analysis and dissemination of sex-disaggregated data and statistics used in policy-making
c. Embed a strong equity focus within line ministry programs, including a broad definition of social inclusion
d. Upgrade and sustain national programs aimed at child protection and the elimination of gender-based violence
e. Develop a proposal for increasing the participation of women in politics

7. REDUCE RISKS OF HAZARDS

a. Review the utility of developing a comprehensive disaster management plan.

Chapter Four

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Achieving the Belize vision requires adopting strategic concepts and action plans that have a high probability of success while at the same time minimizing risk of failure. Recognizing that constrained resources require the development of innovative strategies and action plans that maximize the use of resources and look for synergies, ministries must develop strategic concepts and actions plans that are suitable, feasible and acceptable. A suitable concept or action plan addresses the root causes of the problem, identifies the threats and challenges, and establishes the conditions necessary to achieve the desired goal. To be feasible the strategic concept or action plan must have the necessary means or resources available for execution. The plan is acceptable when its execution costs are justified by the importance or benefits of the goal. By striking a balance between benefits, the probability of success and the associated costs, risk can be minimized.

With such plans in hand, the government will have the necessary information to carefully prioritize and allocate resources in a rational manner.

PERIODIC STRATEGY REVIEWS

Recognizing that the security environment is dynamic and requires periodic adjustments in the allocation of resources, regular periodic reviews of the strategy and resource prioritizations need to occur to ensure we attain the national security goals of Belize.

THE NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE STRATEGY: LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITY

A lead agency is the government ministry or agency designated to the oversight of a relevant strategic objective, which falls under their ministerial responsibility. The lead agency chairs a working group with the supporting agencies to coordinate policy and develop action plans or develop supporting strategies related to particular strategic objectives. The lead agency ensures cohesion among the agencies and is responsible for implementing decisions. The lead agency reports progress through the National Security Council and Cabinet.

1. MAINTAIN THE SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF BELIZE

Lead Agencies: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence

RATIONALE	STRENGTHS	SHORTFALLS	SUPPORTING AGENCIES
Has the responsibility of promoting and maintaining diplomatic relations.	Has the basic institutional framework for the management of Belize's foreign policy	Limited number of experienced career diplomats and specialist attachés and a limited number of diplomatic missions.	All Government Departments.

Ministry of Defence

RATIONALE	STRENGTHS	SHORTFALLS	SUPPORTING AGENCIES
Chartered by law with the defence of the state. Additionally, it has manpower resources and expertise required to maintain the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Belize (with the cooperation of other agencies).	Have the required leadership, training, skills and operational experience.	Requires specific technical, material and human resources some of which are available from the identified supporting agencies.	All Government Departments.

2. REDUCE LOCAL AND TRANSNATIONAL CRIME

Lead Agency: Ministry of Home Affairs

RATIONALE	STRENGTHS	SHORTFALLS	SUPPORTING AGENCIES
Entrusted with administration of the Belize Police Department.	Have the required leadership, training, skills and operational experience.	Requires specific technical, material and human resources some of which are available from the identified supporting agencies.	All Government Departments.

3. STRENGTHEN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM AND ENSURE RESPECT FOR THE RULE OF LAW

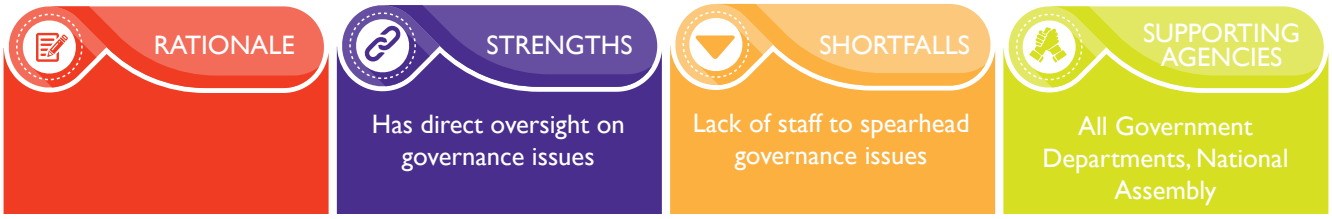
Lead Agency: Attorney General's Ministry and Ministry of Home Affairs

4. PROVIDE THE NECESSARY ENVIRONMENT FOR A STABLE AND VIBRANT ECONOMY

Lead Agency: Ministry of Economic Development

5. STRENGTHEN THE INSTITUTIONS OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

Lead Agencies: Ministry of Public Service



6. IMPROVE DELIVERY OF HEALTHCARE AT ALL LEVELS AND REDUCE THE IMPACT OF HEALTH RELATED THREATS

Lead Agency: Ministry of Health

RATIONALE	STRENGTHS	SHORTFALLS	SUPPORTING AGENCIES
Charged with developing and implementing national policies on healthcare delivery	Has the basic institutional framework and infrastructure to provide national healthcare	Lacks oversight of performance of medical personnel, lacks specialists	All Government Departments

7. REDUCE THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH RAPID AND SLOW ONSET OF NATURAL AND HUMAN CAUSED HAZARDS

Lead Agency: NEMO Ministry

RATIONALE	STRENGTHS	SHORTFALLS	SUPPORTING AGENCIES
Responsible for the management and mitigation of national disasters.	Has established relations with non-governmental and international organizations and partner nations. Has an established national emergency management system led by the Cabinet of Belize and the National Disaster Preparedness and Response Advisory Committee.	Limited technical capabilities	All Government Departments, local and international partner agencies

8. IMPROVE AND EXPAND NATIONWIDE ACCESS TO EDUCATION UP TO THE TERTIARY LEVEL

Lead Agency: Ministry of Education

RATIONALE	STRENGTHS	SHORTFALLS	SUPPORTING AGENCIES
Responsible for developing, implementing, and overseeing national education policy.	Has the basic institutional framework and infrastructure	Lacks education management professionals and subject area experts	All Government Departments

9. PROTECT BELIZE'S NATURAL RESOURCES

Lead Agency: Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment

RATIONALE	STRENGTHS	SHORTFALLS	SUPPORTING AGENCIES
Manager of the nation's natural resources	Issuing authority for the exploitation of natural resources. Have technical expertise in managing the nation's natural resources	Limited oversight capability, and inadequate human & material resources.	All Government Departments

10. ACHIEVE FOOD, WATER AND ENERGY SECURITY

Lead Agencies: Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment and Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries

RATIONALE	STRENGTHS	SHORTFALLS	SUPPORTING AGENCIES
Responsible for management and development of the production of food and energy resources	Issuing authority for the utilization of natural resources. Have technical expertise in managing the nation's natural resources and natural resources are relatively under-utilized and government owned	Limited oversight capability, inadequate human and material resources, and R&D lacking in our education system	All Government Departments

Glossary

BCG	*Belize Coast Guard*
BDF	*Belize Defence Force*
BPD	*Belize Police Department*
Civil Society	*Persons, groups or organizations that include but are not limited to, non-governmental, non-political and non-commercial enterprises.*
Governance	*Exercise of power in the economic, political and administrative management of a country's resources.*
GOTS	*Governance of Belize*
ICJ	*International Court of Justice*
ITVET	*Institute for Technical and Vocational Education and Training*
JIOC	*Joint Intelligence Operations Centre*
NEMO	*National Emergency Management Organization*
NSC	*National Security Council*
NSCS	*National Security Council Secretariat*
NSDS	*National Security and Defence Strategy*
OPM	*Office of the Prime Minister*
Security Forces	*Refers to BCG, BDF, BPD and all law enforcement agencies*

Reference

G

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N

National Development Framework for Belize – Horizon 2010-2030,

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BELIZE COAST GUARD