The National Security Strategy of Belize

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MEXICO
MEXICO
COROZAL
ORANGE WALK
BELIZE
CAYO
STANN CREEK
TOLEDO
Bahía de Chetumal
Corozal Bay
Corozal Town
Orange Walk Town
Belize City
Dangriga
Independence
Punta Gorda
Punta Yocacoa
San Pedro Town
AMBERGRIS CAYE
HICK'S CAYES
TURNEFFE ATOLL
BARRIER REEF
INNER OR MAIN CHANNEL
LIGHTHOUSE REEF
GLOVERS REEF
CARIBBEAN SEA
SAPODILLA CAYES
THE SNAKE CAYES
Gulf of Honduras
Bahía
MAP SYMBOLS
CITIES
BELMOPAN Country Capital
Belize City District Capital
San Pedro Town Greater than 3,500 inhs.
Trial Farm 1,000 to 3,500 inhs.
Monkey River Town 100 to 1,000 inhs.
Less than 100 inhs.
OTHER SYMBOLS
Rivers
Lakes
Coral Reef
Sea Port
Lighthouse
International Airport
International Boundary
District Boundary
Major Roads
Minor Roads
Traks, Footpaths and Trails

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Foreword

Hon. Dean O. Barrow
Prime Minister

AT its core a nation's National Security Strategy outlines a programme for the safety of citizens and the protection of national values and way of life. The Preamble to the Constitution identifies Belize's principles, beliefs and needs.

Belize's new Government came to office last February on an explicit Manifesto commitment to national reconstruction, built on foundation stones of openness, honesty, and transparency, the brick and mortar of its building blocks being economic rescue and social and moral renewal. As a Government we are committed to a clear, doable programme of action for lowering taxes, reducing the cost of living, increasing employment and disposable income, widening the social safety net, improving the quality and accessibility of education and health, and forging a new national partnership based on consultation, dialogue and consensus.

Belize's National Security Strategy responds to the more obvious threats to Belize's security, such as the drug trade, corruption, and the breakdown of social systems. Government is committed to restoring faith in the justice system. A joint intelligence unit made up of the Police, Belize Defence Force, Customs, Immigration, the Coast Guard, Income Tax and the Financial Intelligence Unit will concentrate on illegal activities nationwide in order to strengthen criminal intelligence gathering. A restored Conscious Youth Development Programme, appropriately resourced, is controlling and diffusing gang violence, mainly in Belize City. Traditional threats are increasingly regional and hemispheric, indeed global, in scope, requiring cooperation across borders. Common problems require common, coordinated solutions.

Our national security strategy also takes account of non-traditional threats. Annually from June to October we are reminded of our growing vulnerability to climate change, affecting agriculture, sea-level rise, and the intensity of hurricanes. The escalating price of fuel challenges the state as well as private citizens. Health is the foundation of a secure community. Good schools graduate confident citizens who build a more secure Belize. Strong families are essential to national security. In short, Belize's security ultimately rests on the integral development and participation of its greatest resource, its people.

I am pleased to recommend Belize's National Security Strategy to all.

Hon. Dean O. Barrow
Prime Minister of Belize

Message from the Minister of National Security

Hon. Carlos Perdomo
Minister of National Security

THE nation of Belize is founded on principles of freedom and democracy. These fundamental principles are being challenged by the growing climate of criminal impunity and corruption that has penetrated many strata of the region. Faced with diverse internal and external threats to its people and lands, a Belizean strategy for safeguarding the national security of our country is essential. I am proud to have encouraged the culmination of this Belize National Security Strategy.

This National Security Strategy (NSS) integrates Belize's major national security policies, goals, responsibilities, and activities into a cohesive whole. It addresses the issues of national security from all angles and provides an overarching document for accomplishing national security goals through the combined use of the multifaceted instruments of national government. The NSS provides overall strategic guidance and establishes the vision that will guide national security decisions at all levels. It also aims to make individuals at each level aware of their roles as partners in our responsibility to work simultaneously and continuously to enhance Belize's national security and to creatively and harmoniously coordinate activities for optimal use of our scarce resources.

We can 'protect and preserve Belize our beloved country' working together in a well-planned, strategic and synchronized manner. I expect that all organizations identified within will embrace this security strategy as their own, pursue its directives, and take the necessary steps to contribute to a safer Belize. All Belizeans can be proud of this strategic initiative and, with our national spirit of cooperation, it will become a crucial vehicle for national progress.

Thank You.

The Hon. Carlos Perdomo
Minister of National Security

Executive Summary

Despite the growth of global governance and regional integration efforts, the State remains the primary actor in international affairs and is ultimately responsible for confronting a myriad of possible state and non-state threats that challenge its very existence. Therefore, the State must make every effort to guarantee its sovereignty and territorial integrity in the face of external threats.

It is unwise to define national security solely in terms of sovereignty and territorial integrity. It is a broad concept that encompasses all possible threats to the Belizean way of life, including threats to public safety, governance, economic wellbeing, social welfare, and the environment. National security issues have local, regional, and international dimensions, and greatly affect the nation's chances of achieving all of its social and economic goals. National Security requires proactive management by the State through its agents and institutions.

The National Security Strategy of Belize will establish:

> **"A safe, secure Belize at peace with itself and its neighbours, where the security environment allows the development of a peaceful and democratic society that utilizes its human and natural resources to ensure social justice, ethnic harmony, security, stability and prosperity."**

In essence, the vision is for all Belizeans to enjoy a better quality of life and have an opportunity to realise their full potential.

The illegal drug trade remains of particular concern as this has a direct influence on criminal activity involving drug use, gangs, small arms trafficking, violent crime, money laundering, and the corruption of the criminal justice system. This, coupled with the general breakdown of social mores, have led to the widespread disregard for the rule of law and the gradual depreciation of the value of human life, particularly among our youth. Other threats to Belize include all those relating to natural and man-made disasters, external challenges to Belize's economic stability, and the unsustainable loss of natural resources.

Following a careful analysis of the many threats to national security and their associated vulnerabilities, eleven national security goals arise that can counter or reduce the extent of the country's exposure to these threats:

1. Maintain the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Belize;
2. Reduce violent crime and dismantle local, cross border, and trans-national criminal networks;
3. Strengthen the criminal justice system and ensure the rule of law;
4. Protect Belize from terrorism;
5. Provide the necessary environment for a stable and vibrant economy;
6. Strengthen the institutions of democratic governance;
7. Improve delivery of healthcare at all levels and reduce the impact of health related threats;
8. Reduce the risks associated with rapid and slow-onset of natural and human-caused hazards;
9. Improve and expand nationwide access to education up to the tertiary level;
10. Protect Belize's natural resources;
11. Achieve Energy and Food Security.

This National Security Strategy (NSS) incorporates the State's major security policies, goals, responsibilities and actions into an overall master plan for the fulfilment of the national security vision for Belize. The NSS outlines the combined use of the political, economic, social, informational, and security instruments of national power. It clarifies the institutional framework within which the security forces and civil institutions of the state will coordinate their activities to create an integrated and cohesive national security network to safeguard national interests. It also prescribes the complementary roles and responsibilities of public and private sectors, as well as members of civil society in supporting national security.

Transnational threats coupled with an increasingly complex internal security environment, has resulted in the blurring of traditional agency boundaries with various entities now recognizing that they have a role to play in promoting national security. There remains a need to enhance coordination and

cooperation among the different ministries and institutions charged with providing national security. There is a need to break down barriers to building a long-term security picture, including the sharing of information across databases because of our limited resources in acquiring strategic intelligence.

The National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) will be responsible to coordinate the implementation of this NSS. The NSCS shall coordinate existing operational bodies through agreed procedures. The NSCS shall provide progress reports on strategic security initiatives, advice on current major national security developments, regional and international security concerns.

The National Security Council, (NSC) chaired by the Prime Minister, will have overall responsibility for the implementation of the NSS. The NSC will report to the Cabinet, and the Cabinet to the House of Representatives for public justification.

The strategic action required to achieve each of the National Security Goals is included. The plan outlines the specific strategic actions required by named Ministries, Departments and Agencies which shall contribute significantly to improving the security condition of Belize. The development of detailed security related budgets remains the responsibility of the implementing bodies, as they incorporate security projects into their annual plans and ensure their implementation. The budget for each project shall be incorporated into a Plan Belize; this plan shall be the blueprint for seeking national and international funding.

The Strategic Environment

The Contemporary International System

Belize is in a unique position as the link between Central America and the Caribbean due to its strategic location as well as its historical and contemporary links to both regions. Belize is an active member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Central American Integration System (SICA). Though its near pristine environment and stable democracy are examples to both regions, increased population growth has led to challenges unanticipated only a few years ago. The lack of national and sector-specific strategies to address current and developing concerns exacerbates these problems. However, the international political and economic system must first be clearly understood, since it provides the context within which Belize must design and implement its NSS.

The international political system has evolved much over the course of the past one hundred years. The violence of the "Great War" in the early 20th Century had given rise to the hope that a multilateral international system would bring lasting peace to future generations. The subsequent failure of the League of Nations, which cleared the way for the Second World War and the horrors of the Holocaust, did not put an end to the hope that a multilateral system could bring peace to humankind. Unfortunately, for most of its existence the United Nations coincided with the Cold War during which time it was largely powerless to prevent the intra-state and inter-state violence that was in one form or another, related to the struggle between the two superpowers.

The end of the Cold War has ushered in a new era for the international system. States are no longer the only international actors involved in the formulation and implementation of national and international policies. Inter-Governmental Organisations (IGOs), local and international Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), local and trans-national criminal organisations, and other sub-state and non-state actors are now heavily involved in a variety of challenges to the sovereignty of states and the welfare of the people.

Globalization and the increasing involvement of IGOs such as the United Nations and the OAS in maintaining international peace have made inroads into the anarchic international system. In the final analysis, though, every state remains ultimately responsible for its own existence. Organizations like the United Nations, established primarily to promote international peace, remain restricted by the extent to which its member states may wish to become involved.

For Belize, the modern system presents particular challenges that escape the unilateral and traditional application of state power. Belize's limited size, population, and resources demand addressing problems cooperatively with external actors. This remains true for the majority of challenges facing Belize, including maintaining the country's territorial integrity, confronting criminal activity, increasing economic activity, addressing health related threats, and protecting the environment. These issues will influence the future of Belize. These national security concerns if not adequately addressed could lead to economic, political, and social instability and loss of public confidence.

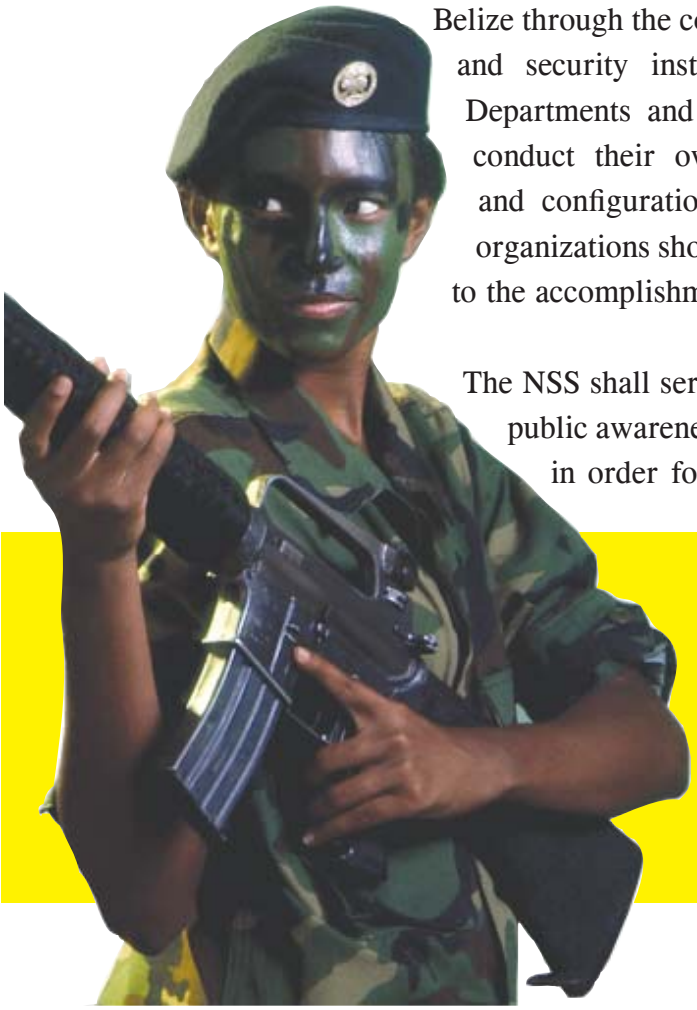
In summary, the international system remains complex and though the primacy of states has faced challenges by a variety of external actors, the state remains the most important international actor. Belize must therefore continue to engage its international partners while acknowledging that it remains ultimately responsible for its continued existence as well as its successes and failures. The International Community has demonstrated willingness to support national efforts. However, the strategic direction must be clearly Belizean to guide scarce international assistance to our areas of priority.

National Security Vision

Introduction

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

It integrates Belize's major security policies, goals, responsibilities and actions into a cohesive whole. It seeks to support the national effort to achieve and maintain a democratic, peaceful, prosperous and stable Belizean society, which maintains human rights and provides the security conditions necessary for social and economic development. The NSS is a catalyst to fulfill the National Security Vision of Belize through the combined use of political, informational, social, economic and security instruments of national power. Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies should critically examine its directives and conduct their own internal appraisals of implications on their roles and configurations. Similarly, citizens and members of Civil Society organizations should scrutinize it and take the necessary steps to contribute to the accomplishment of the national security goals.



The NSS shall serve to provide strategic guidance to the Cabinet, generate public awareness, and define the roles of organizations and stakeholders in order for them to synchronize their own strategies and policies

A safe, secure Belize at peace with itself and its neighbours, where the security environment allows the development of a peaceful and democratic society that utilises its human and natural resources to ensure social justice, ethnic harmony, security, stability and prosperity.

to support the NSS through the formulation of a variety of sector specific plans, including a National Military Strategy and a National Policing Strategy.

National Interests

It is in Belize's interest to continue educating its government officials on and to ensure all citizens understand and support these core national values;

Security

- Territorial Integrity — Belize is a sovereign and independent nation and will earnestly 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 favour of bilateral negotiations under 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 plays a key role in maintaining the physical integrity of the nation. It is therefore in Belize's interest to ensure that the Belize Defence Force is of an appropriate size relative to its neighbours and is properly equipped to fulfil its mission to ensure the physical integrity of the nation. In broad terms, the Belize Defence Force should be large enough to prevent a regional security vacuum and small enough to avoid alarming its neighbours. 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.
- Protecting the People – Defending Belizean citizens and visitors against external and internal armed threats, including terrorism and local and trans-national organised crime is a fundamental commitment of the Government. Cooperation with international allies with interest in regional security and stability will be required.

Political

- Rule of Law— 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.

However, 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 realised.

- Political Will— There is a need for the demonstrated credible intent of political actors to attack the root causes of crime and corruption. This is a critical starting point for sustainable and effective strategies and programs. It is essential to reform civil service, to strengthen transparency and accountability, and to reinvent the relationship between government and private industry.

- Human Rights— It is important to reassess the responsibilities and rights of individuals as efforts to combat crime and corruption in the society is strengthened. The protection of these rights and freedoms are of immense importance both for the individuals affected and for the development of Belizean society as a whole.

- Individual Freedoms— 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.

- Good Governance – There is a need to restore faith in our institutions of government. Honesty, transparency and accountability are the three pillars that will guide all government transactions. We must not allow corruption to invade any level of government or society; this would only erode citizens' confidence in our systems of justice and governance. There a need to recruit competent and trained professionals who will serve with the highest level of integrity and ethical conduct.

Economic and Social

- Public Health and Social Services— It is the duty of the State to provide a safety net for lower income Belizeans; the provision of social service must be preserved and expanded. Medical care and other services will continue to be available through the expanded NHI as part of the government's efforts to improve the quality of life of the people.

- Harmony— Belize is a multi-racial community of people living and working together in harmony, and sharing common values and aspirations as a nation. Belize's national interest lies in ensuring that no group is marginalised and that every individual has an equal opportunity to realize their potential.

- 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.

- Employment— we must implement measures to increase employment 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 increase 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.

- International Debt, Investment, and Aid — because international investment requires stability, Belize's economic and security interests are inextricably linked. Belize therefore has a vital interest in freeing itself of the burden of the current external debt. We must ensure that we structure our debt repayments in such a way that they do not siphon away the money that is vital to develop the country.

- Education—Belize must invest in its human capital through education. Eradicating illiteracy and focusing investment in the education of children is crucial. Belize must also develop a Future-Ready national curriculum including increased attention to science, math, engineering, technology, innovation and entrepreneurship.

- 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.

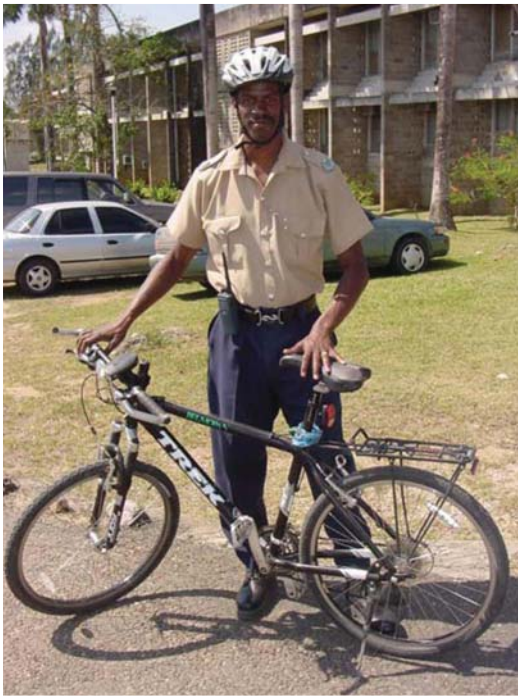
- Immigration - Belize must formulate a long-term immigration policy. This will not only counter the threat from the migration of Mareros from the Central American Region, but ensure that all immigrants are integrated into Belizean society. There is also a need to raise the profile of the migration topic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

The National Security Strategy - Goals

The National Strategic Security Goals listed below are specific action areas whose achievement will contribute to a safe and secure Belize at peace with itself and it neighbours. Achievement of the following goals is the focus of the National Security Strategy:

1. Maintain the Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity of Belize;
2. Reduce violent crime and dismantle local and trans-national criminal networks;
3. Strengthen the criminal justice system and ensure respect for the Rule of Law;
4. Protect Belize from terrorism;
5. Provide the necessary environment for a stable and vibrant economy;
6. Strengthen the institutions of democratic governance;
7. Improve delivery of healthcare at all levels and reduce the impact of health related threats:
8. Reduce the risks associated with rapid and slow-onset of natural and human-caused hazards;
9. Improve and expand nationwide access to education up to the tertiary level;
10. Protect Belize's natural resources;
11. Achieve Energy and Food security.

The Strategy



Introduction

This chapter outlines a plan of action to implement the National Security Strategy (NSS). It focuses on prioritisation of the national strategic goals and takes into consideration the likely resources that will be required. In order for the strategy to be effective, a multi-agency approach is required. This strategy will ensure effective governance that addresses national security, non-traditional threats, social and economic issues and at the same time maximizing efficient use of our national resources. This vision is one of a secure Belize, with its sovereignty and territorial integrity intact while maintaining excellent relations with our regional and international partners. This should result in a vibrant Belize with strong, sustainable economic development, prosperity, social justice, and ethnic harmony. In this way, Belize will contribute to hemispheric security.

The National Security Goals (Ends), and the Concepts (Ways) and Capabilities (Means) that make up the national security strategy provide the road map for achieving The National Security Vision.

Concepts and Required Capabilities

Resources available to Central Government are limited; therefore, pooling is required, and expenditure prioritised 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 prioritsed as to their perceived impact on the identified security threats.

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. In respect of the border dispute with Guatemala, the confidence building measures presently in place require expansion to include cultural and academic level exchanges. The mixed commission should be the vehicle for further cooperation with Guatemala.

There should be continued efforts to accede to international treaties and agreements which aim to promote and ensure international 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 and maritime spaces need strengthening. Belize must maintain absolute administrative control of the common borders with México and Guatemala.

To support this initiative there is a need to maintain modern, professional, balanced security forces that are properly equipped, proficient and technologically prepared to cooperate and contribute to national and regional security. Belize should strive to influence regional and international policies on Belize and to be a regional exemplar of good governance. Security cooperation and political agreements within the Caribbean and Central America should be made to actively promote peace and regional stability.

◈ Strategic Action:

- Continued diplomatic engagement regionally and internationally;
- A public information campaign to advance Belize's cause in selected countries and multilateral fora;
- Appropriately resourced professional development and training programs for Belize's Foreign Service personnel and members of the security forces;
- Equipment to effectively manage and control Belize's land, sea and air space;
- Improved coordination of the intelligence gathering arms of the Security Forces in disseminating their intelligence to an Intelligence Fusion Centre, to ensure better flow of intelligence, nationally and regionally;
- Develop a border management system.
- A properly equipped, combat-ready BDF capable of deterring external attacks and defusing internal threats to Belize;

2. Reduce violent crime and dismantle local, cross-border, and trans-national criminal networks

◈ Strategic Concept:

Criminal activities undermine the social and economic well-being of Belize. In order for Belize to bring crime under control and dismantle criminal networks, it needs to improve its intelligence capabilities with improved manning, logistical support, and information sharing with other countries throughout the region. It also requires better coordination of the intelligence gathering arms of the Security Forces in disseminating their intelligence to an Intelligence Fusion Centre to ensure a better flow of intelligence. Addressing social issues such as poverty, unemployment, education, and housing, will provide viable alternatives to illegal activities. Actions that target criminals and their activities will have a serious effect on criminal activity and revitalize the rule of law. Drug trafficking represents the greatest threat from serious and organized criminal networks because drugs offer sufficient profit at each stage of the trade. To counteract the prevalence of drugs the strategy is five-fold: promote demand reduction by sensitizing our youths to the evils of drugs; eradicate local marijuana production; interdict drug smugglers who use Belize as a transshipment point; go after the ill-gotten gains of those involved in illegal activity and offer meaningful rehabilitation to those who abuse drugs.

◈ Strategic Action:

- A properly resourced, properly trained and motivated Police Department that commands respect and respects the human rights of all citizens;
- An enhanced CYDP and YFF that provide viable alternatives to criminal activity through improved economic opportunities and social programs including rehabilitation focusing on youths;

- Develop a National Crime Control and Prevention Strategy to with cascaded policies, action plans and targets;
- People's Coalition in every district to serve as a vehicle to solving local problems;
- A Gang Violence Prevention Unit comprised of specially trained police and public officers within the Police Department;
- Public Information campaign to support police work and engender respect for the rule of law;
- Improved coordination of the intelligence gathering arms of the Security Forces in disseminating their intelligence to an Intelligence Fusion Centre to ensure better flow of intelligence, nationally and regionally.
- A national communication network that enhances communication and information technology systems between the security forces and law enforcement agencies;
- A Cyber Crime Unit to develop enhanced policies, procedures, and enforcement to detect and deter pornography, sexual exploitation, and related activities in cyber space;
- A multi-sector Asset Seizure Agency whose functions are to include civil recovery, complex criminal confiscation and a national assets seizure strategy to seize the ill-gotten assets of criminals;
- A multi-sector Serious Crimes Unit to dismantle criminal networks;
- A drug demand reduction strategy and a multi-sector approach to achieve drug demand reduction and raise public awareness of the negative, unattractive aspects of the drug lifestyle (deglamorize);
- A National Identification System incorporating biometrics;

- A Border Management System that covers all Ports of Entry;
- A comprehensive database of criminal statistics to track patterns, measure effectiveness of crime prevention techniques, and to increase operational success;
- A crime pattern analysis GIS Database to track crime;
- Strengthen existing and enact new legislation to address modern challenges in law enforcement;
- Modern Forensic Laboratory with a National Ballistics Identification System and a National DNA Identification System;

- A poverty elimination strategy that specifically targets marginalized communities on the Southside of Belize City;
- Develop and support initiatives to protect the rights of children to eliminate physical and sexual exploitation of children;
- A Witness Protection Program;
- Develop a gun buyback program possibly administered by Crime Stoppers Belize;
- Strengthen Canine (K-9) Unit for detection of firearms and explosives.

3. Strengthen the criminal justice system and ensure respect for the Rule of Law

◈ Strategic Concept:

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. The strengthening of the relationship between law enforcement agencies and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecution is essential. It is also necessary to improve the investigative capabilities of law enforcement with a view to investigating and successfully prosecuting illegal activity. 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 programmes directed at the youth.

◈ Strategic Action:

- Develop a "Gun Court" to deal fairly and swiftly with crimes involving the possession or use of guns and ammunition;
- Establish a witness protection program;
- Develop a National Ballistics Identification System;
- Enact a citizens charter to protect the rights of citizens;
- Develop a victim support services unit in the Police Department;
- Provide professional legal and investigative training to the Police Department;
- Establish a Modern Forensic Laboratory with a National Ballistics Identification System and a National DNA Identification System;
- Encourage high levels of coordination between the BPD and the DPP;
- Promote respect for the rule of law through a Public Awareness Campaign and continuous education of the public;

- Revise and enact legislation to address crime control;
- Strengthen through training, understanding of the roles and responsibilities of statutory bodies, for CEOs, and the executive to create an environment of transparent, accountable and lawful decision making;
- Modernize the Supreme and Magistrates Courts and court systems to take advantage of efficiencies of information technology.

4. Protect Belize from Terrorism

◈ Strategic Concept:

Acts of terrorism would undoubtedly have a serious negative impact on the economy. A national counter-terrorism strategy is necessary along with relevant legislation to improve our legal capabilities to respond to this threat. The gathering and sharing of intelligence with regional and international partners in the fight against terrorism assists in deterrence and consequently improves our preparedness and response capabilities. The revision and strengthening of our Immigration and Customs laws to aid in detection of possible threats at our entry points will improve security and reduce our vulnerability to terrorism. Besides revising and strengthening laws, data management systems must be acquired to improve security at our border points. Without a doubt, adequate equipment and human resources are indispensable assets in the fight against terrorism.

◈ Strategic Action:

- Develop a Counter Terrorism (CT) Strategy;
- Update CT legislation in accordance with existing international instruments and standards;
- Establish a CT Committee to provide strategic guidance to the NSC on appropriate tourism, maritime, aviation, and cyber-security measures on how to combat terrorism;
- Promote cooperation and information sharing between public and private sectors, especially between financial institutions and control authorities, with respect to individuals, entities, and organizations that could be related to money laundering activities and financing of terrorist groups and/or activities;

- Develop a properly resourced multi-departmental Counter Terrorism Unit;
- Enhance border and customs control measures;
- Develop a border management system;
- Promote technical standardized training for immigration and customs personnel;
- Prevent the fraudulent use of identification and travel documents;
- Enable border enforcement authorities to better enforce control laws without affecting the flow of commerce;
- Improve vigilance and control, to prevent the passage of terrorists;
- Improve coordination of the intelligence gathering arms of the Security Forces in disseminating their intelligence to an Intelligence Fusion Centre to ensure better flow of intelligence, nationally and regionally.

5. Provide the necessary environment for a stable and vibrant economy

◈ Strategic Concept:

The concept is to enhance our national security through economic growth, supported by favourable trading regimes that create new jobs, higher incomes, and improved economic opportunities that allow people to raise themselves out of poverty. Promote growth and financial independence through public sector support of viable private sector economic activities. Vibrant private sector participation remains critical for ensuring the economic sustainability of the nation. There is a need to seek international assistance and debt relief to assure macroeconomic stability; re-establishing confidence should translate into lower mortgage and interest rates. The economy should be gradually steered away from the export of primary products to value added products. There is a need to invest in the technological infrastructure necessary to leapfrog the nation to a Digital Belize.

◈ Strategic Action:

- A National Debt Management Strategy;
- A Poverty Elimination Strategy;
- A new Development Finance Institution that provides concessionary funding for Private Sector Development Projects;
- A national Infrastructure Development Plan;
- A national digital infrastructure development strategy;
- A national housing scheme for first time home owners with the aim of constructing 1000 houses;
- A national tourism development strategy;
- Efficient and equitable revenue collection system;
- A youth entrepreneurship centre;
- Develop sustainable partnerships with NGOs, regional and international agencies for specialist training in agriculture, livestock, manufacturing and service industries;
- Provide incentives to farmers to produce products for local and exports markets;
- An educated and technically competent workforce;
- An Amnesty program coupled with a new Immigration policy.

6. Strengthen the institutions of democratic governance

◈ Strategic Concept:

Transparency and accountability are key to good governance. Political, financial and legal reforms that involve the participation of the wider Belizean population, civil society and the business community will create an atmosphere of confidence in government affairs. The use of information technology, that is accessible to the public and business community in routine government procedures, will facilitate efficiency and promote good governance.

◈ Strategic Action:

- Revised Freedom of Information Act;
- Public Senate hearings on corruption and mismanagement by public officials;
- Constructive input from Civil Society and the Private Sector;
- Small Business Development Programme;
- Internal Affairs division of the Police Force accountable to Civilian/Police Board;

- Transparency and openness in government financial operations, contracts and projects;
- Office of the Ombudsman and Contractor – General further empowered to investigate wrongdoing and negligence on the part of the Department of Public Prosecution and the Magistracy;
- Public officers' asset declaration enforcement;
- Develop "whistleblower" legislation to allow for the prosecution of those engaged in corrupt practices in the private and public sector;
- Strengthen through training, understanding of the roles and responsibilities of statutory bodies, for CEOs, and the executive to create an environment of transparent, accountable and lawful decision making;
- Modernize the Supreme and Magistrates Courts and court systems to take advantage of efficiencies of information technology.

7. Improve delivery of healthcare at all levels and reduce the impact of health related threats

◈ Strategic Concept:

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.

Preventable health threats such as malnutrition, obesity and endemic diseases such as malaria, diabetes and dengue lead to premature deaths and affect the productivity of the Belizean people. This may require a comprehensive review of national surveillance and vector control capacity in order to mitigate existing and emerging health threats. The country must develop a cadre of rapid responders beyond just mass casualty approaches as well as enhance its mass casualty response capacity to be in a position to manage potentially devastating pandemic health threats such as HIV/AIDS and the Avian Flu.

The focus will be on wellness, preventive health services, early childhood nutrition and immunization, more and better equipped rural clinics, public health education, and the removal of GST from medical service and medications currently subject to tax. Government will need to expand support for Belize's health care system in general including the Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital and upgrade facilities at all regional hospitals to provide all basic testing and primary care services. The preventive health care needs of every child will be addressed, and a national school feeding program will be introduced at the primary level in partnership with the private and social sectors.

◈ Strategic Action:

- Develop a national wellness revolution addressing major preventable lifestyle diseases plaguing Belize (diabetes, hypertension, obesity);
- Improve and enforce public health legislation;
- Enhance strategic alliances with the private sector and NGOs;
- Legislation governing medical practice outlining the rights and responsibilities of medical professionals to their patients;
- Develop human resources for preventative, primary, secondary, tertiary and specialist healthcare countrywide;
- Develop well equipped hospitals and clinics for the effective delivery of all levels of healthcare countrywide, emphasizing wellness and primary care;
- Legislate occupational health and safety standards at the work place;
- Develop a Department of Mental Health Care within the Ministry of Health. Acute mental health centers and support systems for families of affected persons will be established at all regional hospitals;
- Provide Oncology and dialysis treatment facilities at the KHMH;
- National training scheme to train the general health care providers as priority not just the specialist;
- A proper retention policy must be developed and a review of conditions of service must be done to ensure quality personnel remain in the health care system;
- Establish appropriate incentives to attract and retain professionals;
- Develop sustainable partnerships with NGOs, regional and international agencies for specialist treatment and training;
- Develop sustainable mechanisms and international partnerships for response and mitigation of pandemics;
- Achieve drug demand reduction through the National Drug Abuse and Control Council (NDACC).

8. Reduce the risks associated with rapid and slow-onset of natural and human-caused hazards

◈ Strategic Concept:

Natural or man-made disasters are complex, potentially deadly events that often occur with little warning. 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 such as human-caused disasters. Existing emergency action plans developed by the twelve (12) National Operational Committees must be refined 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.

◈ Strategic Action:

- Develop centralized information database centre to enable precise damage assessment and needs analysis processing;
- National authority to influence infrastructure development that enforces disaster resistant construction regulation;
- Refined Mass casualty treatment plans;
- Enhance national building codes legislation to increase hazard resistant development;
- Enforce pollution and oil spills legislations. Hold stakeholders responsible to quick action, mitigation, and resource the agencies to clean up pollution;
- Amend and enforce the EIA related legislation;
- Secure highly trained medical, security, and operational planning personnel;
- Public education and awareness campaign on the importance of mitigation and the effects of rapid and slow onset hazards namely Hurricanes, Floods and Fires.

9. Improve and expand nationwide access to education up to the tertiary level

◈ Strategic Concept:

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

- ***Education for Self:*** Education must prepare each child to be the best he/she can be to create meaningful and happy lives;
- ***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 societ; and
- ***Education for Life and Change***: In a changing world, we must provide opportunities for life-long learning no matter why or when a person left 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.

The barriers to realizing this vision are many. The direct and indirect costs of education hinder access to education at all levels. It also impacts the provision of sufficient human and material resources. This combined with inadequate quality and lack of relevance of education undermines the effectiveness of the system to produce productive citizens able to contribute to the development of our society.

To overcome these barriers the following strategic action have been defined:

◈ Strategic Action:

Start Strong: Ensure Every Child Starts School Ready to Learn

- Create and provide access to high-quality preschool programs designed to prepare children for primary school. The first target in achieving this goal will be to expand access by attaching preschools to primary schools, especially in disadvantaged areas.
- Ensure that the preventative health care needs of every child are addressed through school immunization programmes.
- Introduce a National School Feeding Program at the primary school level in partnership with the private and social sectors.

Build Stamina: Get and Keep Young People in Schools for More Years of Learning

- Expand mandatory education to include secondary as well as primary levels with the introduction of 10 years of compulsory education for all.
- Provide a direct annual subsidy of $300.00 per student to qualifying first and second form students at enrollment to offset the high cost of school fees, in addition to the free tuition policy instituted by the UDP in 1993.
- Establish First and Second Forms as extensions of rural primary schools to give the rural population more education with less travel
- Standardize a core high school curriculum with vocational and technical options.
- Standardize high school textbooks and cycle usage for a minimum of 3 years.
- Allocate public funding to schools equitably by funding schools on a per-student basis.
- Provide basic literacy, numeracy and continuing education opportunities for both adults and youths who have left the formal system.

Raise the Bar: Put a New Focus on Standards

- Foster full competence in English, Mathematics, Spanish, and the Physical and Social Sciences for all students.
- Subsidize the cost of CXC Examinations (CCSLC and CSEC) to ensure that all students are able to take the exams at least in core areas.
- Create National Education Performance Standards and direct resources to under-resourced, underperforming schools to enable them to meet standards.
- Position remedial teachers throughout the school system to assist students in danger of failing.
- Support the development of after-school programmes to assist with homework, learning difficulties and provide healthy forms of recreation in arts, culture and sports.
- Activate the National Accreditation Council.
- Encourage the private and public sectors to support on-the-job training programmes and foster private sector grants, scholarships or other funding of tertiary level education.
- Expand courses at vocational and technical institutions, in partnership with the private sector, to develop a skilled labour force to meet the changing needs of new industries.

Teach the Teacher: Invest in Teacher Education and Professional Development

- Provide financial incentives for teachers to acquire professional qualifications.
- Encourage the provision of targeted Professional Development/In-Service Training for teachers by tertiary level institutions and other private providers.
- Establish a Continued Professional Development Fund for teachers to access loans for continued professional development.

10. Protect Belize's natural resources

◈ Strategic Concept:

Belize must preserve 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 Belize. Strengthening our engagement with international partners and our involvement in international efforts to manage the natural resources is equally critical and should be encouraged and supported at all levels to complement national development efforts.

◈ Strategic Action:

- Support the development of the National Protected Areas Commission and support the implementation of the National Land Use Plan and the National Protected Areas Policy and System Plan;
- Engage the National Protected Areas Commission for collaboration on protected areas management;
- Strengthen and maintain high level collaboration with international facilitating organizations such as the OAS;
- Engage, establish and maintain healthy working partnerships with local and international NGOs that have an interest in conservation and natural resource management;
- Develop and implement National Conservation Campaigns through joint partnerships;
- Develop and retain local expertise in land use management and environmental studies
- Establish and promote, in collaboration with the National Protected Areas Commission, legislation to protect current and potentially sensitive areas with high biodiversity;

- Increase support for public awareness and education program;
- Support the implementation of the Sustainable Forestry Planning and Management Program;
- Enforce, strengthen, resource the BNCG, Fisheries Department, and other enforcement agencies to manage the EEZ;
- Revitalize the CZMA&I and the development and implementation of an integrated coastal management plan. Also a re-definition of our coastal zone to ensure inclusion of all inland areas that affect the sea and all marine waters that affect inland areas;
- Promote environmentally friendly practices and legislation where necessary;
- Strengthen and enforce the EPA and EIA related legislation;
- Provide research and development technology for management of Belize's natural resources.

11. Achieve Food and Energy Security

◈ Strategic Concept:

The high cost of food, fuel, electricity, water, and telephone services is a major obstacle to economic development. Promote incentives for enterprise within these sectors by subsidizing and granting concessions and establishing partnerships with international agencies for technological training and expertise to maximize success. Utility providers must not stand in the way of competitors willing and able to provide lower cost service by means of the new technology that is readily available throughout the world. In the long term, a self-reliant, sustainable society is critical for economic stability and prosperity. The economy should be geared to production and manufacturing for subsistence and export.

◈ Strategic Action:

- Pursue and create conditions for natural energy and agro investment;
- National Refining Capability for Diesel and Gasoline;
- National Renewable Energy Utilization Plan;
- Research Grant Scheme - Provide finance to education institutions to engage in research and development of technology for management of Belize's natural resources and exploration of renewable energies, increase agriculture production and manufacturing;

- Develop sustainable partnerships with NGOs, regional and international agencies for specialist training in agriculture and manufacturing Import-Export;
- A national energy conservation campaign;
- An import substitution strategy;
- Enable small business owners to benefit from agriculture and energy industries;
- Develop a "Buy Belizean" campaign;
- Promote the diversification of energy sources and supplies by fostering diversity of sources of energy supply and modes/routes of transit so as to lessen the impact of supply disruptions, whether they are natural or man-made;
- Work with other oil producing countries to respond to supply disruptions, particularly through the use of strategic petroleum stocks;
- Pursue dialogue with major oil-producing countries to maintain responsible production policies to support a growing world economy and to reduce oil market price volatility;
- Work with other countries to reduce global dependence on oil and develop alternative energy sources;
- Adapt new technologies to increase production of basic food products such as corn, beans and rice for self-sufficiency and export;
- Provide low interest rate loans to farmers and entrepreneurs in the food industry to enhance production and sustainability;
- Implement an import substitution campaign to promote locally grown food products to reduce importation;
- Increase volume of exports to reduce trade deficits and generate foreign exchange earnings;
- Provide skills training for entrepreneurs in agro-industries;
- Provide finance for research and training in agriculture;
- Provide subsidy for agricultural inputs to reduce costs of production, hence, costs of living;
- Take advantage of natural resources with comparative advantages to produce food at competitive prices;

- Promote the use of alternate energies to reduce costs and dependency on fossil fuel.

Execution and Monitoring Programmes

Introduction

Pressured by the immediacy of today's concerns, government ministries and agencies often focus on current issues at the expense of strategic long-term thinking. Without a long-term view, policy makers lack the strategic perspective needed to achieve the goals of this vision. The absence of an institutionalised process for long-range national security planning results in a structural strategic disadvantage.

Overarching Issues

Achieving the Belize vision requires adopting strategic concepts and action plans that have a high probability of success while at the same time minimising risk of failure. Recognising that constrained resources require the development of innovative strategies and action plans that maximise 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 minimised.

With such plans in hand, the government will have the necessary information to carefully prioritise 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 prioritisations need to occur to ensure we attain the national security goals of Belize.

The National Security Strategy - Lead Agency Responsibility

A lead agency is the government ministry/agency designated to coordinate the day-to-day execution and oversight of ongoing security program. The lead agency chairs a working group with the supporting agencies to coordinate policy and develop action plans or supporting strategies related to particular programs. The lead agency ensures cohesion among the agencies and is responsible for implementing decisions. The lead agency reports progress through the parent Ministry to the National Security Council and Cabinet.

1. Maintain the Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity of Belize

◈ Lead Agencies: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of National Security

➦ **Rationale:**

- Has the responsibility of promoting and maintaining diplomatic relations outside of Belize.
- Strengths: Has the basic institutional framework for the management of Belize's foreign policy
- Shortfalls: Limited number of experienced career diplomats and specialist attachés and a limited number of diplomatic Missions around the world.
- Supporting Agencies: All Government Departments.

➦ **Rationale:**

- Chartered by law for the defence of the state. Additionally, it has manpower resources and expertise required to Maintain the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Belize. (With cooperation of other agencies.)
- Strengths: Has the required leadership, training, skills and operational experience.
- Shortfalls: Requires specific technical, material and human resources some of which are available from the identified supporting agencies.
- Supporting Agencies: All Government Departments.

2. Reduce violent crime and dismantle local, cross border, and trans-national criminal networks

◈ Lead Agency: Ministry of National Security

➦ **Rationale:**

- Is entrusted by the government with Administration of the Police Department who by law is responsible for the preservation of Law and Order within Belize
- Strengths: Has the required leadership, training, skills and operational experience.
- Shortfalls: Requires specific technical, material and human resources some of which are available from the identified supporting agencies.
- Supporting Agencies: BPD, Attorney General's Ministry, BNCG, BDF, Forest, Immigration, Customs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NGOs, Private Sector, Ministry of Housing, NCFC, Department of Corrections, FIU, Ministry of Youth, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, Income Tax

3. Strengthen the criminal justice system and ensure respect for the Rule of Law

◈ Lead Agency: Attorney General's Ministry

➦ **Rationale:**

- Senior legal office in Government with oversight of the justice system; the promotion of human rights; and the provision of legal aid
- Strength: Understanding of the law and the capability to prosecute offenders
- Shortfalls: Lack of adequate human resources, limited training and equipment
- Supporting Agencies: Ministry of National Security, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NGOs, Private Sector, Ministry of Housing, NCFC, Department of Corrections, FIU, Office of the Ombudsman, BPA, Customs, Fisheries, Transport, Income Tax, CAA, BACC (Airport), Forest Department

4. Protect Belize from Terrorism

◈ Lead Agency: Ministry of National Security

➦ **Rationale:**

- Is chartered by law for the defence of the state. Additionally, it has manpower resources and expertise required to Maintain the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Belize (with cooperation of other agencies). Is responsible for internal security and mandated to uphold the rule of law within Belize;
- Strengths: Has the required leadership, training, skills and operational experience.
- Shortfalls: Requires specific technical, material, additional specialized training and human resources.
- Supporting Agencies: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, BNCG, BTB, CAA, Attorney General's Ministry, Immigration, Customs, FIU, Private Sector.

5. Provide the necessary environment for a stable and vibrant economy

◈ Lead agency: Ministry of Economic Development

➦ **Rationale:**

- Is charged with developing GOB's micro and macro economic policies.
- Strength: Has the human resources with the technical expertise.
- Shortfalls: Limited perspective of other ministries' concerns and focuses.
- Supporting Agencies: Ministry of Human Development, Ministry of Labour and Rural Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NGOs, Private Sector, Ministry of Housing, NCFC, Department of Corrections, FIU, BDF, BPD, Immigration, BNCG, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Customs, Income Tax, Central Bank

6. Strengthen the institutions of democratic governance

◈ Lead Agency: Ministry of the Public Service, Governance Improvement and Elections and Boundaries (MPSGIEB)

➦ **Rationale:**

- Strength: MPSGIEB has direct oversight on governance issues
- Shortfalls: Lack of staff to spearhead governance issues

- Supporting Agencies: All Ministries, National Assembly, NGOs & IGOs

7. Improve delivery of healthcare at all levels and reduce the impact of health related threats

◈ Lead Agency: Ministry of Health

➦ **Rationale:**

- Charged with developing national policies on healthcare delivery
- Strength: Has the basic institutional framework and infrastructure
- Shortfalls: Lacks oversight of performance of medical personnel, lacks specialists
- Supporting Agencies: Ministry of National Development, Ministry of Human Development, NEMO, Ministry of Education, Attorney General's Ministry, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NDACC, NGOs & IGOs

8. Reduce the risks associated with rapid and slow onset of natural and human caused hazards

◈ Lead Agency: Ministry of Public Utilities & NEMO, Transport and Communications

➦ **Rationale:**

- Responsible for the management and mitigation of national disasters.
- Strength: Has established relations with NGOs, IGOs and friendly countries. Has an established national emergency management system led by the Cabinet of Belize and the National Disaster Preparedness and Response Advisory Committee.
- Shortfalls: Limited technical capabilities
- Supporting Agencies: All ministries, NGOs & IGOs, Private Sector, Friendly Countries

9. Improve and expand nationwide access to education up to the tertiary level

◈ Lead Agency: Ministry of Education

➦ **Rationale:**

- Responsible for developing, implementing, and overseeing national education policy.
- Strength: Has the basic institutional framework and infrastructure

- Shortfalls: Lacks education management professionals and subject area experts
- Supporting Agencies: Ministry of National Development, Ministry of Human Development, Business Community, University of Belize, Attorney General's Ministry, Ministry of Finance, Ministry Foreign Affairs, NGOs & IGOs

10. Protect Belize's natural resources

◈ Lead Agency: Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment

➦ **Rationale:**

- Manager of the nation's natural resources
- Strength: Issuing authority for the exploitation of natural resources. Have technical expertise in managing the nation's natural resources
- Shortfalls: Limited oversight capability, and inadequate human & material resources.
- Supporting Agencies: Ministry of National Security, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, NEMO, PACT, NGOs & IGOs

11. Achieve Food and Energy Security

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

➦ **Rationale:**

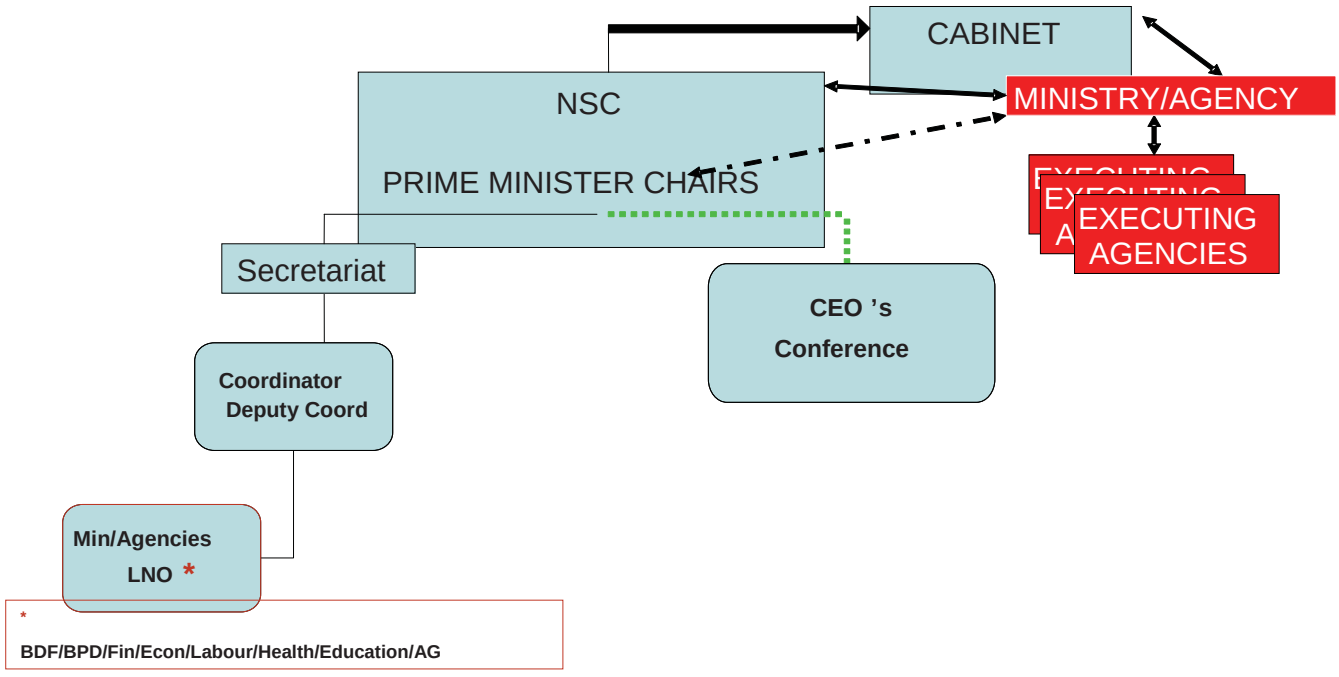
- Responsible for management and development of the production of food and energy resources
- Strength: Issuing authority for the utilization of natural resources. Have technical expertise in managing the nation's natural resources and natural resources are relatively under-utilized and government owned
- Shortfalls: Limited oversight capability, inadequate human and material resources, and R&D lacking in our education system.
- Supporting Agencies: All Ministries, NGOs, University of Belize, Private Sector, International Partners, and Financial Institutions

National Security Architecture

To reduce risk and achieve this vision, Belize requires an integrated national security architecture that develops policy, coordinates action plans, monitors execution, reviews progress and maintains a long-term perspective. Achieving these capabilities requires a redesign of the current national security architecture so that it provides long-range planning, coordination between cabinet ministers and their agencies and monitoring of security programs. Achieving this capability can be the difference between success and failure of the national security strategy.

A strengthened National Security Council Secretariat with adequate staff dedicated to enabling the development of strategic policy objectives is required to fulfill its original purpose. They need the capability to translate such objectives into executable initiatives resourced according to their strategic priority is essential to achieving this vision.

NATIONAL SECURITY ARCHITECTURE



Conclusion

Belize is the product of a particular set of historical, geographical and geopolitical circumstances that have combined to create a dynamic and progressive nation. However, because of the complex nature of the international system in which Belize participates, Belize faces a number of challenges that defy its sovereignty and the way of the life that the Belizean people aspire to achieve. Based on an identification of a number of fundamental national interests, the NSS exercise has identified eleven national security goals which, if achieved, should mitigate some of the most serious challenges facing Belize today.

Some of the challenges present themselves in traditional forms easily recognizable by leaders of centuries past. However, the contemporary, interdependent international system also offers a myriad of complex non-traditional challenges that require not only seamless interagency cooperation but also a high degree of coordination and cooperation with other states as well as IGOs, and local and international NGOs.

This NSS points to specific issues of concern and the lead agencies charged with developing more focused, sector-specific plans for confronting these challenges. There is an urgent need to improve coordination of the intelligence gathering arms of the Security Forces in disseminating their intelligence to ensure better flow, nationally and regionally. The National Security Council Secretariat should then receive timely and comprehensive analysis of a variety of possible traditional and non-traditional threats. In this way, the NSCS shall be able to formulate comprehensive long-term policies that ensure that Belize achieves the level of development that its people desire.

The underlying message of the NSS is that National Security is everyone's business and all Belizeans must play a part in maintaining the country's national security. All Government ministries, departments and agencies should critically examine their policies and directives and conduct their own internal assessment of the implications of their roles and structures. Individual citizens, the private sector and members of civil society groups are compelled to join in this process of transformation and take the necessary steps to contribute to the achievement of the national security goals and a safer Belize.

Glossary

BACC Belize Airport Concession Company

BDF Belize Defence Force

BNCG Belize National Coast Guard

BPA Belize Port Authority

BPD Belize Police Department

BTB Belize Tourism Board

CAA Civil Aviation Authority

CZMA&I Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute

Civil Society Persons or organisations that comprise but are not limited to non-governmental, non-political or non-commercial enterprises.

DPP Director of Public Prosecution

EEZ Exclusive Economic Zone

FIU Financial Intelligence Unit

Governance Exercise of power in the economic, political and administrative management of a country's resources.

ICJ International Court of Justice

Narco-trafficking Illegal trade in narcotics and psychotropic substances.

NCFC National Committee for Families and Children

NDACC National Drug Abuse Control Council

NSC National Security Council

NSCS National Security Council Secretariat

NSS National Security Strategy

NSSIT National Security Strategy Implementation Team

OPM Office of the Prime Minister

PACT Protected Areas Conservation Trust

Security Forces Term used to refer to military and law enforcement agencies

Trans-National Threats Threats that transcend national boundaries.