

BELIZE

No. 2/1/13

SENATE

Wednesday, 9th December 2015

10:08 A.M.

Pursuant to the direction of Mr. President, in writing, dated 4th December 2015, the Senate met in the National Assembly Chamber in Belmopan on Wednesday, 9th December 2015, at 10:08 A.M.

_

Members Present:

Senator, the Honourable Lee Mark Chang – President
Senator, the Honourable Godwin Hulse – Leader of Government Business
and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration
Senator, the Honourable Dr. Carla Barnett – Vice-President
Senator, the Honourable Francine Burns
Senator, the Honourable Macario Coy Sr.
Senator, the Honourable Stephen Duncan
Senator, the Honourable Aldo Salazar
Senator, the Honourable Lisa Shoman
Senator, the Honourable Anthony Sylvestre Jr.
Senator, the Honourable Patrick Andrews
Senator, the Honourable Markelm Lizarraga
Senator, the Honourable Rev. Ashley Rocke

Member Absent:

Senator appointed for the National Trade Union Congress and the Civil Society Steering Committee

MR. PRESIDENT *in the Chair*.

PRAYERS *read by Mr. President*.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Mr. President made the following announcement:-

“Honourable Members, by letter dated 4th December 2015, Cabinet’s recommendation has been signified to the following:

1. General Revenue Supplementary Appropriation (2015/2016) (No.4) Bill, 2015.
2. The OPEC Fund for International Development US \$12,000,000 – Reconstruction of the Hummingbird Highway Project Loan Motion, 2015.

3. Inter-American Development Bank – Sustainable Tourism Program II US\$15,000,000 Loan Motion, 2015.”

BILL BROUGHT FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration signified his willingness to take charge of the General Revenue Supplementary Appropriation (2015/2016) (No.4) Bill, 2015.

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved that the Bills be taken through all its stages forthwith.

Question put and agreed to.

PAPERS

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration:-

- 1/1/13 - Supplementary Appropriation (No.4) Schedule for Fiscal Year 2015/2016.

Paper was ordered to lie on the Table.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration made the following statement:

“Mr. President, Senators, I rise to make a statement with respect to a statement that was made on Friday, December 4, on the motion for the adjournment by the Representative for Toledo East in the House of Representatives, Honourable Mike Espat. During the statement, the Honourable Representative alleged that he had in his possession 14 nationality certificates which were part of a program initiated in the Immigration Department to effect and extract from poor residents of the villages of Bella Vista and Trio, who were duped by immigration officials. He further alleged that these 14 persons paid a thousand dollars to the Immigration Officials. He further stated that it was confirmed that Mrs. Maria Marin and Mrs. Ana Alpuche as well as Mr. Eden Martinez and the Chairman of the village of Bella Vista met with the people as part of this scam. Mr. President, I will stop there.

In this process of alleging and insinuating wrongdoing on the part of officials, he left no doubt in the minds of listeners that Mrs. Maria Marin, the Deputy Director, was presiding over a very corrupt department and even insinuated that she may have knowledge of this. In a very, what we consider venomous, and knowledgeable and tone of voice, he called for an investigation into this activity. Mr. President, to say the least, I was stunned by this revelation, by the exactness of his revelation, the confidence with which he exposed this information and the situation and confidence he placed in his street source. Mr. President, the facts of the case are as follows. On Thursday, October 29, 2015, I was informed, as then Minister responsible for Immigration, by the Chairman of Bella Vista village that some 12 persons had paid for and received nationalities certificates from an

operative who claimed to be an Immigration official. On Friday, October 30, 2015, the Chairman brought a copy of one of the certificates to the offices of the Department of Immigration. I convened a meeting with the Director and the CEO, who both like myself, immediately recognized this document to be a fake. Everything was wrong; the paper, the printing, no seal, a signature that bear no close resemblance to any Immigration Minister present or past, no oath on the certificate.

But it was obviously important that we find a way to apprehend the scam artist. So Mrs. Marin and I travelled to Bella Vista on Sunday, 31st October, to meet with these people for the purpose of: (1) checking on their legal status; (2) finding out exactly what occurred and how it was done; and (3): to get an exact idea of the person or persons with whom they were involved.

Present at that meeting was the Chairman of the village, a police officer, the Director of Immigration, myself and the Standard Bearer for Toledo East at the time and candidate, Mr. Eden Martinez. One by one the Director interviewed each of the 12 persons and checked on their legal status in the country and their preparedness to be witnesses in this case. While there, we learnt that another 10 certificates were being prepared for additional persons to be delivered on the following Monday. The persons were to travel to Belize City on Tuesday morning for a rendezvous with the operatives on Tuesday at 8:00 o'clock and to meet at a pre-arranged location. All the relevant personnel at the highest level of the security forces were informed, and arrangements were made to nab these persons in the act.

Mr. President, this was done and at 8:00 A.M. on Friday morning two persons were arrested. And they were subsequently charged and released on bail. Since it is public knowledge, both persons, the names are Mark Antonio Rosales and Marcos Basto, a former BDF Officer. The information is currently with the DPP's Office for prosecution.

Mr. President, these are the facts of the case. At no time was there any evidence, allegation, or assertion that anyone at the Immigration Department was involved. Therefore, any suggestion of wrongdoing or impropriety in the part of the Acting Director, Mrs. Marin, is not only wrong, false, and malicious and deserves the unequivocal and stern denouncement of the statements made by the Honourable gentleman, who abused his parliamentary privilege by calling the names of persons not present or capable of defending themselves in this forum.

I call on him for an immediate and public apology to Mrs. Marin and Mrs. Alpuche who was not involved at all and others whose names were called. It is the least he can do since he knows that these persons are defenseless against his utterances in these Chambers. But his words cast a shadow over the reputation of these persons across this nation and, indeed, across the world. And this is a terrible injustice to foist on any individual. I demand from him an apology on behalf of Mrs. Marin and Mrs. Alpuche, two of the hardest working and impeccable individuals at the Immigration Department.

Mr. President, Immigration has been the whipping boy of many, and indeed, many critics and also well-meaning Belizeans. And, indeed, over the years some persons procured nationality and passport who did not meet the legal requirements by engaging in deals with persons inside and outside of the department. Indeed, in the past this was facilitated for hundreds of persons by what could only be deemed ministerial decree, when instructions in the past and directives were issued

to the Director to prepare nationality certificates for persons, waiving all legal requirements, including security checks and fees.

The process when I became Minister of Immigration was still a very loose one to obtain nationality and the passport. The penalties for abuses were very low and the possibility of tracking the wrongdoers was difficult. Two years ago, Mr. President, in January of 2014, in this very Chamber, the law was amended and strengthened and the mechanisms improved to ensure not only transparency in the process but also accuracy as best as possible. The new law and process decoupled and, I repeat, decoupled the department and the Minister from a direct symbiotic relationship whereby the Minister could previously instruct the Director to prepare certificates for his or her signature. Today, files are prepared for nationality and go to a Nationality Committee made up of Government officials and social partners. My Honourable colleague, Senator Francine Burns, representing the AG's Ministry sat on that committee. Government officials and social partners review these files, and the names of persons who apply must be published for a three week period prior to the scrutiny by the committee. This is to give the public some time to comment. It's only after the committee has reviewed the file can the certificate be presented to the Minister for signature. The process is not finished there, Mr. President. The recipient must take an oath of allegiance. This is printed on the certificate and signed by a Commissioner of the Supreme Court and a public swearing-in takes place, and at that swearing-in the embossed seal is affixed to the certificate. Finally, the names of those persons who receive nationality are published once again for the world to see.

Visas, Mr. President, there was once a situation involving what could only be called a visa scandal. These are now in the hands of three CEOs for approval, and not the Director or the Minister or any officer in the department can issue a visa without the approval of the Visa Vetting Committee. The committee is made up of the CEO in the Ministry of National Security, the CEO in the Ministry of Human Development, and presently the CEO responsible for Immigration.

Passports, Mr. President, at the time of the atrocities that are reported to have taken place in 2012, passport applications required only the signature of a Justice of the Peace, any Justice of the Peace. Today, the signature of two persons, one in category A and one in category B, is required. This new process has created some difficulty for persons who find it complicated. But it is an aid to trying to ensure that, when the state issues a certificate, the state issues it to the legal, properly deserving person in his proper legal name. And the second part of that is to ensure that he is a Belizean. Mr. President, the law has also been strengthened from the past \$500 fine for impropriety and wrongdoing to a present \$50,000 fine with jail time from 5 years to 15 years.

So, Mr. President, we know, indeed, all of us know that in the past irregularities occurred. The department has taken persons before the Public Service Commission but lost on what seemed to be a clear-cut case on technicalities. The same occurred with 22 persons taken before the Supreme Court for procuring nationality by decent fraudulently. The department continues to strengthen processes and practices to prevent the reoccurrence of these situations. However, they're only as good as the persons operating these systems. So whenever any certificate or passport is detected, which was obtained without satisfying the legal requirements, such status shall be revoked and, as best as possible, persons involved shall be taken before the Public Service Commission for disciplinary action and the case handed to the police for appropriate charges to be laid. The department cannot guarantee the outcome of such actions but can certainly ensure that the object of their misdeeds, that is, to get nationality and a subsequent passport through, though succeeding temporarily, shall not sustain. So they shall know that they will not

profit from their wrongdoing. Hopefully this shall serve as a deterrent to those who would try it in the future.

I conclude, Mr. President, by asking all Belizeans to join in this effort to ensure that anyone who obtains nationality and a subsequent passport is truly deserving. The media should undertake to broadcast the names of persons which have been published in the gazette, that is why we publish them, for the world to see. It is like getting married, Mr. President. You don't do it in secret. You are marrying in to the Belizean society. All and everyone should know who you are and that you are an acceptable candidate. You have, we all have a duty, Mr. President, to report on these matters. We, as a family, are all in this and should only welcome deserving persons into our society.

I conclude once again, Mr. President, by calling on the Honourable Representative to offer his deepest apology for having used the names of both the Director and Mrs. Alpuche, persons who had nothing to do with what was reported to be this so-called scam. Thank you.”

MOTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OR SITTINGS OF THE SENATE

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved that, at its rising, the Senate adjourn to a date to be fixed by the President.

Question put and agreed to.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

A. GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

I MOTIONS

1. **The OPEC Fund for International Development US\$12,000,000 – Reconstruction of the Hummingbird Highway Project Loan Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved:-

WHEREAS, Member States of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), being conscious of the need for solidarity among all developing countries and aware of the importance of financial cooperation between them and other developing countries, have established the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID) to provide financial support on concessionary terms to developing countries;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize aims at reconstructing and upgrading the Hummingbird Highway which will involve costs in civil works, land acquisition, and consultancy services and supervision;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize has requested assistance from OFID in the sum of US\$12.0 million for partial financing of the Project;

AND WHEREAS, the OFID has approved an offer of a Loan of US\$12.0 million to the Government of Belize to finance 39% of the civil works component of the Project;

AND WHEREAS, the approved financing will be used towards the general mobilization and site preparation, earth works, construction of embankments and pavement, construction of 8 new concrete bridges; installation of necessary drainage infrastructure along the road and bridges, and the installation of utilities structures, street lighting and other protection and safety works;

AND WHEREAS, the terms and conditions of the Loan Offer are as follows:

Lender:	The OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID);
Loan Principal Amount:	US\$12,000,000.00;
Loan Term:	20 years (5 years grace period plus 15 years repayment period);
Grace Period:	5 years from the Date of the Loan Agreement;
Repayment period:	Repayment in thirty (30) semi-annual installments commencing October 15, 2020;
Purpose:	To reconstruct and upgrade 85km of the Hummingbird Highway, including the construction of 8 reinforced concrete new bridges with pedestrian sidewalks;
Rate of Interest:	At a rate of 2.75 percent per annum on the principal amount withdrawn and outstanding and payable semi-annually on April 15

and October 15 in each year;

Service Charge:

At a rate of one percent (1.0%) per annum on the principal amount of the Loan withdrawn and outstanding payable semi-annually on April 15 and October 15 in each year;

AND WHEREAS, under the provisions of section 7 of the Finance and Audit (Reform) Act 2005, the Government of Belize is required to obtain the prior authorization of the National Assembly, by way of a Resolution, for such a borrowing;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable House, being satisfied that the loan proceeds would significantly contribute towards the improvement of the regional road network and the socio-economic integration between Belmopan and Dangriga, approves and confirms that the Government of Belize may enter into a Loan Agreement with the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID) on the term and conditions set out above, and further authorizes the Minister of Finance to execute and deliver the said Loan Agreement and all other documents associated therewith.

After the debate thereon, question put and agreed to.

2. Inter-American Development Bank – Sustainable Tourism Program II US\$15,000,000 Loan Motion, 2015.

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved:-

WHEREAS, Belize being a member of the Inter-American Development Bank (the “Bank”), is eligible for development assistance in the form of loans, grants, and technical assistance from the Bank on such terms and conditions as may be agreed between Belize and the Bank from time to time;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize has approached the Bank for financial assistance in the execution of a Sustainable Tourism Program II;

AND WHEREAS, it is the intention of the Government to apply such financial assistance to increase the tourism sector’s contribution to national sustainable, and resilient socioeconomic, development;

AND WHEREAS, such goal consists of undertaking investments geared towards diversifying the tourism product in Corozal, Cayo, Caye Caulker and Toledo, enhancing the tourism services and experiences and increasing tourism expenditure, employment and

income; promoting disaster and climate resilient tourist destinations and environmental sustainability; and strengthening of national and local capacity for sector policy, destination planning and management;

AND WEREAS, the Bank has offered the Government financing of up to US\$15,000,000 from its Ordinary Capital Resources in support of Belize's Sustainable Tourism Program II under the following terms and conditions:

Lender:	The Inter-American Development Bank;
Loan Principal Amount:	US\$15,000,000.00 Ordinary Capital of the Bank;
Disbursement Schedule:	Over a period of five (5) years from the effective date of the Loan Contract;
Loan Term:	Twenty five (25) years from the date of signature of the Loan Contract, inclusive of a sixty-six (66) month Grace Period on Principal Repayment;
Repayment Period:	To be repaid in 39 semi-annual and consecutive, and insofar as possible, equal installments of about US\$384,615.38. First installment to be paid on the expiration date of the sixty-six (66) month period following the effective date of the Loan Contract;
Purpose:	To execute a Sustainable Tourism Program II;
Rate of Interest:	Lending Rate is based on the Single Currency Facility

Loan with a LIBOR-
Based Interest Rate;

Credit Fee:

A Credit Fee will be
at a percentage to be
established by the
Bank on a periodic
basis, not exceeding
0.75% per annum;

AND WHEREAS, under the provisions of section 7 (2) of the Finance and Audit (Reform) Act, 2005, the Government of Belize is required to obtain the prior authorisation of the National Assembly, by way of a Resolution, for such a borrowing;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable House, being satisfied that the Loan proceeds would significantly assist the Government of Belize in the execution of the activities and investments encompassing its Sustainable Tourism Program II, approves and confirms that the Government may enter into a Loan Contract with the Inter-American Development Bank on the terms and conditions set out above for financing the said Program, and further authorizes the Minister of Finance to execute and deliver the said Loan Contract and all other documents associated therewith.

After the debate thereon, question put and agreed to.

3. Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize of the Basic Technical Cooperation Agreement between the Government of Ecuador and the Government of Belize Motion, 2015.

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved:-

WHEREAS, the Framework Cooperation Agreement (hereinafter referred to as “the Agreement”) was signed on 13 August 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the objective of the Agreement is to promote cooperation between the Parties;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize is desirous of ratifying the Agreement pursuant to Article XII (1) of the Agreement;

AND WHEREAS, section 61(A)(2)(a) of the Belize Constitution as amended by the Belize Constitution (Sixth Amendment) Act (No.13 of 2008) provides that the Senate shall authorize the ratification of any treaty by the Government of Belize;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate authorizes the Government of Belize to ratify the Agreement, a full text of which is hereto annexed

Motion was referred to the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee for examination, consideration and report.

4. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize of the Agreement on Technical Cooperation between the Government of the Argentine Republic and the Government of Belize Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved:-

WHEREAS, the Framework Cooperation Agreement (hereinafter referred to as “the Agreement”) was signed on 22 October 2013;

AND WHEREAS, the objective of the Agreement is to promote and develop technical cooperation between the Parties;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize is desirous of ratifying the Agreement pursuant to Article XI (1) of the Agreement;

AND WHEREAS, section 61(A)(2)(a) of the Belize Constitution as amended by the Belize Constitution (Sixth Amendment) Act (No.13 of 2008) provides that the Senate shall authorize the ratification of any treaty by the Government of Belize;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate authorizes the Government of Belize to ratify the Agreement, a full text of which is hereto annexed.

After debate thereon, Motion was referred to the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee for examination, consideration and report.

5. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala for the Serving of Penal Sentences Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved:-

WHEREAS, the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala for the Serving of Penal Sentences (hereafter called “the Agreement”) was signed on 17 December 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the objective of the Agreement is to cooperate in the broadest way possible in the serving of penal sentences of persons deprived of their liberty in their respective country;

AND WHEREAS, this Agreement is based on the “Framework Agreement for Negotiations and Confidence Building Measures between Belize and Guatemala” signed on 7 September 2005 and the Road Map for Strengthening of the Bilateral Relations signed on the 24 January 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize is desirous of ratifying the Agreement pursuant to Article 7(6) of the Agreement;

AND WHEREAS, section 61(A)(2)(a) of the Belize Constitution as amended by the Belize Constitution (Sixth Amendment) Act

(No.13 of 2008) provides that the Senate shall authorize the ratification to any agreement by the Government of Belize;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate authorizes the Government of Belize to ratify the Agreement, a full text of which is hereto annexed.

(Suspension of the debate on the Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala for the Serving of Penal Sentences Motion, 2015.)

In accordance with Standing Order 10 (8) the Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved that the proceeding of the matter on the Order Paper be entered upon and proceeded with at the sitting at any hour though opposed.

Question put and agreed to.

(Resumption of the debate on the Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala for the Serving of Penal Sentences Motion, 2015.)

After debate thereon, Motion was referred to the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee for examination, consideration and report.

6. Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on the Equivalency of Studies and the Recognition of Educational Documents Motion, 2015.

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved:-

WHEREAS, the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on the Equivalency of Studies and the Recognition of Educational Documents (hereafter called “the Agreement”) was signed on 17 December 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the objective of the Agreement is to *inter alia*, grant equivalency of studies at the levels of preschool, primary, secondary and technical and vocational training in recognized institutions;

AND WHEREAS, this Agreement is based on the “Framework Agreement for Negotiations and Confidence Building Measures between Belize and Guatemala” signed on 7 September 2005 and the Road Map for Strengthening of the Bilateral Relations signed on the 24 January 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize is desirous of ratifying the Agreement pursuant to Article 4(6) of the Agreement; **AND WHEREAS**, section 61(A)(2)(a) of the Belize Constitution as amended by the Belize Constitution (Sixth Amendment) Act (No.13 of 2008) provides that the Senate shall authorize the ratification to any agreement by the Government of Belize;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate authorizes the Government of Belize to ratify the Agreement, a full text of which is hereto annexed.

Motion was referred to the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee for examination, consideration and report.

7. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on the Movement of Students through Terrestrial Ports of Entry Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved:-

WHEREAS, the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on the Movement of Students Through Terrestrial Ports of Entry (hereafter called “the Agreement”) was signed on 17 December 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the objective of the Agreement is to facilitate swift and safe passage of students of preschool, primary, and secondary level, who move daily from one country to another for academic studies and the same day return to their country of origin;

AND WHEREAS, this Agreement is based on the “Framework Agreement for Negotiations and Confidence Building Measures between Belize and Guatemala” signed on 7 September 2005 and the Road Map for Strengthening of the Bilateral Relations signed on the 24 January 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize is desirous of ratifying the Agreement pursuant to Article 4(6) of the Agreement;

AND WHEREAS, section 61(A)(2)(a) of the Belize Constitution as amended by the Belize Constitution (Sixth Amendment) Act (No.13 of 2008) provides that the Senate shall authorize the ratification to any agreement by the Government of Belize;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate authorizes the Government of Belize to ratify the Agreement, a full text of which is hereto annexed.

After debate thereon, Motion was referred to the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee for examination, consideration and report.

8. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on the Mutual Recognition of Driver’s Licenses Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved:-

WHEREAS, the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on the Mutual Recognition of Driver’s Licenses

(hereafter called “the Agreement”) was signed on 17 December 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the objective of the Agreement is to *inter alia*, mutually recognize the driver’s licenses issued by the competent authority of the other Party;

AND WHEREAS, this Agreement is based on the “Framework Agreement for Negotiations and Confidence Building Measures between Belize and Guatemala” signed on 7 September 2005 and the Road Map for Strengthening of the Bilateral Relations signed on the 24 January 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize is desirous of ratifying the Agreement pursuant to Article 4(6) of the Agreement;

AND WHEREAS, section 61(A)(2)(a) of the Belize Constitution as amended by the Belize Constitution (Sixth Amendment) Act (No.13 of 2008) provides that the Senate shall authorize the ratification to any agreement by the Government of Belize;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate authorizes the Government of Belize to ratify the Agreement, a full text of which is hereto annexed.

Motion was referred to the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee for examination, consideration and report.

9. Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on the Recovery and Return of Vehicles Stolen, Confiscated or Impounded Illegally or Inappropriately Motion, 2015.

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved:-

WHEREAS, the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on the Recovery and Return of Vehicles Stolen, Confiscated or Impounded Illegally or Inappropriately (hereafter called “the Agreement”) was signed on 17 December 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the objective of the Agreement is to *inter alia*, promptly return vehicles which have been found stolen or retained illegally in the territory of either of the Parties;

AND WHEREAS, this Agreement is based on the “Framework Agreement for Negotiations and Confidence Building Measures between Belize and Guatemala” signed on 7 September 2005 and the Road Map for Strengthening of the Bilateral Relations signed on the 24 January 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize is desirous of ratifying the Agreement pursuant to Article 9(6) of the Agreement;

AND WHEREAS, section 61(A)(2)(a) of the Belize Constitution as amended by the Belize Constitution (Sixth Amendment) Act

(No.13 of 2008) provides that the Senate shall authorize the ratification to any agreement by the Government of Belize;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate authorizes the Government of Belize to ratify the Agreement, a full text of which is hereto annexed.

Motion was referred to the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee for examination, consideration and report.

10. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala for the Protection, Conservation, Recovery and Return of Items of Cultural and Natural Patrimony which have been Stolen, Pilfered, Looted, Exported, Imported or Trafficked Unlawfully Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved:-

WHEREAS, the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala for the Protection of the Environment and the Sustainable Use of Resources (hereafter called “the Agreement”) was signed on 17 December 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the objective of the Agreement is to *inter alia*, establish the basis and procedures to cooperate on the matters of the protection, conservation, recovery and return of the archeological, artistic, historic, religious and cultural assets which have been stolen, looted, pilfered, unlawfully exported or imported or trafficked;

AND WHEREAS, this Agreement is based on the “Framework Agreement for Negotiations and Confidence Building Measures between Belize and Guatemala” signed on 7 September 2005 and the Road Map for Strengthening of the Bilateral Relations signed on the 24 January 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize is desirous of ratifying the Agreement pursuant to Article 9(6) of the Agreement;

AND WHEREAS, section 61(A)(2)(a) of the Belize Constitution as amended by the Belize Constitution (Sixth Amendment) Act (No.13 of 2008) provides that the Senate shall authorize the ratification to any agreement by the Government of Belize;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate authorizes the Government of Belize to ratify the Agreement, a full text of which is hereto annexed.

Motion was referred to the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee for examination, consideration and report.

11. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala for the Protection of the Environment and the Sustainable Use of**

Resources Motion, 2015.

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved:-

WHEREAS, the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala for the Protection of the Environment and the Sustainable Use of Resources (hereafter called “the Agreement”) was signed on 17 December 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the objective of the Agreement is to *inter alia*, design a framework for cooperation and strategic collaboration with the aim of improving the protection and conservation of the environment and of protected areas;

AND WHEREAS, this Agreement is based on the “Framework Agreement for Negotiations and Confidence Building Measures between Belize and Guatemala” signed on 7 September 2005 and the Road Map for Strengthening of the Bilateral Relations signed on the 24 January 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize is desirous of ratifying the Agreement pursuant to Article 5(6) of the Agreement;

AND WHEREAS, section 61(A)(2)(a) of the Belize Constitution as amended by the Belize Constitution (Sixth Amendment) Act (No.13 of 2008) provides that the Senate shall authorize the ratification to any agreement by the Government of Belize;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate authorizes the Government of Belize to ratify the Agreement, a full text of which is hereto annexed.

After debate thereon, Motion was referred to the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee for examination, consideration and report.

12. Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala for Sustainable Tourism Motion, 2015.

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved:-

WHEREAS, the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala for Sustainable Tourism (hereafter called “the Agreement”) was signed on 17 December 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the objective of the Agreement is to *inter alia*, enhance cooperation and collaboration in the tourism sectors based on equal rights and mutual benefits;

AND WHEREAS, this Agreement is based on the “Framework Agreement for Negotiations and Confidence Building Measures between Belize and Guatemala” signed on 7 September 2005 and

the Road Map for Strengthening of the Bilateral Relations signed on the 24 January 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize is desirous of ratifying the Agreement pursuant to Article 7(6) of the Agreement;

AND WHEREAS, section 61(A)(2)(a) of the Belize Constitution as amended by the Belize Constitution (Sixth Amendment) Act (No.13 of 2008) provides that the Senate shall authorize the ratification to any agreement by the Government of Belize;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate authorizes the Government of Belize to ratify the Agreement, a full text of which is hereto annexed.

Motion was referred to the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee for examination, consideration and report.

13. Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on Electric Power Trade, Transmission Interconnection and Grid Connectivity Motion, 2015.

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved:-

WHEREAS, the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on Electric Power Trade, Transmission Interconnection and Grid Connectivity (hereafter called “the Agreement”) was signed on 17 December 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the objective of the Agreement is to *inter alia*, promote cooperation in the power sector, including developing transmission infrastructure to interconnect the electrical systems, as well as the necessary norms that will enable the trade of electrical energy;

AND WHEREAS, this Agreement is based on the “Framework Agreement for Negotiations and Confidence Building Measures between Belize and Guatemala” signed on 7 September 2005 and the Road Map for Strengthening of the Bilateral Relations signed on the 24 January 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize is desirous of ratifying the Agreement pursuant to Article 7(6) of the Agreement;

AND WHEREAS, section 61(A)(2)(a) of the Belize Constitution as amended by the Belize Constitution (Sixth Amendment) Act (No.13 of 2008) provides that the Senate shall authorize the ratification to any agreement by the Government of Belize;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate authorizes the Government of Belize to ratify the Agreement, a full text of which is hereto annexed.

After debate thereon, Motion was referred to the Constitution and Foreign Affairs

Committee for examination, consideration and report.

14. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on the Harmonization of Operating Hours at Legal Terrestrial Entry Points Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved:-

WHEREAS, the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on the Harmonization of Operating Hours at Legal Terrestrial Entry Points (hereafter called “the Agreement”) was signed on 17 December 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the objective of the Agreement is for both parties to maintain twenty-four (24) hour operations at their legal terrestrial entry points;

AND WHEREAS, this Agreement is based on the “Framework Agreement for Negotiations and Confidence Building Measures between Belize and Guatemala” signed on 7 September 2005 and the Road Map for Strengthening of the Bilateral Relations signed on the 24 January 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize is desirous of ratifying the Agreement pursuant to Article 5(6) of the Agreement;

AND WHEREAS, section 61(A)(2)(a) of the Belize Constitution as amended by the Belize Constitution (Sixth Amendment) Act (No.13 of 2008) provides that the Senate shall authorize the ratification to any agreement by the Government of Belize;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate authorizes the Government of Belize to ratify the Agreement, a full text of which is hereto annexed.

After debate thereon, Motion was referred to the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee for examination, consideration and report.

15. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on Expedited Deportation Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved:-

WHEREAS, the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on Expedited Deportation (hereafter called “the Agreement”) was signed on 17 December 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the objective of the Agreement is to establish an expedited procedure for the safe deportation of those nationals of either Party who immigration status is irregular;

AND WHEREAS, this Agreement is based on the “Framework Agreement for Negotiations and Confidence Building Measures between Belize and Guatemala” signed on 7 September 2005 and the Road Map for Strengthening of the Bilateral Relations signed on the 24 January 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize is desirous of ratifying the Agreement pursuant to Article 4(6) of the Agreement;

AND WHEREAS, section 61(A)(2)(a) of the Belize Constitution as amended by the Belize Constitution (Sixth Amendment) Act (No.13 of 2008) provides that the Senate shall authorize the ratification to any agreement by the Government of Belize;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate authorizes the Government of Belize to ratify the Agreement, a full text of which is hereto annexed.

Motion was referred to the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee for examination, consideration and report.

16. Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on a Programme for Seasonal Workers Motion, 2015.

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved:-

WHEREAS, the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on a Program for Seasonal Workers (hereafter called “the Agreement”) was signed on 17 December 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the objective of the Agreement is to establish a general framework for the development of a seasonal workers programme;

AND WHEREAS, this Agreement is based on the “Framework Agreement for Negotiations and Confidence Building Measures between Belize and Guatemala” signed on 7 September 2005 and the Road Map for Strengthening of the Bilateral Relations signed on the 24 January 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize is desirous of ratifying the Agreement pursuant to Article 6(6) of the Agreement;

AND WHEREAS, section 61(A)(2)(a) of the Belize Constitution as amended by the Belize Constitution (Sixth Amendment) Act (No.13 of 2008) provides that the Senate shall authorize the ratification to any agreement by the Government of Belize;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate authorizes the Government of Belize to ratify the Agreement, a full text of which is hereto annexed.

Motion was referred to the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee for

examination, consideration and report.

17. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala to Facilitate the Issuance of Student Visa Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved:-

WHEREAS, the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala to Facilitate the Issuance of Student Visa (hereafter called “the Agreement”) was signed on 17 December 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the objective of the Agreement is to *inter alia*, exempt nationals studying in the territory of either Party from the student visa requirement;

AND WHEREAS, this Agreement is based on the “Framework Agreement for Negotiations and Confidence Building Measures between Belize and Guatemala” signed on 7 September 2005 and the Road Map for Strengthening of the Bilateral Relations signed on the 24 January 2014;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize is desirous of ratifying the Agreement pursuant to Article 3(6) of the Agreement;

AND WHEREAS, section 61(A)(2)(a) of the Belize Constitution as amended by the Belize Constitution (Sixth Amendment) Act (No.13 of 2008) provides that the Senate shall authorize the ratification to any agreement by the Government of Belize;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate authorizes the Government of Belize to ratify the Agreement, a full text of which is hereto annexed.

Motion was referred to the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee for examination, consideration and report.

II BILL FOR SECOND READING

1. **General Revenue Supplementary Appropriation (2015/2016) (No.4) Bill, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration moved that the above-mentioned Bill be read a second time:

Bill for an Act to appropriate further sums of money for the use of the Public Service of Belize for the financial year ending on the thirty-first day of March, two thousand and sixteen.

After the debate, a division was requested by Senator Lisa Shoman. The Senators voted as follows:

Senator Godwin Hulse – Aye

Senator Dr. Carla Barnett – Aye
 Senator Francine Burns – Aye
 Senator Macario Coy Sr. – Aye
 Senator Stephen Duncan – Aye
 Senator Aldo Salazar – Aye
 Senator Lisa Shoman – No
 Senator Anthony Sylvestre Jr. – No
 Senator Patrick Andrews – No
 Senator Markhelm Lizarraga – No
 Senator Rev. Ashley Rocke – Aye

Thereon, the result was that six (7) Senators voted “Aye”, four (4) Senators voted “No” and one (1) Senator was absent.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a second time and, pursuant to Standing Orders, was committed to a Committee of the whole Senate.

III COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE SENATE ON MOTIONS AND BILL

In accordance with Standing Order 68A, the Senate, without question put, resolved itself into the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee, a Committee of the whole Senate, to consider the Motions referred to it and, thereafter, in accordance with Standing Order 54, into the Committee of the whole Senate to examine and consider the Bill that was read a second time.

(In the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee)

MR. PRESIDENT in the Chair.

1. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize of the Basic Technical Cooperation Agreement between the Government of Ecuador and the Government of Belize Motion, 2015.**

Motion in its entirety agreed to.

Motion to be reported back to the Senate for adoption without amendment.

2. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize of the Agreement on Technical Cooperation between the Government of the Argentine Republic and the Government of Belize Motion, 2015.**

Motion in its entirety agreed to.

Motion to be reported back to the Senate for adoption without amendment.

3. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala for the Serving of Penal Sentences Motion, 2015.**

Motion in its entirety agreed to.

Motion to be reported back to the Senate for adoption without amendment.

4. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on the Equivalency of Studies and the Recognition of Educational Documents Motion, 2015.**

Motion in its entirety agreed to.

Motion to be reported back to the Senate for adoption without amendment.

5. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on the Movement of Students Through Terrestrial Ports of Entry Motion, 2015.**

Motion in its entirety agreed to.

Motion to be reported back to the Senate for adoption without amendment.

6. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on the Mutual Recognition of Driver's Licenses Motion, 2015.**

Motion in its entirety agreed to.

Motion to be reported back to the Senate for adoption without amendment.

7. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on the Recovery and Return of Vehicles Stolen, Confiscated or Impounded Illegally or Inappropriately Motion, 2015.**

Motion in its entirety agreed to.

Motion to be reported back to the Senate for adoption without amendment.

8. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala for the Protection, Conservation, Recovery and Return of Items of Cultural and Natural Patrimony which have been Stolen, Pilfered, Looted, Exported, Imported or Trafficked Unlawfully Motion, 2015.**

Motion in its entirety agreed to.

Motion to be reported back to the Senate for adoption without amendment.

9. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala for the Protection of the Environment and the Sustainable Use of Resources Motion, 2015.**

Motion in its entirety agreed to.

Motion to be reported back to the Senate for adoption without amendment.

10. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala for Sustainable Tourism Motion, 2015.**

Motion in its entirety agreed to.

Motion to be reported back to the Senate for adoption without amendment.

11. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on Electric Power Trade, Transmission Interconnection and Grid Connectivity Motion, 2015.**

Motion in its entirety agreed to.

Motion to be reported back to the Senate for adoption without amendment.

12. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on the Harmonization of Operating Hours at Legal Terrestrial Entry Points Motion, 2015.**

Motion in its entirety agreed to.

Motion to be reported back to the Senate for adoption without amendment.

13. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on Expedited Deportation Motion, 2015.**

Motion in its entirety agreed to.

Motion to be reported back to the Senate for adoption without amendment.

14. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on a Programme for Seasonal Workers Motion, 2015.**

Motion in its entirety agreed to.

Motion to be reported back to the Senate for adoption without amendment.

15. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala to Facilitate the Issuance of Student Visa Motion, 2015.**

Motion in its entirety agreed to.

Motion to be reported back to the Senate for adoption without amendment.

(In the Committee of the whole Senate)

MR. PRESIDENT in the Chair.

1. **General Revenue Supplementary Appropriation (2015/2016) (No.3) Bill, 2015.**

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Schedule agreed to.

Bill to be reported back to the Senate without amendment.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

A. GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

IV MOTIONS

(Adoption of Motions)

1. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize of the Basic Technical Cooperation Agreement between the Government of Ecuador and the Government of Belize Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee met and considered the above captioned motion and has agreed for it to be adopted without amendment.

Question put and agreed to.

2. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize of the Agreement on Technical Cooperation between the Government of the Argentine Republic and the Government of Belize Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee met and considered the above captioned motion and has agreed for it to be adopted without amendment.

Question put and agreed to.

3. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala for the Serving of Penal Sentences Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee met and considered the above captioned motion and has agreed for it to be adopted without amendment.

Question put and agreed to.

4. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on the Equivalency of Studies and the Recognition of Educational Documents Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee met and considered the above captioned motion and has agreed for it to be adopted without amendment.

Question put and agreed to.

5. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on the Movement of Students through Terrestrial Ports of Entry Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee met and considered the above captioned motion and has agreed for it to be adopted without amendment.

Question put and agreed to.

6. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on the Mutual Recognition of Driver's Licenses Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee met and considered the above captioned motion and has agreed for it to be adopted without amendment.

Question put and agreed to.

7. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on the Recovery and Return of Vehicles Stolen, Confiscated or Impounded Illegally or Inappropriately Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee met and considered the above captioned motion and has agreed for it to be adopted without amendment.

Question put and agreed to.

8. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala for the Protection, Conservation, Recovery and Return of Items of Cultural and Natural Patrimony which have been Stolen, Pilfered, Looted, Exported, Imported or Trafficked Unlawfully**

Motion, 2015.

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee met and considered the above captioned motion and has agreed for it to be adopted without amendment.

Question put and agreed to.

9. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala for the Protection of the Environment and the Sustainable Use of Resources Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee met and considered the above captioned motion and has agreed for it to be adopted without amendment.

Question put and agreed to.

10. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala for Sustainable Tourism Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee met and considered the above captioned motion and has agreed for it to be adopted without amendment.

Question put and agreed to.

11. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on Electric Power Trade, Transmission Interconnection and Grid Connectivity Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee met and considered the above captioned motion and has agreed for it to be adopted without amendment.

Question put and agreed to.

12. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on the Harmonization of Operating Hours at Legal Terrestrial Entry Points Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee met and considered the above captioned motion and has agreed for it to be adopted without amendment.

Question put and agreed to.

13. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on Expedited Deportation Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee met and considered the above captioned motion and has agreed for it to be adopted without amendment.

Question put and agreed to.

14. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala on a Programme for Seasonal Workers Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee met and considered the above captioned motion and has agreed for it to be adopted without amendment.

Question put and agreed to.

15. **Resolution Authorizing the Ratification by Belize to the Agreement between Belize and the Republic of Guatemala to Facilitate the Issuance of Student Visa Motion, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Constitution and Foreign Affairs Committee met and considered the above captioned motion and has agreed for it to be adopted without amendment.

Question put and agreed to.

V REPORTING AND THIRD READING OF BILL

1. **General Revenue Supplementary Appropriation (2015/2016) (No.4) Bill, 2015.**

The Leader of Government Business and Minister of Natural Resources and Immigration reported that the Committee of the whole Senate has considered the above-mentioned Bill, clause by clause, and has agreed upon it without amendment.

Whereupon the Senator moved that the Bill be read a third time.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

B. Private Member's Business

I MOTION

1. **Motion for the Senate to institute and conduct an enquiry and investigation in relation to the Ministries of Immigration and National Security.**

Senator Lisa Shoman moved:-

WHEREAS, section 61(A)(2) of the Constitution of Belize, Chapter 4 of the Laws of Belize sets out the powers and functions of the Senate as including:

“(d) instituting and conducting enquiries and investigations on any matter of public interest or importance, including inquiries into mismanagement or corruption by persons in the central government or public statutory bodies;”

“(f) requiring the attendance before it of the Auditor General, the Contractor General or the Ombudsman generally, in relation to the discharge of their duties and the execution of their functions;

(g) requiring the attendance before it of any Chief Executive Officer in a Government Ministry in respect of any matter of which he has knowledge by virtue of his office, or in respect of anything related to his office and the due execution of his duties; and

(h) requiring the attendance before any Committee of the Senate, of any Minister of Government.”

AND WHEREAS in November of 2015, one David Miguel Nanes Schnitzer, a citizen of Mexico, was found to be living in Belize under the assumed name of “David Banes”;

AND WHEREAS, it was reported that the said David Nanes Schnitzer is an international fugitive wanted for taking part in a scheme, where Mexican investors were defrauded of tens of millions of dollars and was arrested and charged and held without bail, at the Hatieville prison for two weeks; and that the said David Nanes Schnitzer, reportedly under the name “David Banes” was able to obtain permanent residence in Belize, was thereafter registered via a Certificate of Registration as a Citizen of Belize, was issued a Belizean passport, and was registered to vote in Belize Rural South;

AND WHEREAS, by **Statutory Instrument No. 83 of 2015**, which is dated November 18, 2015, and published in a Gazette Extraordinary No. 58 of November 18, 2015, the Minister responsible for Immigration and Nationality, the Honourable Godwin Hulse, in exercise of the powers conferred upon him by section 21(1) (c) of the Belizean Nationality Act Chapter 161 of the Laws of Belize, made an order, known as the **BELIZEAN NATIONALITY (CESSATION OF CITIZENSHIP) (DAVID BANES) ORDER 2015**, which states that:

“WHEREAS, it appears to me that David M. Banes also known as David Miguel Nanes and as David Miguel Nanes Schnitzer who was registered as a citizen of Belize as evidenced by

Certificate of Registration as a Citizen of Belize No. 28293/12 dated 17th November 2012, was so registered by means of fraud, false representation and the concealment of material circumstances and by mistake, I do declare that the above-mentioned David M. Banes shall hereby cease to be a citizen of Belize.”

A copy of this Statutory Instrument is attached to this Notice of Motion and is marked “ANNEX A”.

AND WHEREAS, the said David Miguel Nanes Schnitzer was not charged with the obtaining of the Certificate of Registration of Nationality No. 28293/12 dated 17th November 2012, by means of fraud, false representation and the concealment of material circumstances and by mistake, either before or after the said Order was gazetted, and was, released on bail a few days later on a separate and minor charge; and has since failed to report to the Police in San Pedro according to his bail conditions and has not since been found;

AND WHEREAS, the Prime Minister has admitted publicly that a request for the extradition of the said David Nanes Schnitzer was made by the Government of Mexico and that the circumstances surrounding the release of the said David Nanes Schnitzer has the potential of straining the good relationship of Belize with the Government of Mexico;

AND WHEREAS, there is no other information which has been provided to the Senate and the Belizean people as to how the said David Nanes Schnitzer was able to obtain Certificate of Registration of Nationality No. 28293/12 dated 17th November 2012, by means of fraud, false representation and the concealment of material circumstances and by mistake; nor does the Prime Minister know why and how this person was not kept under adequate surveillance by the relevant law enforcement authorities;

AND WHEREAS, the Prime Minister of Belize and the Minister of Immigration, the Honourable Godwin Hulse, have now and in the past made various public disclosures as to the finding of certain improprieties and irregularities in the processing and issuance of nationality certificates and passports issued by the Ministry of Immigration and Nationality including the ones issued to Won Hong Kim and to David Nanes Schnitzer;

AND WHEREAS, this resulted in the dismissal of the Minister of State in the Ministry of Immigration and Nationality in 2013;

AND WHEREAS, there have also been public allegations of the existence of a visa quota allocation system, and/or the sale of visas by certain persons as well as the public acknowledgement by the Prime Minister that Cabinet Ministers and others were recommending persons for visas;

AND WHEREAS, such public disclosures and public allegations and the issuance and subsequent revocation of nationality to David Nanes Schnitzer are matters of public interest and public importance which the Executive has not adequately addressed and

therefore now require that the Senate shall exercise its powers and fulfill its functions under the Constitution of Belize to conduct an enquiry and investigation and require the attendance before it, and question the **Chief Executive Officer in the Ministry of Immigration and Nationality** about the issuance of permanent residence, nationality certificates, passports and visas, and the **Auditor General** about inquiry into any mismanagement or corruption in the Ministry of Immigration and Nationality or by any person or persons in relation to the same and the **Chief Executive Officer in the Ministry of National Security** in relation to the measures taken by that Ministry and the Belize Police Department in respect of David Nanes Schnitzer;

AND WHEREAS, this is therefore a matter within the duties, rights and responsibilities of the Senate of public interest and public importance and **THEREFORE REQUIRE THAT THE SENATE EXERCISE ITS POWERS IN ORDER TO FULFILL ITS ROLE AND FUNCTION UNDER SECTION 61A (2) (d) OF THE CONSTITUTION OF BELIZE AND REQUIRE THE ATTENDANCE BEFORE THE SENATE of the Chief Executive Officer in the Ministry of Immigration and Nationality** about the issuance of permanent residence, nationality certificates, passports and visas, and the **Auditor General** about inquiry into any mismanagement or corruption in the Ministry of Immigration and Nationality or by any person or persons in relation to the same and the **Chief Executive Officer in the Ministry of National Security** in relation to the measures taken by that Ministry and the Belize Police Department in respect of David Nanes Schnitzer and to explain the measures taken and investigations done in that regard;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Senate shall be moved in the exercise of its powers, duties and responsibilities as set out in accordance with section 61(A) (2) of the Constitution of Belize, Chapter 4 of the Laws of Belize as follows:

- 1) To institute and conduct an enquiry and investigation and require the attendance before the Senate, the **Chief Executive Officer in the Ministry of Immigration and Nationality** about the issuance of permanent residence, nationality certificates, passports and visas, and the **Auditor General** about the inquiry into any mismanagement or corruption in Ministry of Immigration and Nationality or by any person or persons in relation to the same and the **Chief Executive Officer in the Ministry of National Security** in relation to the measures taken by that Ministry and the Belize Police Department in respect of David Nanes Schnitzer, to provide as much information and detail possible to the Senate as possible relating to the same;
- 2) To question these said persons and inquire into all matters involving the issuance of permanent residence, nationality certificates, passports and visas, and the inquiry into any mismanagement or corruption in the Ministry of Immigration and Nationality or by any person or persons in relation to the same; to question the **Chief Executive**

Officer in the Ministry of National Security in relation to the measures taken by that Ministry and the Belize Police Department in respect of David Nanes Schnitzer;

- 3) To examine all such persons as are required to attend before the Senate as witnesses, pursuant to Standing Order 72 of the Senate Standing Orders;
- 4) To hold and conduct its sittings and meetings in public.

Motion was seconded by Senator Markhelm Lizarraga.

After the debate thereon, question was put and a division was requested by Senator Lisa Shoman.

The Senators voted as follows:

Senator Godwin Hulse	-	No	Senator Dr. Carla
Barnett	-	No	
Senator Francine Burns	-	No	
Senator Macario Coy Sr.	-	No	Senator
Stephen Duncan	-	No	Senator Aldo Salazar
	-	No	Senator Lisa Shoman
	-	Aye	
Senator Anthony Sylvestre Jr.	-	Aye	
Senator Patrick Andrews	-	Aye	
Senator Markhelm Lizarraga	-	Aye	
Senator Rev. Ashley Rocke	-	Aye	

Thereon, the result was that six (6) Senators voted “No”, five (5) Senators voted “Aye” and one (1) Senator was absent.

The Motion was not approved.

ADJOURNMENT

The Senate adjourned at 5:46 P.M. to a date to be fixed by the President.

PRESIDENT

_**__**_***