

**Resolution Authorizing the Ratification of the Protocol to Amend the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas Motion, 2021.**

**WHEREAS**, the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), was adopted by a conference of plenipotentiaries in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on May 14, 1966, and entered into force on **April 1, 1969**. (Copy of ICCAT Convention is attached hereto at Annex I of this Motion);

**AND WHEREAS**, the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) was developed for governments to cooperate in maintaining the populations of tuna and tuna-like species of fish at levels which will permit their long-term conservation and sustainable use for food and other purposes;

**AND WHEREAS**, Belize acceded to the Convention on **July 19, 2005**; thus, becoming the 41<sup>st</sup> State (Contracting Parties) to join the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (the Commission) established under the Convention;

**AND WHEREAS**, the Commission is the body established by the Convention for the conservation and management of species under its purview;

**AND WHEREAS**, the Commission has the mandate to adopt recommendations that are binding on Contracting Parties, which includes Belize. As a signatory to the Convention, Belize is a full Member of the Commission and enjoys fishing rights, participation in the decision-making process, and voting rights;

**AND WHEREAS**, the Commission established the Convention Amendment Working Group in 2010, with a mandate to develop proposals to modernize and improve the effectiveness and strengthen the conservation and management of species under its purview;

**AND WHEREAS**, the Convention Amendment Working Group produced a new Protocol to broaden the scope of the Convention by explicitly including **elasmobranchs** (sharks, rays, skates) and thus providing the Commission with a comprehensive and firm legal basis for their protection; (A copy of the Protocol is attached hereto at Annex II);

**AND WHEREAS**, on **November 20, 2019**, Belize signed the Protocol to Amend the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) during the 26<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of the Commission which took place in Palma de Mallorca, Spain;

**AND WHEREAS**, ratification of the Protocol will permit Belize to demonstrate its ongoing commitment to the conservation and sustainable use of global fishing resources, as well as further demonstrating Belize's leadership role in the protection of the environment and careful husbanding of natural resources, consistent with Government's policies;

**AND WHEREAS**, ratification of the Protocol will further demonstrate Belize's commitment to the continued sustainable management of species regulated by this Commission and our dedication to the prudent use of high seas fisheries resources;

**AND WHEREAS**, section 61A (2) (a) of the Belize Constitution provides that the Senate shall authorize the ratification of any treaty by the Government of Belize;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that this Honourable Senate, being satisfied that the ICCAT Protocol will permit Belize to demonstrate its ongoing commitment to the conservation and sustainable use of global fishing resources, as well as further demonstrate Belize's leadership role in the protection of the environment and careful husbanding of natural resources, consistent with Government's policies, and in doing so being in the public interest of Belize, hereby authorizes the Government of Belize to ratify the Protocol to Amend the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) which was first signed by Belize **on November 20, 2019**.