

BELIZE

No.30/1/14

SENATE

Thursday, 26th October 2023

9:00 A.M.

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ORDERS OF THE DAY

- 1. Prayers.**
- 2. Oath of Allegiance of a new Senator.**
- 3. Announcement by the President.**
- 4. Bills brought from the House of Representatives.**

1. *Firearms (Amendment) Bill, 2023;*
2. *Trade Licensing Bill, 2022;*
3. *Fiscal Incentives (Amendment) Bill, 2023; and*
4. *Referendum (Amendment) Bill, 2023.*

(Leader of Government Business and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, and Immigration)

- 6. Papers.**

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| No. 71/1/14 | - | The Development Finance Corporation's (DFC) Annual Report for the Year 2022. |
| No. 72/1/14 | - | Belize Social Investment Fund Financial Statements for the year ended 31 st March 2023. |
| No. 73/1/14 | - | Central Bank of Belize - Annual Report and Statement of Accounts, 2022. |
| No. 74/1/14 | - | Central Bank of Belize - Revised Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for Fiscal Year 2023. |

(Leader of Government Business and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, and Immigration)

- 13. Motions relating to the Business or Sitzings of the Senate.**

14. Public Business.**A. GOVERNMENT BUSINESS****I MOTIONS** (*For Text of Motions see Notice Paper attached*)

1. Resolution Authorizing the Accession by Belize to the Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Customs Organization and on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters Motion, 2023.
2. Resolution Authorising the Ratification of the Agreement on the Return or Sharing of Recovered Assets Motion, 2023.
3. Inter-American Development Bank – Promoting Sustainable Growth in the Blue Economy Program - US\$7.0 Million - Loan Motion, 2023.

(Leader of Government Business and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Immigration)

II BILLS FOR SECOND READING**III COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE SENATE ON BILLS AND MOTIONS****IV BILLS FOR THIRD READING**

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NOTICES OF QUESTIONS AND MOTIONS

MOTIONS

1. **Resolution Authorizing the Accession by Belize to the Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Customs Organization and on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters Motion, 2023.**

WHEREAS, the Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Customs Organization and on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters (hereinafter referred to as “the Agreement”) was adopted in Havana, Cuba on 22nd May 2019, by the 41st Annual Caribbean Customs Law Enforcement Council (CCLEC) Conference;

AND WHEREAS, the objective of this Agreement is to achieve a balance between law enforcement, security, and trade facilitation requirements by focusing on high-risk goods to meet the needs of governments for the protection of society and revenue as well as to ensure the least possible customs interference with logistics of legitimate trade flows;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize is desirous of acceding to the Agreement pursuant to article 60 of the Agreement;

AND WHEREAS, section 61A(2)(a) of the Belize Constitution provides that the Senate has the power to authorize the ratification, including adhesion or accession, of any treaty by the Government of Belize;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable Senate authorizes the Government of Belize to accede to the Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Customs Organization and on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters, a full text of which is hereto annexed.

2. **Resolution Authorising the Ratification of the Agreement on the Return or Sharing of Recovered Assets Motion, 2023.**

WHEREAS, the Agreement on the Return or Sharing of Recovered Assets (hereinafter referred to as “the Agreement”) is grounded in the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas which established the CARICOM, and the CARICOM Crime and Security Strategy, adopted by the Conference of Heads of Government at its 24th Inter-sessional Meeting held in 2013, which underscored the importance of asset recovery as an effective tool against organized crime;

AND WHEREAS, the Agreement was signed by the Government of Belize in San Pedro, Ambergris Caye at the 33rd Inter-sessional Meeting of the CARICOM Heads of Government on 2nd March 2022;

AND WHEREAS, the object of the Agreement is to combat crime comprehensively, especially corruption, money laundering, the trafficking of illicit drugs and illicit firearms, ammunition and explosives, the proliferation of small arms, ammunition and weapons of mass destruction, organized crime, cybercrime, trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, as well as terrorism in all forms and manifestations, including its financing and other offence;

AND WHEREAS, the Government of Belize is desirous of ratifying the Agreement pursuant to Article 16 of the said Agreement;

AND WHEREAS, section 61A(2)(a) of the Belize Constitution provides that the Senate has the power to authorise the ratification, including adhesion or accession, of any treaty by the Government of Belize;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that this Honourable Senate, having examined the said Agreement, authorises the Government of Belize to ratify the Agreement on the Return or Sharing of Recovered Assets, a full text of which is hereto annexed.

3. Inter-American Development Bank – Promoting Sustainable Growth in the Blue Economy Program - US\$7.0 Million - Loan Motion, 2023.

WHEREAS, Belize, as 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, in an effort to enhance the Government’s ability to sustainably manage key commercial species in the fisheries sector; and promote the adoption of sustainable technologies and best fishing practices by artisanal fisherfolk, approached the Bank for financial assistance to finance a Program to support sustainable growth in the Blue Economy, hereinafter referred to as “the Program”;

AND WHEREAS, the Program will consist of two components whose activities will (i) create an enabling environment for the sustainable and resilient management of the fisheries sector; (ii) provide direct support to the sustainable development of the Finfish Fishing Industry; (iii) strengthen the sustainability and resilience of the Spiny Lobster and Queen Conch Fishing Industries; (iv) provide direct support to artisanal fisherfolk in Belize; and (v) strengthen the institutional capacity to improve data collection, management and analysis of information from the Fisheries Sector;

AND WHEREAS, it is intended that the execution of the project shall be carried out, on behalf of the Government, by the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Investment, acting as Executing Agency;

AND WHEREAS, the Bank has offered loan financing of up to US\$7,000,000.00 from its Ordinary Capital Resources for the said purpose under the following terms and conditions:

Lender:	The Inter-American Development Bank;
Loan Principal Amount:	US\$7,000,000.00;
Disbursement Schedule:	Over a period of five (5) years from the date of signature of the Loan Contract;
Loan Term:	Twenty-five (25) Years inclusive of sixty-six (66) months Grace Period on Principal Repayments;
Repayment Period:	To be repaid in 39 approximately equal, semi-annual, and consecutive installments of about US\$179,487.18;
Purpose:	To execute a program that will improve the income generation capacity of artisanal fisherfolk, and to maintain export levels of fisheries products while contributing to the sustainable use of commercial oceanic resource;

Rate of Interest:	Interest will be charged on the daily outstanding balance of the loan, as per the SOFR-Based Interest Rate, plus the applicable lending spread for the Bank's ordinary capital loans;
Credit Fee:	A Credit Fee will be charged on the undisbursed loan balance 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 authorization of the National Assembly, by way of a Resolution, for such a borrowing to take effect;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable House, being satisfied that the Loan proceeds would assist the Government of Belize in its efforts to mitigate the factors that can jeopardize the fisheries sector's ability to maintain its contribution to the Belizean economy in terms of marine exports and income opportunities for fisherfolk, 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, and further authorizes the Minister of Finance to execute and deliver the said Loan Contract and all other documents associated therewith.

(Leader of Government Business and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Immigration)
