



National Assembly of Belize

Office of the Clerk

P.O. Box 139, Belmopan, Cayo District, Belize Central America

Tel. (+501) 822-2141/2142 or 2144

E-mail: ClerkNA@bna.gov.bz

www.nationalassembly.gov.bz

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PRESS RELEASE

Parliament Participated at the 28th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth in New Delhi, India

Monday, 19th January 2026 – The Honourable Carolyn Trench-Sandiford, President of the Senate and the Honourable Marconi Leal Jr., Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, represented the National Assembly of Belize at the 28th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth (CSPOC), held in New Delhi, India, from 14th – 18th January 2026.

The conference, hosted by the Parliament of India, brought together Speakers, Presiding Officers, and senior parliamentary officials from over sixty Commonwealth jurisdictions. The forum served as a vital platform for dialogue, cooperation, and the strengthening of democratic governance across the Commonwealth. The conference was formally inaugurated by His Excellency Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, at the historic Central Hall of the Samvidhan Sadan, underscoring India's longstanding democratic traditions and its role as host of this significant multilateral parliamentary gathering.

Throughout the conference, the Belize delegation actively participated in plenary sessions, workshops, and bilateral engagements focused on contemporary parliamentary challenges and best practices. Discussions centred on key thematic areas, including the role of Speakers and Presiding Officers in safeguarding strong democratic institutions; the responsible integration of artificial intelligence in parliamentary processes; the impact of social media on parliamentary work; innovative strategies to enhance public understanding of Parliament and promote citizen participation beyond voting; and issues relating to the security, health, and wellbeing of Members of Parliament and parliamentary staff.

In addition to the formal sessions, the delegation engaged in a bilateral meeting with the Honourable Speaker of Lok Sabha, His Excellency Shri Om Birla. The interaction provided an opportunity to exchange experiences, strengthen inter-parliamentary cooperation, and explore areas of mutual interest aimed at enhancing legislative effectiveness and institutional development.

The National Assembly of Belize acknowledges the importance of international parliamentary diplomacy and capacity-building and reaffirms its dedication to applying shared knowledge and best practices to further strengthen Belize's democratic institutions.

While transiting through Mexico en route to India, the delegation took the opportunity, on Tuesday, 13th January 2026, to pay a courtesy visit to the Ambassador of India to Mexico, His Excellency Ambassador Pankaj Sharma. Also present with the delegation was His Excellency Oscar Arnold, Belize's Ambassador to Mexico.

The delegation was also accompanied by Mrs. Clarita Pech, Clerk to the National Assembly of Belize. All travel expenses were fully funded by the Parliament of India and the Embassy of India in Mexico. The delegation is scheduled to return to Belize on Wednesday, 21st January 2026.

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