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PRESS RELEASE

President of the Senate Represents Belize at 1st Caribbean-European Union (EU) Parliamentary Assembly

Friday, 27th February 2026 - The President of the Senate, the Hon. Carolyn Trench-Sandiford, Co-Vice-President of the Caribbean-European Union (EU) Parliamentary Assembly represented Belize at the 1st Caribbean-European Union Parliamentary Assembly held in Antigua and Barbuda February 14th – 18th, 2026 under the auspices of the Samoa Agreement, the new overarching legal framework for relations between the European Union and the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS).

The Assembly commenced with a solemn address by H.E Hon. Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, followed by key presentations, panel discussions and the exchange of views on several thematic areas.

On Territorial Integrity and Multilateralism, the President used the opportunity to update the Assembly on Belize and Guatemala's commitment to a final and binding resolution of Guatemala's territorial, insular, and maritime claim through adjudication at the International Court of Justice, and on the border challenges that persist. She also called for continued support from the OACPS and the EU for both the process and the implementation of the Court's judgment.

On the Situation in Haiti, the President expressed Belize's deep concern, affirming its solidarity with the people of Haiti, while underscoring the urgent need for elections, restored security, and a return to constitutional governance; reiterated Belize's support for CARICOM-led political efforts; acknowledged Kenya's leadership of the Multinational Security Support Mission, and pledged participation in it; and called on the EU, the United Nations, and the OACPS to strengthen support for urgently needed humanitarian assistance and to back Haitian-led, Haitian-owned solutions to the crisis.

On Climate Resilience, renewable energy transition and the Sargassum Crisis, the President underscored Belize's vulnerability to climatic events, highlighted its transition to renewable energy and shared how sargassum is impacting Belize's marine environment and the livelihoods of its people. She further underscored how unpredictable annual flows and expensive machinery are limitations for transforming sargassum into an economic opportunity and reiterated Belize's support for regional approaches to addressing the challenge.

On the Economic and Trade Partnership Agreement, investments, and the Global Gateway, the President outlined how, since 2008, the European Union's support through the CARIFORUM Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) has strengthened Belize's productive sectors, modernized trade institutions, and advanced reforms in customs, tariffs, and regulatory frameworks. She noted, however, that Belize continues to face challenges related to financing needs and evolving EU private standards, including deforestation requirements.

Looking ahead, she highlighted the opportunity presented by the Global Gateway Investment Agenda to reinforce Belize's trade policy through investments in green and digital infrastructure, renewable energy, and resilient systems, ensuring that the EPA continues to deliver sustainable growth, enhanced competitiveness, and shared prosperity.

The President also participated in the Women's Forum - "Women as Changemakers in Economy and Business" and Co-Chaired the Youth Forum - "From Vision to Action: Empowering Youth in Climate Resilience" The meeting concluded with the adoption of recommendations by the Caribbean-EU Parliamentary Assembly to the Caribbean-EU Council of Ministers on these and other areas of interest. The cost of the President's participation was met by the OACPS-EU Partnership. For more information contact the President of the Senate at President.Senate@bna.gov.bz.

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