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Joint Press Release

Belize Hosts Regional Forum on Innovative Solutions to Strengthen Citizen Security and Access to Justice

Belize City – The Government of Belize, together with the U.S. Government, through the United States Agency for International Development, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), inaugurated the international forum on Innovative Solutions to strengthen Citizen Security and Access to Justice. The forum is being held in Umaya Resort, Placencia Village, Belize. Participating countries include Belize, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.

The two-day event, an activity under USAID's and the UNDP's Evidence-based Information Management for Citizen Security in Central America and the Dominican Republic project (InfoSegura) will provide space to share experiences and best practices to enhance citizen security and access to justice in Central America and the Dominican Republic and effective governance in the context of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals on Peace, Security and Justice. Topics that will be discussed include innovative solutions for strengthening access to justice; the use of technology in justice processes; security; and youth violence prevention.

UNDP's Deputy Resident Representative, Ian King welcomed all participants and expressed his sincere appreciation for attending the first Infosegura regional meeting held in Belize to foster creative ideas, share best practices and emerging lessons. Mr. King further emphasized that the use of evidence-based data is integral for decision makers to make strategic legal, policy, and operational interventions to make Belize a safer place for all. UNDP expresses gratitude to USAID for our long-standing partnership, to the Regional Infosegura Team, and of course the Government of Belize for the continued investment in the work of citizen security.

In his remarks Hon. Kareem Musa, Minister of Home Affairs and New Growth Industries added that "the UNDP InfoSegura Regional Project deploys an innovative model that is a qualitative leap in managing information on citizen security and justice in the region". He further emphasized that the joint work between the institutions and the UNDP InfoSegura has been reflected "in information produced and multidimensional analysis carried out to inform evidence-based decision-making, enhanced Belize Crime Observatory capacity for data management on offenses and violence; improved training in the management of information on crime and violence information, and created data ecosystems by consolidating information systems connecting different institutions in the security and justice sectors".

"This forum shows how working together and sharing experiences and knowledge takes us along the path toward greater citizen security and access to justice in Central America and Dominican Republic," said USAID Regional Director for Central America and Mexico Programs Christopher M. Cushing.

The USAID-UNDP Regional InfoSegura project provides countries in the Central American region and Dominican Republic the data and statistics they need to develop effective crime prevention strategies and programs. The project also trains institutions and civil society in understanding and analyzing crime data. In Belize, InfoSegura has been supporting the Ministry of Home Affairs and New Growth Industries and its Belize Crime Observatory and key partner agencies since May 2014, with the goal of enhancing access to justice, and strengthening policies within the Ministry to improve citizen security.

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