

JOINT COMMUNIQUE

MEETING OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF BELIZE AND GUATEMALA

1. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Belize and of Guatemala along with their delegations held a successful and productive meeting on 9th January 2014, in Belize City, to discuss various matters of mutual interest.

2. They agreed that it is necessary to build more bridges and not a wall between our two countries. Both agreed that Belize and Guatemala must be partners in development and security and that they have many challenges to overcome jointly.

3. In this context the Foreign Ministers agreed to establish, as soon as possible, a Joint Commission of the two countries, in accordance with article 20 of the AGREEMENT ON A FRAMEWORK FOR NEGOTIATIONS AND CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURES BETWEEN BELIZE AND GUATEMALA which will be headed by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belize and the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala, with the support of the OAS, with a view to enhancing the implementation of the Confidence Building Measures and the proposing of other measures that will contribute to the strengthening of the bilateral relations and the avoidance of any conflict.

4. The Foreign Ministers instructed the CEO and the Vice Minister to define a Road Map for 2014, scheduling a series of meetings of various sectors, to facilitate greater exchanges that will promote confidence and cooperation between both peoples and governments. They agreed on the need to promote dialogue between parliamentarians, the private sector, local authorities, academia, churches, cultural and educational sectors among others, as the best way to create a climate of confidence conducive to the fixing of a date to hold the necessary referenda to lead to the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

5. The Ministers agreed that political dialogue and direct communication channels between the authorities of both governments should be maintained since this is the best manner of avoiding any incidents. Likewise, they agreed on the critically important role of the Secretary General of the OAS and the need to maintain the OAS Office at the Adjacency Zone.

6. The Ministers also agreed to continue the dialogue to enable advances in the implementation of the Special Agreement of 2008.

7. The Ministers agreed to maintain close cooperation including in the various organizations and mechanisms of which Belize and Guatemala are both members.

8. The Ministers agreed to meet again, next June, to evaluate the work entrusted to the CEO and the Vice Minister.

9. The Ministers addressed the need to identify the necessary financing for the functioning of the OAS Office at the Adjacency Zone. They agreed to meet with the Secretary General of the OAS, H.E. Jose Miguel Insulza, on 24th January 2014, to coordinate the holding of a meeting of the Belize - Guatemala Group of Friends and to discuss other issues.

Belize City, January 9, 2014