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Joint Public Accounts Committee Three-Day Training Programme Concludes

-Wednesday, 29th July 2026- A three-day training programme for Members of the **Joint Public Accounts Committee (JPAC)** was held from Monday, 27th July to Wednesday, 29th July 2026.

Facilitated by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) in collaboration with the Canadian Audit and Accountability Foundation (CAAF), the programme was designed to strengthen the Committee's capacity to scrutinise public expenditure, examine audit findings and promote transparent, accountable public financial management.

Day One explored the role and mandate of Public Accounts Committees, their relationship with the Office of the Auditor General, the selection of inquiry topics and the importance of access to information. Ms. Maria Rodriguez, Auditor General, led a session offering practical insight into the work of her Office, complemented by virtual presentations from Hon. David Agius of Malta and Hon. Akerria Missick of the Turks and Caicos Islands, who provided a comparative view of how Public Accounts Committees operate across the region.

Day Two turned to the practicalities of oversight, conducting public hearings, developing effective lines of questioning, managing witnesses and preparing clear, evidence-based reports. Virtual contributions came from Ms. Rosemarie Douglas Beckford, Public Accounts Committee (PAC) Clerk of Jamaica; Ms. Khisha Peterkin, PAC Assistant Secretary of Trinidad and Tobago; and Hon. Tanya August Phillips of the Isle of Man, who shared good practices from their respective parliaments.

The final day underscored the importance of an independent Office of the Auditor General, with a presentation by Mr. Benjamin Fuentes, Senior Manager for Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) Governance at the INTOSAI Development Initiative (IDI) and examined effective systems for monitoring the implementation of Committee recommendations. Drawing on the knowledge gained throughout the programme, Members and officials then worked together to develop a Plan of Action, a practical roadmap to guide the Committee's ongoing work and strengthen its oversight function.

In his closing remarks, Mr. Marshall Tisdale of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) commended the National Assembly: "Belize continues to be one of the CPA's most active and engaged member Parliaments, consistently demonstrating a commitment to strengthening its parliamentary institutions. Effective financial scrutiny is fundamental to good governance, transparency and public trust, and the work of JPAC has a direct impact on ensuring that public resources are managed responsibly and in the best interests of the people of Belize."

The National Assembly extends its appreciation to CPA and the CAAF for coordinating and facilitating the programme.

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