



Statement by Ms. Sasha Dixon, Counsellor
Permanent Mission of The Bahamas to the United Nations Office and Other
International Organizations in Geneva
at the 45th Session of the Universal Periodic Review Working Group
Presentation of National Report by the Government of Belize
29 January 2024

Thank you, Madam Vice President.

The Bahamas extends a warm welcome to the high-level delegation of its sister CARICOM State of Belize and congratulates Belize on strides made in the promotion and protection of human rights, despite the challenges of limited human and financial resources, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the devastation wrought by Hurricane Lisa, in 2022.

The Bahamas welcomes the support accorded by Belize to two (2) of the three (3) recommendations made by The Bahamas during the last review and lauds the strides made in these areas, including steps toward strengthening of the Inter-Institutional Review Committee (IRC) to serve as the National Mechanism for Implementation, Reporting and Follow-up (NMIRF) and efforts to address high school dropout rates. Other noteworthy areas of progress include raising the compulsory school age to ensure that youth, especially those disadvantaged by the pandemic, have access to formal education and the development of the Road Map to End Child Marriage and Early Unions in Belize. We also encourage Belize to positively consider our previous recommendation to extend a standing invitation to the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council.

With a view toward further progress, The Bahamas **recommends** that Belize:

- i. Continue to strengthen national emergency and disaster response systems;
- ii. Accelerate efforts to implement the envisaged National Social Protection Policy and Strategy through an evidence-based approach

and

- iii. Seek and avail itself of technical assistance and capacity-building support in the field of human rights, including from the OHCHR, in accordance with its needs and priorities.

We wish Belize every success in this UPR process.

I thank you.