

BELIZE

In preparing Belize's response to the 1st round questionnaire, we were pleased to report that Belize has taken several measures to implement the convention which complement our existing measures in support of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption.

We have 2 sets of similar Codes of Conduct: one is in our Constitution and the other is part of our Public Service Regulations. The Codes of Conduct apply to all government officials and public servants. We have enacted several mechanisms to support the Codes of Conduct, which produced desired results. In the questionnaire, we mentioned a very prominent case where the judge was removed from office for using his office corruptly for private gain. This case was quite remarkable because at one point judges were quite immune to the law.

We also have an Integrity Commission and three Services Commissions with the power to charge and discipline public officers accused of corruption.

We have several statutes which support the convention, including the Prevention of Corruption in Public Life Act, a Finance and Audit Act, which we are currently revising to include provisions on Public Procurement and, of course, we have our Public Service Regulations.

With regard to reporting: Public Officials may be called to report acts of corruption in public office of which they are aware and they must respond to summons or face fines or imprisonment.

We have provisions regarding the financial disclosure and summaries of those disclosures are published.

With regard to access to information, we have a Freedom of Information Act, which facilitates access to information; and we allow the registry of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), some with mandates, to gather information and deter corruption.

Finally, as for Assistance and Corporation, we are in the process of, in some cases, negotiating several treaties and in some cases, enacting local provision, for several treaties on Mutual Legal Assistance, which guard against corruption.

And the Government of Belize is committed to doing what is necessary to further the Convention to ensure accountability and transparency from our public officials and in public service.