



## ---Joint Press Release---

### Congratulations to the Hon. John Briceno and His New Administration

**Belize City – November 12, 2020** - Today, the LGBTQ community stand with thousands of Belizeans – people fighting for equity and justice, feminists, immigrants, youth, and other people of good conscience—to congratulate the People’s United Party, in winning majority seats in November 2020’s General Election.

We celebrate the election of Honorable John Briceno to the office of Prime Minister. In our generation, Honorable John Briceno will become the first Prime Minister to not represent a Belize City constituency. The historic significance and symbolic magnitude of his election and what it represents to all people who have lived in the shadow of discrimination and inequity cannot be overstated.

For years, the LGBTQ voters in Belize have faced hundreds of attacks against our collective and individual rights due to the lack of political will from previous administrations—inaction which limited our families’ protection within adequate social security systems, restrained our ability to access legal protections, and threatened our safety and well-being from discrimination.

Today, we take a moment to celebrate, to take a deep breath and imagine a new, more hopeful chapter in our ongoing struggle for full equality and humanity. While the nation celebrates, we also know that many LGBTQ people still suffer the pain of harassment, and discrimination. Transgender women still live in fear of brutal violence and daily assaults on their very identity. Queer youth are still disowned by their families and bullied at school. There is still so much to be done.

The election of Honorable John Briceno and the PUP does not mean those struggles have ended, nor does their election end the deep divisions we have experienced as a nation over the past years. But it does mean that our leaders in the National Assembly share a vision of a nation that includes our community as full and equal participants. From that starting point, we can continue to build a better, more inclusive, and just world for all.



We look forward to working with the PUP to immediately ensure that:

- subscribers of the Social Security Scheme have autonomy over who their beneficiaries will be;
- data about LGBT victims is collected by the Belize Police Department in order to support the need for a Hate Crimes Legislation; and
- revisiting the Tribunal and Commission proposed in the draft Equal Opportunity Bill to ensure the bill can go through its rightful democratic process.

We are right to celebrate today, but Belize Trans Colors, Belize Youth Empowerment for Change, Empower Yourself Belize Movement, Our Circle, Promoting Empowerment Through Awareness for Les/Bi Women and the United Belize Advocacy Movement look forward to working with the new PUP Administration and leaders to create a Belize in which we embrace the slogan ***todos ganamos*** as healthy, equal, and complete members of society.

Today, we celebrate the possibilities and embrace the dream of full equality. Tomorrow, we go back to work.

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