

# Government

**Names:**

*conventional long form:* none  
*conventional short form:* Belize  
*former:* British Honduras

**Digraph:** BH

**Type:** parliamentary democracy

**Capital:** Belmopan

**Administrative divisions:** 6 districts; Belize, Cayo, Corozal, Orange Walk, Stann Creek, Toledo

**Independence:** 21 September 1981 (from UK)

**National holiday:** Independence Day, 21 September (1981)

**Constitution:** 21 September 1981

**Legal system:** English law

**Suffrage:** 18 years of age; universal

**Executive branch:**

*chief of state:* Queen ELIZABETH II (since 6 February 1952), represented by Governor General Sir Colville YOUNG (since 17 November 1993)

*head of government:* Prime Minister Manuel ESQUIVEL (since July 1993); Deputy Prime Minister Dean BARROW (since NA 1993)

*cabinet:* Cabinet; appointed by the governor general on advice from the prime minister

**Legislative branch:** bicameral National Assembly

*Senate:* consists of an 8-member appointed body; 5 members are appointed on the advice of the prime minister, 2 on the advice of the leader of the opposition, and 1 after consultation with the Belize Advisory Council (this council serves as an independent body to advise the governor-general with respect to difficult decisions such as granting pardons, commutations, stays of execution, the removal of justices of appeal who appear to be incompetent, etc.)

*National Assembly:* elections last held 30 June 1993 (next to be held June 1998); results - percent of vote by party NA; seats - (28 total) PUP 13 UDP 15

**Judicial branch:** Supreme Court

**Political parties and leaders:** People's United Party (PUP), George PRICE, Florencio MARIN, Said MUSA; United Democratic Party (UDP), Manuel ESQUIVEL, Dean LINDO, Dean BARROW; National Alliance for Belizean Rights, Philip GOLDSON

**Other political or pressure groups:** Society for the Promotion of Education and Research (SPEAR), Assad SHOMAN; United Workers Front, leader NA

**Member of:** ACP, C, CARICOM, CDB, ECLAC, FAO, G-77, GATT, IADB, IBRD, ICAO, ICFTU, ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRC, ILO, IMF, IMO, INTELSAT (nonsignatory user), INTERPOL, IOC, IOM (observer), ITU, LAES, NAM, OAS, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UPU, WCL, WHO, WMO

**Diplomatic representation in US:**

*chief of mission:* Ambassador Dean R. LINDO  
*chancery:* 2535 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20008  
*telephone:* [1] (202) 332-9636  
*FAX:* [1] (202) 332-6888  
*consulate(s) general:* Los Angeles  
*consulate(s):* New York

**US diplomatic representation:**

*chief of mission:* Ambassador George Charles BRUNO  
*embassy:* Gabourel Lane and Hutson Street, Belize City  
*mailing address:* P. O. Box 286, Belize City; APO: Unit 7401, APO AA 34025  
*telephone:* [501] (2) 77161 through 77163  
*FAX:* [501] (2) 30802

**Flag:** blue with a narrow red stripe along the top and the bottom edges; centered is a large white disk bearing the coat of arms; the coat of arms features a shield flanked by two workers in front of a mahogany tree with the related motto SUB UMBRA FLOREO (I Flourish in the Shade) on a scroll at the bottom, all encircled by a green garland

## Defense Forces

**Branches:** Belize Defense Force (includes Army, Navy, Air Force, and Volunteer Guard), Belize National Police

**Manpower availability:** males age 15-49 50,499; males fit for military service 30,040; males reach military age (18) annually 2,285 (1995 est.)

**Defense expenditures:** exchange rate conversion - \$11 million, 2.2% of GDP (FY93/94)