



Check Against Delivery

OPENING REMARKS
Claude Haylock
Director General and Deputy Chairman

**Acknowledgment Ceremony in recognition of the certificates
of our Fraud Risk Management and AML-CFT-CPF programs
and,
Celebration of the 2nd anniversary of the Institute of Banking
and Finance.**

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

It is truly an honour and a privilege to join you today. On behalf of the Financial Services Commission, I extend heartfelt congratulations to the University of Belize team on the remarkable achievement of reaching the two-year anniversary of the Institute of Banking and Finance. Witnessing the tremendous progress of this initiative over the past two years has been nothing short of inspiring.

Today, we also celebrate the accomplishments of those who have successfully completed the Anti-Money Laundering & Fraud Risk Management certification program. Your dedication, perseverance, and commitment to professional growth are commendable. By investing in your development, you are not only advancing your careers but also contributing significantly to the strength and integrity of Belize's financial sector. We are immensely proud of what you have achieved.

The FSC remains committed to supporting the advancement of knowledge and excellence in Anti-Money Laundering, Countering the Financing of Terrorism, and Combating Proliferation Financing. The work being done by the Institute, its students, and key partners is critical to building a resilient and transparent financial system. By sharing essential knowledge and fostering sound financial practices, we are collectively shaping a future that benefits our entire country.

However, as we reflect on the achievements of the past two years, it is important to revisit one of the core reasons for establishing the Institute: to promote quality training and educational programs that meet the evolving needs of Belize's financial services sector. The Institute was envisioned to be innovative and responsive to the expanding needs of the business and financial community, developing creative synergies that foster and enhance sustained growth within the industry.

While the focus on Anti-Money Laundering training has been a critical and commendable contribution, we must recognize that the needs of the financial services industry are broad and dynamic. For the Institute to fully realize its mandate, there is a clear need to widen its course offerings to address these diverse requirements. From emerging areas such as fintech, digital transformation, and risk management, to leadership development and financial innovation, there is a wealth of opportunities for the Institute to play an even more pivotal role in shaping the future of Belize's financial landscape.

The FSC's own strategic direction closely aligns with this vision. We recently completed a comprehensive strategic planning review and have launched a three-year strategic plan that focuses on priorities critical to the long-term growth and resilience of Belize's financial sector.

This plan emphasizes:

Stakeholder Cooperation – Deepening partnerships with institutions like the University of Belize to promote a broader range of training programs that address the evolving needs of the financial services industry. Together, we can cultivate a highly skilled workforce capable of navigating complex financial environments.

Financial Safety and Stability – Supporting educational initiatives that reinforce transparency, resilience, and integrity within the financial system. By broadening its curriculum, the Institute can help ensure that professionals are equipped with the knowledge necessary to sustain a stable and robust financial sector.

Technology Optimization – Embracing digital innovation and technological advancements as critical components of financial education. We believe that the Institute can lead the way in offering courses that address emerging trends in fintech, cybersecurity, and digital finance, ensuring Belize remains competitive on the global stage.

Governance and Management – Promoting best practices in governance, leadership, and management. These areas are fundamental to the long-term success of the financial services industry, and the Institute is well-positioned to deliver training that builds leadership capacity and strengthens institutional frameworks.

These strategic priorities are not just guiding the work of the FSC; they represent a call to action for the entire financial community. Our collaboration with the University of Belize through the Institute of Banking and Finance will be central to achieving these goals. By expanding its offerings and embracing a more holistic approach to financial education, the Institute will play a transformative role in shaping the future of Belize's financial landscape.

I am deeply honoured to be part of this initiative and the UB community. Your hard work, determination, and commitment to excellence are shaping the future of Belize's financial sector, and I look forward to witnessing your continued success.

In closing, I extend my sincere gratitude to the President Palacio, Dean Watler, esteemed faculty members of the University, the dedicated team of the Institute, and all the professionals whose time, expertise, and passion have made this Institute a success.

Together, we are laying the foundation for a stronger, more prosperous, and sustainable financial future for Belize.

Thank you

_____ ... _____