



Statement by the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana

The Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana notes with deep concern the decision of the Venezuelan National Assembly to conduct a referendum on defending Venezuela's spurious claim to Guyana's territory of Essequibo.

Guyana is of the view that this has the potential to foment tension between the two States.

Guyana considers that the only appropriate forum for Venezuela to raise its territorial claim, consistent with the rule of international law and the preservation of peace and security, is the International Court of Justice in The Hague which has already determined, twice, that it has jurisdiction to resolve the competing claims of Venezuela and Guyana to the territory in question. Resolution by the Court assures both Parties of a final, binding, and permanent settlement that is equitable, just and consistent with international law.

The Government expresses its sincere appreciation for the full and unequivocal support which it has received from friendly Governments and organisations, in particular the Caribbean Community, the Organisation of American States, and the Commonwealth, for their principled stand in support of the preservation of Guyana's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Guyana's strenuous efforts to this end will remain premised on respect for the rule of law and the principles of the United Nations Charter.

Guyana's concerns have been communicated to the Government of Venezuela.

September 23, 2023