

## **Statement by the Government of Guyana on the Decision by the United Nations Secretary General**

We are pleased to be able to convey to the people of Guyana that a new point of promise in our relations with the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has been reached.

It has long been the accepted position of all Governments in Guyana that the best means of settlement of our controversy with Venezuela should be a reference of it to the International Court of Justice. We consider that controversy to be essentially a legal question and one eminently susceptible to a legal process of settlement.

There can be no higher tribunal for this purpose than the International Court of Justice (on which once sat our own distinguished son Mohammed Shahabuddeen) to determine this matter on a definite basis. The Secretary General of the United Nations acting under the 1966 Geneva Agreement has informed the President of his decision to give the 'good offices' process one last period of twelve months, that is to the end of 2017.

If, at the end of that period, the Secretary-General concludes that significant progress has not been made towards arriving at a full agreement for the solution of the controversy, he will choose the International Court of Justice as the next means of settlement, unless the Governments of Guyana and Venezuela jointly request that he refrain from doing so.

The Government of Guyana accepts the decision of the Secretary General. We stand committed to using our best endeavours to fulfill its highest expectations. The Government will be writing formally to him as well as to the President of Venezuela to indicate our acceptance of this decision.

We believe that, in taking this decision, the Secretary General has remained loyal to the sacred mission of the United Nations to uphold the law and maintain the peace between nations – small and large. Guyana will do everything in its power to ensure that his expectations, and those of his successor to whom the mandate of implementation now falls – as well as our expectations are fulfilled. The Government calls upon all Guyanese to support the process that now lies ahead in the confidence that it will lead to a just and binding resolution of the discords that have plagued our development for so long. It is a fitting advance in this fiftieth year of our independence.

May God continue to bless our nation in this noble cause.

*Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs website – [www.minfor.gov.gy](http://www.minfor.gov.gy).*