

Statement by Hon. Carl Greenidge, Agent of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana in the case before the International Court of Justice – Arbitral Award of 3 October 1899 (Guyana v. Venezuela)

Monday June 29th, 2020

On Tuesday June 30 Guyana goes before the International Court of Justice in its Case against Venezuela. The Hearing will be by Video Conference, at the instance of the Court and will be streamed live. This is a virtuous move by the Court to keep the wheels of justice turning despite the constraints of COVID 19.

Guyana has long valued the opportunity of a judicial settlement of Venezuela's outrageous claim to nearly three-quarters of Guyana and welcomed the decision of the Secretary General of the United Nations in 2018 (acting under the 1966 Geneva Agreement) that the International Court of Justice shall be the forum of settlement of the controversy.

This hearing is for the sole purpose of addressing the question of the Court's jurisdiction, that is, whether the Court has the authority to resolve the dispute between Guyana and Venezuela over the validity of the boundary between the two States that has been permanently fixed since 1899. Guyana says the Court has jurisdiction to rule on the validity and permanence of that boundary. Venezuela claims that it does not.

Only Guyana will present its arguments to the Court on June 30. Regrettably, Venezuela has decided to boycott the hearing. However, this will not prevent the Court from hearing Guyana's arguments, or going forward with the case.

Guyana anticipates that the Court will issue its decision on the jurisdictional question before the end of the year. Should it rule in Guyana's favour, as we expect, it will then proceed to the next phase

of the case, and ultimately decide the question that Guyana has put before it: whether the 1899 boundary that separates the two States, is a lawful and permanent boundary, such that the Essequibo region is confirmed as an integral part of Guyana's territory for all time.

Guyana will continue to do everything in its power to achieve that result, and is confident that the final outcome will be what all Guyanese wish for.