



Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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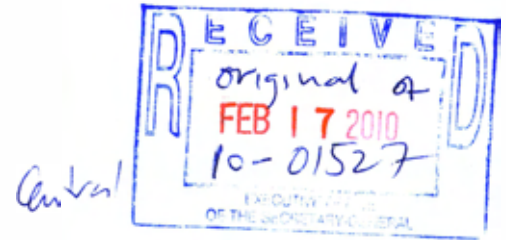
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Guyana

12th February, 2010

His Excellency Ban Ki Moon
Secretary General of the United Nations
Office of the Secretary General
United Nations Headquarters
United Nations Plaza
New York



Excellency,

Within the past two weeks, several statements have emanated from prominent Surinamese politicians, including senior Government officials and Members of the National Assembly, that are of grave concern to the Government and people of the Republic of Guyana.

Earlier this month, the Vice President of the Republic of Suriname was publicly quoted as stating that the boundary with Guyana is on the New River and that every Surinamese, including himself, must "defend" it. Mr. Jules Wijdenbosch, a former President of Suriname and currently the leader of the People's Alliance for Progress, an opposition party, stated in the Surinamese National Assembly on February 8, last, that he, as President of the Republic of Suriname, had given instructions for the invasion of the New River Triangle, but that the elections of May 2000 had interrupted those plans.

Guyana has historically exercised sovereignty over the New River Triangle, which is in the South-East of Guyana and the international community has consistently recognized this area as part of the sovereign territory of Guyana. In fact, in 1936, the Governments of the Federative Republic of Brazil, Great Britain and The Netherlands, identified the tri-junction point at which the boundaries of British Guiana (now Guyana), Dutch Guiana (now Suriname) and Brazil meet. That tri-junction point clearly recognizes the boundary as being on the head waters of the Kutari – and not along the New River which Suriname now claims the boundary should be.

The statements to which I have referred especially the latter, have not been clarified, condemned or commented upon by the Government of Suriname. The Government of Guyana is therefore concerned that this could be an indication that the Government of the Republic of Suriname does not have a position that is dissimilar to the position being publicly espoused by individuals both inside and outside of the Government. The position adumbrated in the National Assembly by the former President is indeed contrary to international law, and the Surinamese Government should have promptly disassociated itself from it and publicly clarified the formal and official position of the State of Suriname in relation to the use of force.

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Excellency,

Those two – and other similar – statements, individually and collectively, have given rise to great consternation in Georgetown since they represent a return to the saber rattling that characterized the political environment in Suriname that led directly to Surinamese action in June 2000 to militarily expel a rig from Guyana's waters. An Arbitral Tribunal constituted pursuant to Article 287, and in accordance with Annex VII, of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, ruled on September 17, 2007 that that action by the Republic of Suriname "constituted a threat of the use of force in breach of the Convention, the UN Charter, and general international law".

The Government of Guyana is hopeful that these inflammatory statements emanating from official and unofficial sources in Suriname do not signal a return to an adventurist posture by the Republic of Suriname and that its Government would eschew the use of force which would indeed be a breach of international law that would require Guyana to take action to safeguard its sovereignty.

The Government of Guyana is continuing to monitor this situation closely and will keep the international community informed of any new developments since it is of the view that the intemperate nature of the statements have the potential to lead to security instability and might even result in the development of bilateral tensions and threaten the peace in the area.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.


Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett
Minister of Foreign Affairs



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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February 15, 2010

Mr. Vijay Nambiar
Chef de Cabinet
Executive Office of the United Nations
Secretary General
United Nations Secretariat

Dear Chef de Cabinet,

I shall be grateful if the enclosed letter addressed to the Secretary General from Her Excellency Ms. Carolyn Rodrigues- Birkett, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Guyana, is brought to the attention of its addressee.

Sincerely

George Talbot
Chargé d'affaires a.i.