



## the Co-Operative Republic of Guyana Position Paper

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### I. Background Information on Country

Guyana, or officially the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, is a country located in South America with a population of 800.000. It borders Venezuela, Brazil, and Suriname. Its mostly covered with rainforests, resulting in a coastal population; Georgetown, the capitol and the largest city, is an example.

Guyana, as it stands today, is one of the fastest-growing economies in the world due to the massive oil reserves that were discovered in 2015 off its coast. Democracy in the country, while never perfect, has taken a hit due to the discovery. With allegations of election fraud as recent as 2020. The political landscape is dominated by 2 parties, those being the People's Progressive Party and People Congress Party. The country received a lot of attention from global media after Venezuela threatened the invasion of the country.

The tense relations between Guyana and Venezuela stem from history. The area that makes current Guyana was first settled by the Dutch in the 17th century, with the United Kingdom taking it from the Dutch under the premise of protecting it from Napoleon in the 18th century. The most notable part of Guyana's history was the British-Venezuela crisis of 1985, where a long-standing dispute dating to the formation of Grand Colomiba (Venezuela's parent state) about the border between then-Colony of Demerara, Berbice, and Essequibo (formerly the colony of Dutch Guiana and the parent state of British Guyana) on their mutual border. With Venezuela claiming the Essequibo River as its border, conceding to this border would mean Guyana losing half its land and most of its oil fields.

Guyana in regional politics has little to no sway in the region, with the notable exception of CARICOM (Caribbean Community), whose headquarters are in Georgetown.

### II. Past Achievements and Attempts of Country/Organization on the Issues

Only agenda item II truly applies to Guyana; however, Guyana has previously worked with Brazil, the US, and Peru to limit the influence of groups like the ELN in Colombia, usually related to drug trafficking; no relation with Boliva's internal instability can be observed.

#### A. Eliminating the possibility of armed conflict between Venezuela and Guyana:

- 1966 Geneva agreement, Port of Spain Protocol and the ICJ ruling
  - 1966 Geneva agreement came about as a result of Guyanese independence in 1960, 2 years after Venezuela announced in the UN its desire to reclaim its rightful territory, citing



decolonization of Guyana as including the rightful territories of Venezuela. Tensions grew to a boiling point in 1966 as Venezuela invaded Anokoko island in the claimed region, a move that was protested in the UN and eventually was solved with the 1966 Geneva Agreement, which promised the right to navigate Guyanese rivers to Venezuela in exchange for withdrawing its military forces.

- Port of Spain Protocol came as a result of two new presidents getting elected in both Venezuela and Guyana and was a peace agreement promising better relations and cooperation; unfortunately, neither president had control over their respective legislative bodies, and after the 12-year period of the agreement ended, both nations decided to not renew the agreement. In 1982, when the agreement ended, with the recent Falklands War, Venezuela restated its claim to the region with an emphasis on taking it by force, which was shot down by Brazilian mediation.
- ICJ ruling, under the Maduro administration, Venezuela has vowed to reclaim all territories. Transgressions of such nature include disregard of Guyana's EEZ borders, constitutional amendments to add the disputed land to the Venezuelan constitution, changing the flag to have 8 stars, etc. Followed by attacks on oil and fishing vessels, Guyana brought the matter before the ICJ, which after 6 years ruled in favor of Guyana, stating the validity of the Washington Agreement and the Arbitral Award, which originally granted the land to British Guyana. The ruling was disputed by Venezuela, questioning the authority of the ICJ to rule on the case.

### III. Objectives, Aims and Possible Solutions Proposed by Country/Organization on the Issues

The nature of the border problem lies purely in politics. Venezuela, under its current administration, will never move towards a peaceful diplomatic solution unless forced via sanctions or military actions, which are not on the table. Currently, as it stands, preserving the status quo is the best form of action. Previous attempts at solving the issue might highlight possible solutions, yet without territorial concessions from Guyana or Venezuela ceasing its irridentist agenda, its impossible.

#### A. Eliminating the possibility of armed conflict between Venezuela and Guyana:

- Currently, the Security Council's position is that the long, persistent peace in South America and the Caribbean should not be disturbed, and the parties should solve the problem in accordance with international law. It should be noted that the UN recognises the 1966 Treaty of Geneva as a guideline to solve the issue. The agreement itself presents solutions of non-ternational concessions, such as navigation rights, stopping Guyanese settlement in the region, and blocking any change to any territorial claim. After this agreement, relations between the two countries improved only to be restored with Brazilian intervention.



- A possible solution to the problem would be the renewal of the Geneva agreement with 2 or more international mediators (possibly Brazil and the US). This option would at least halt the conflict but would only be a temporary solution.
- Another possible solution would be the reopening of dialogue between the two nations through an outside country with little to no affiliation with the region. This would not only ensure the upholding of ICJ procedures but also would create international pressure to resolve the issue.
- The much more unlikely solution would be a joint economic venture between the nations, tho this is highly unlikely as both countries heavily depend on oil revenue and thus have more to lose if they cooperate.

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