



Co-operative Republic of Guyana
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
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Statement by the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana

The Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana has taken note of the action taken today, April 3, 2024, by the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to promulgate “the Organic Law for the Defense of Guayana Esequiba.”

This attempt by Venezuela to annex more than two-thirds of Guyana’s sovereign territory and make it part of Venezuela is an egregious violation of the most fundamental principles of international law enshrined in the United Nations Charter, the Charter of the Organisation of American States and customary international law. It also contradicts the letter and spirit of the Joint Declaration of Argyle for Dialogue and Peace between Guyana and Venezuela agreed to on December 14, 2023 in St Vincent and the Grenadines. This unlawful act calls into question Venezuela’s obligation to abide by the principles of that Declaration. In this light, the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana wishes to put on notice the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the Governments of the Caribbean Community and the Latin American and Caribbean Community of Nations, as well as the Secretary General of the United Nations and the Secretary General of the Organisation of American States, that it will not countenance the annexation, seizure or occupation of any part of its sovereign territory. Guyana has always stood by the principles of the United Nations Charter, the rule of law and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

It is as a result of the 1966 Geneva Agreement, to which Venezuela and Guyana are parties, that the International Court of Justice has ruled that it has jurisdiction to make a decision on the case brought before it by Guyana regarding the validity of the 1899 Arbitral Award which definitively settled the land boundary between the two countries. The Court's decision will be final and binding on both parties. If Venezuela wants to contest title to the territory in question, the proper forum is the International Court of Justice, which will decide the issue objectively and according to the law.

Furthermore, the offensive and undignified statements made by President Maduro about the President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana have not gone unnoticed. It is unfortunate that the commitment made at Argyle to “the pursuance of good neighborliness, peaceful coexistence, and the unity of Latin America and the Caribbean” is now again seriously threatened by President Maduro’s words and action today.

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April 3, 2024