

Communiqué of the COVRI in relation to the Concluding Statement of the meeting of Commonwealth Ministerial Group on Guyana

The Venezuelan Council on Foreign Relations (COVRI), an independent foreign policy and international relations think tank based in Caracas, which is committed to the defense of Venezuelan interests, the promotion of regional integration and the liberal international order; in relation to the Concluding Statement of the meeting of Commonwealth Ministerial Group on Guyana (Governments of Antigua and Barbuda, Bangladesh, Canada, Guyana, Jamaica, South Africa, and the United Kingdom), held in New York on 26th September 2019 and chaired by Bangladesh, declares as follow:

1. To call the attention to the Member States of Commonwealth Ministerial Group on Guyana that our legitimate authorities have objected the point number 49 of the Communiqué of the 25th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting held in London in 16th-20th April 2018 #CHOGM2018. Venezuela never has recognized the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice, neither by way of any unilateral statement under Article 36.2 of Statute of International Court of Justice, through any multilateral treaties like Bogotá Pact or the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), nor signed any special agreement with Guyana conferring competence on the International Court of Justice in the matter of controversy over the Essequibo territory.
2. To remind to the Member States of Commonwealth Ministerial Group on Guyana that the Geneva Agreement of 1966 was not notified to the Registry of the International Court of Justice, after being registered by United Nations Secretariat, because it did not include any clause relating to the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice.
3. To recall to the Member States of Commonwealth Ministerial Group on Guyana that the Statute, the Rules and Jurisprudence of International Court of Justice are very clear: Both States, Guyana and Venezuela, need to recognize its jurisdiction in order to have competence in the controversy.
4. To remind to the Member States of Commonwealth Ministerial Group on Guyana that the Geneva Agreement of 1966, established the task of “seeking

satisfactory solutions for practical settlement of the controversy” and stated that it “should therefore be amicably resolved in a manner acceptable to both Parties”. A unilaterally application against Venezuela by Guyana in the International Court of Justice could not be considered amicably way, neither a unilateral judicial course of action shall be the warranty to permanently resolve the controversy and build a stronger base for closer cooperation between next-door neighbors in the long term.

5. To underline to the Member States of Commonwealth Ministerial Group on Guyana that United Nations Secretary General has competence under Article IV of the Geneva Agreement of 1966 to help in the choice one of the means of settlement provided in Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations, but he could not replace the unequivocally will of a sovereign State like Venezuela in the matter of recognition of jurisdiction of International Court of Justice.
6. To draw the attention to the Member States of Commonwealth Ministerial Group on Guyana that, in his eclectic decision, United Nations Secretary General, H. E. António Guterres, also chose Good Offices mechanism, but its Statement does not say anything about it.
7. To reaffirm that the Good Offices process not reached an agreement in past years because Guyana never has negotiate in good faith.
8. To respectfully request again to the United Nations Secretary General, H. E. António Guterres, to release all reports of the Good Officers for controversy since the beginning of this mechanism in 1989.
9. To alert to the Member States of Commonwealth Ministerial Group on Guyana that the Government of Guyana misinformed you about the incident with oil exploration vessels in the Economic Exclusive Zone of Venezuela in December 2018. In the same way, the Government of Guyana misinformed the Lima Group about it in January 2019, but this important group of countries did not give its diplomatic support after verifying the happened. This was result of unnecessary provocation to Venezuela in its Economic Exclusive Zone, linked to unilaterally oil licenses awarded by Guyana in disputed waters that our legitimate authorities have objected under Article V of the Geneva Agreement. Attending the practice of International Law and the Geneva Agreement, only when both States have resolved its controversy over the land frontier in a manner acceptable to both Parties, shall proceed to bilateral negotiations in order to delimit marine and submarine areas, because it is another pending controversy between our countries.
10. To express to the Member States of Commonwealth Ministerial Group on Guyana that the controversy over Esequibo territory, is other poisoned fruit of old British imperialism against the territorial integrity of a weak country such Venezuela in its first years of independent life, that many of your

countries also suffered in nineteenth century, which was inherited for the peoples of Guyana and Venezuela.

11. Last but not least, to respectfully request to all Member States of Commonwealth of Nations and its Secretary General, and in particular to the Government of United Kingdom that is also a Party of the Geneva Agreement and has a deep historic responsibility, to play a constructive role with the aim to help Guyana and Venezuela to find an amicably way to resolve this centennial and painful controversy.

Caracas, 28 September 2019