

21.07.2006

**GECOM ADVISES PRESIDENT ABOUT READINESS OF 2006 OLE, RESPONDS TO
COMMISSIONER PARRIS' RESIGNATION**

The Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM) hereby acknowledges the resignation of Mr. Haslyn Parris, CCH from his position as a Commissioner of GECOM. GECOM was made aware of Mr. Parris' resignation, with effect on July 31, 2006, by a copy of Mr. Parris' letter of resignation to President Bharrat Jagdeo.

We feel constrained to use this opportunity to note that Mr. Parris resignation is of his own volition, and that the reasons given by him for so doing are based on his own perceptions. The immediate issue precipitating Mr. Parris' decision refers to a Memorandum dated July 19, 2006, which sought to enforce that which the Chairman had stated at the 154th Statutory Meeting of the Commission, to wit: (i) The Chief Election Officer (CEO) and his team of professional technicians have worked diligently to reach the stage of production of the 2006 Revised List of Electors (RLE), and (ii) When the statutory period of display of the 2006 RLE was completed, the CEO would be required to inform the Chairman in writing that he (CEO) is ready to print and publish the 2006 Official List of Electors (OLE), and that immediately thereafter, the Chairman would inform the President that the 2006 OLE is ready to be printed and published.

The Chairman sought Commissioners' approval for this procedure to be employed via the July 19, 2006 Memorandum. On July 20, 2006, the Chairman received written approval from four Commissioners. Two Commissioners assumed the position that it was not within their responsibility to approve or not approve the procedure.

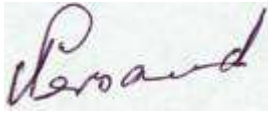
The CEO has since written the Chairman a Memorandum dated July 21, 2006, informing that the 2006 RLE has transmuted into 2006 Official List of Electors (OLE) which is now ready to be printed and published. The Chairman has taken the consequential step and has advised the President accordingly.

GECOM acknowledges that Mr. Parris had raised concerns, including treating with the fingerprint scanning and cross matching results, which precipitated extensive investigations by the Secretariat. At the end of it all, the CEO reported to the Commission that the Secretariat had complied with the recommendations in the Walker Report that GECOM investigate all identified duplicates. The CEO emphasized that all actions taken by the Secretariat in dealing with the results of the EOJ/MSSI project were done in accordance with the guidelines adumbrated by Mr. Walker and in accordance with the relevant Sections of the Regulations associated with the National Registration (Amendment) Act 2005.

Mr. Parris' letter of resignation was especially disconcerting because there was the inference that he was working in a Commission environment which thwarted his preference "re professionalism, technical correctness, intellectual honesty, straightforwardness, observance of the intention of the law,.". Mr. Parris' perception does not reflect the reality of the individual impression of other Commissioners, nor the Chairman, who feel aggrieved by this innuendo.

GECOM wishes to use this opportunity to reiterate for the information and benefit of all stakeholders in the electoral process that it will continue to honour its manifold responsibilities in accordance with the electoral laws that govern the preparations for and holding of elections. We assure all stakeholders that the Commission is committed to ensuring the upcoming elections are conducted in a manner that meets international best practice and which could be commonly accepted as free, fair and transparent.

We also use this opportunity to extend sincere gratitude to Mr. Haslyn Parris for the valuable contributions he has given the GECOM during his tenure as a Commissioner.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Persaud', is centered on a light-colored rectangular background.

Vishnu Persaud, MCIPR

Public Relations Officer