

02.09.2006.

**STATEMENT BY DR. STEVE SURUJBALLY, CHAIRMAN, GUYANA ELECTIONS COMMISSION**

In my capacity as Chairman of the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM) over the past five years, I have had the good fortune of working with some of the most dedicated people our country has produced. This fact became crystal clear to me as we at GECOM got closer to the elections and during the management of the elections on Election Day itself.

On Election day, and until the announcement of the final results, myself and Mr. Gocool Boodoo, the Chief Election Officer faced the nation via the airwaves on several occasions to make announcements about the electoral process. But we were not the only two persons who were tasked with bringing off satisfactory elections. It must be recognized that an elections management is of such magnitude that it could not be successfully concluded if there were not other leaders carrying out the operations behind the scenes.

In acknowledgement of their exemplary contributions, it would be remiss of me if I were not to publicly acclaim the efficient and the indefatigable work of Mr. Calvin Benn, Deputy Chief Election Officer and Head of Operations, and Mr. Keith Lowenfield, the Assistant Chief Election Officer. The Guyanese nation owes Mr. Boodoo, Mr. Benn and Mr. Lowenfield and their teams a definite and immeasurable debt of gratitude.

Similarly, the importance of the guidance and wisdom of Commissioners Mr. Robert Williams, Mr. Moen McDoom, Mr. Lloyd Joseph, Dr. Keshav Mangal, Mr. Mahamood Shaw and, for many years, Mr. Haslyn Parris must be mentioned.

The hard work and keen scrutiny of the local and international Observers, the magnanimity of the Donor Community, the astuteness of the Joint International Technical Assessors (JITAs), Mr. Stephen Beale and Dr. Kwadwo Afari-Gyan, the priceless work of the media consultant Mr. Tim Neale, the maturity displayed by the contending Political Parties, the ubiquity of the Disciplined Services - especially the Guyana Police Force which under the leadership of Mr. Henry Greene, has given GECOM constant and continuous support in the area of security, the shared knowledge of specialist consultants (past and present), and the copious coverage of the media have all contributed to the success of the 2006 General and Regional Elections.

On behalf of the management and staff of the Guyana Elections Commission and its Secretariat, I salute all of the above mentioned persons and organizations and every other person or organization who/which would have contributed in any manner to making the 2006 General and Regional Elections an event of which we can all be proud of.

On behalf of the Commission also, I wish all those persons who will sit in the National Assembly all the very best as they focus their collective resources on the management and good governance of our beloved country.