

Meeting of the Commonwealth Ministerial Group on Guyana

24th September 2008

Concluding Statement

The Commonwealth Ministerial Group on Guyana was convened by the Commonwealth Secretary-General on 24th September 2008 in New York in accordance with the mandate given by the Commonwealth Heads of Government when they met in Coolumberr, Australia in March 2002, "to convene the Commonwealth Ministerial Group on Guyana when the occasion required it". The meeting was chaired by the Honourable Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Minister of Foreign Affairs of South Africa.

The Group took note of the recent developments in Guyana/Venezuela relations and the efforts being made to resuscitate the United Nations Good Offices Process. Note was also taken of the fact that consultations had commenced between the Governments of Guyana and Venezuela for the nomination of a new Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the process which is aimed at finding a solution to the controversy that arose from the Venezuelan contention that the Arbitral Award of 1899, that definitively settled the boundary between Guyana and Venezuela, is null and void. The post of Special Representative of the Secretary-General became vacant with the demise of Mr Oliver Jackman who served in that capacity from November 1999 to January 2007.

The Group emphasized the importance of the timely replacement of Mr Jackman so that there can be added momentum to the search for a solution to the controversy.

The Group reaffirmed their unequivocal support for the maintenance and safeguarding of Guyana's territorial integrity and sovereignty and its right to develop its resources in the entirety of its territory.