



# UNASUR

Unión de Naciones Suramericanas

União de Nações Sul-Americanas

Union of South American Nations

Unie van Zuid-Amerikaanse Staten

## **ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION FOR THE GENERAL ELECTIONS HELD IN THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA ON MAY, 11TH 2015**

### **PRELIMINARY REPORT.-**

Once election-day has concluded, we would first like to congratulate the people of Guyana for the development of the General Elections, during which the demonstrated civic maturity and a high commitment to democracy. We would also like to point out that we were able to witness a high voter turnout in the polling stations we visited. Another aspect worth commemorating is the job carried out by the electoral officers and clerks, as well as the service provided by the police force in insuring the security and integrity of the process, and a peaceful election day.

The institutional task carried out by the authorities and officers of Guyana's Electoral Commission (GECOM) was crucial in the execution of the electoral day and in guaranteeing the fulfillment of the Guyanese citizen's democratic rights and duties. Both authorities and officer of the organs that make up UNASUR's Electoral Council, witnessed and verifies the most relevant stages of the electoral organization and the activities displayed throughout the day.

### **ACTIVITIES THAT WERE CARRIED OUT THROUGH OUT THE ELECTION DAY**

Starting with the installation of the polling stations, our observers visited different centers located in four regions: Parika-Lookout, Georgetown, New Amsterdam and Linden; where they were able to verify the procedures regarding the timeliness of the installation and the course of the polling, as well as, the tallying of the ballots and the completion of the tally sheets.

Even though the reports generated by our observers provided the inputs for this general first impression of how the course of the electoral day occurred, the whole of the reports will be processed with the intention of incorporating our observer's findings and observations into the final report.

In this context it must be said that our Electoral Observation Mission's findings report upon aspects worth commending, as well as aspects of the process that could be improved for future processes.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

UNASUR'S Electoral Observation Mission commends the task carried out by the police force, political parties, and their agents, who collaborated in upholding a general atmosphere of peace, respect and tolerance throughout the Election Day. Their role within the polling process is key in instilling deep democratic roots in Guyana.

We would also like to commend GECOM's decision to promote the participation of electoral observation missions, who contribute with their experience and knowledge to bettering the electoral practices of this and all countries. In the particular case of UNASUR, we are glad to exchange observations and experiences in good electoral practices as a means of bettering democratic processes throughout the region.

## INITIAL OBSERVATIONS

In all four regions we visited, our observers witnessed:

1. A timely opening of the polling stations, with a slight variation of 5 to 10 minutes;
2. Information desks present in all polling centers;
3. All polling centers had security provided by the discipline forces;
4. There was an adequate display of information signs and other visual aids which served to instruct and clarify voters about the polling process;
5. We witnessed long lines waiting to vote, however, the voters conducted themselves in a very orderly and respectful manner;
6. The polling officers were well instructed about their tasks, and followed the protocol in a very parsimonious manner; however, this also led to extending the time that it took for each citizen to cast their vote.
7. We observed party agents in every one of the stations we visited, however, the agents belonged only to the two main contenders;
8. There are no accessibility measures taken to facilitate handicapped people and the elderly's vote, nonetheless, we did see Electoral Officials aiding people who required assistance in casting their vote;
9. We are also happy to report that the composition of the polling stations upheld the principle of secrecy for each voter;
10. And finally, we observed a high level of commitment from voters to participating in this democratic capstone.

## THE NEXT STEPS

The electoral mission will continue to process the reports throughout the next days and will thereafter present its final conclusions and recommendations in a Final Report. The Final Report will be presented before the Council of Foreign Affairs Ministers of UNASUR and Guyana's Electoral Commission (GECOM), in the terms established in the statutory norms.

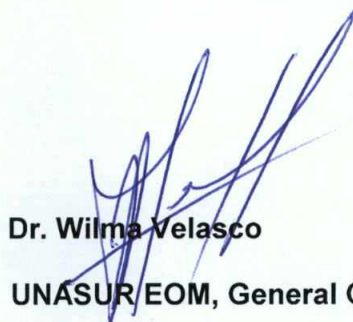
It is also worth noting that we present this preliminary report before any official results have been announced by GECOM.

Georgetown, May 12th, 2015.



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