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CARICOM Calls on All Stakeholders to Ensure 'Peaceful and Lawful Completion' of Guyana Elections

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Supporters of presidential candidate David Granger, of the National Unity and Alliance for Change (APNU+AFC) party, cheer and wave flags in front of their house in Georgetown, Guyana. By. LUIS ACOSTA/AFP/DAYLIFE

GEORGETOWN, Guyana, CMC – The 15-member Caribbean Community (CARICOM) grouping Saturday called on the electoral officials in Guyana as well as the representatives of the various political parties to work together “to achieve a peaceful and lawful completion of the electoral process” in the country, following Monday’s regional and general elections.

CARICOM chair and Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley, in a statement urged all the relevant stakeholders to come together so as to ensure the “tabulation of the results in all Regions using the Statement of Polls in a transparent manner in the presence of the representatives of the political parties and the electoral observers.

“Indeed, CARICOM issued a statement on Thursday night and one was also issued yesterday from the Chief of the independent CARICOM Electoral Observation team. Both statements called on GECOM to complete the electoral process.”

Mottley said that “we are very clear, every vote must be made to count; and transparently so.

“We have noted that all sides have been making serious allegations against each other. It is critical that good sense prevail. The Preservation of law and order is paramount and All parties must work hard to ensure that there is peace on the roads and in the communities across Guyana. There has already been one death reported overnight. That is one death too many,” she said.

On Thursday, the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM) released to the media, results for Region Four, and if, certified would result in the ruling coalition, A Partnership for National Unity plus the Alliance for Change (APNU+AFC) defeating the main opposition People’s Progressive Party Civic (PPP/C) by more than 59,000 votes and securing another term in office..

GECOM public relations officer, Yolanda Ward, had forwarded without comment images of Statutory Declaration Form 24. The Form shows the incumbent APNU+AFC securing 136,335 votes while the PPP/C has earned 77,258 a difference of 59,077.

But attorneys representing the PPP/C said they had been able to secure three injunctions from the High Court ordering GECOM to verify the results of Region Four.

The High Court will deliver a preliminary ruling on Sunday.

In her statement, Mottley, who is also an attorney, said that “in simple language, we ask the parties to recognise that the primary consideration must not only be who will be President but, moreso, who will be alive come next week or next month, for there cannot be a tolerance for any further loss of life”.

She said she had spoken to both President David Granger and Opposition Leader Bharrat Jagdeo indicating “that CARICOM stands ready to be able to be there to facilitate further dialogue and any actions that are necessary.

“We have done this on many occasions in the past, including in Guyana, when elections have been highly contentious and when social order and the rule of law has been threatened across the region. We are family and this is what happens when there are disputes in families.

“We will work together to create the space for dialogue and resolution once there is an acceptance on the part of all parties that there is a higher interest beyond simply the result in this election,” Mottley added.