**Government of Guyana Response to Call for Input:**

**Report of the Independent Expert on Protection against Violence and Discrimination based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity on Peace, Security, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity.**

**April 5, 2022**

In reference to the call for input from the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity on Peace, Security, Sexual Orientation and Gender identity, the Government wishes to state that the questions posed by the Special Rapporteur are not relevant to the Cooperative Republic of Guyana at this time.

As was reiterated in the State Party’s response to the call for input from the Special Rapporteur on Armed Non-State Actors, *“Guyana does not have a history of organized armed resistance by non-actors, in the recent past.. .Unlike other Latin American and South American countries, criminal activity in Guyana is less far less organized.”*

No evidence exists to suggest that there is any type of organised armed conflict in Guyana, especially against any vulnerable population. Further, there have been no reports of any organized armed conflict against LGBTQ+ persons and/or persons with non-normative sexual orientations, gender identities, and expressions (SOGIEs) in Guyana.

The Government recognizes that there are recorded individual instances of gender-based violence, domestic violence and intimate partner violence perpetrated against LGBTQ persons, women and other persons from vulnerable populations, however, these separate instances do no not amount to any semblance of armed conflict.

Notwithstanding, the Government of Guyana remains committed to ensuring that all Guyanese, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or any other characteristic are afforded equal rights, equal opportunities and equitable access to essential services.

Notably, the Government of Guyana in 2021, amended the Summary Jurisdiction Act to have the cross-dressing laws removed from the legislation of Guyana, consistent with the Caribbean Court of Justice’s 2018 ruling in the McEwan case.

Further, key Government agencies such as the Ministry of Health continue to work with LGBTQ+ rights civil society organisations to ensure that the needs of the communities are heard and that appropriate actions are taken to offer support to these communities wherever possible. Most recently, at an event in commemoration of International Transgender Day of Visibility, the Minister of Health, Hon. Dr. Frank Anthony delivered feature remarks. In his remarks, Minister Anthony noted that fundamental human rights, especially those related to access to quality healthcare, will be protected and that trans men and women, like every other Guyanese, will be afforded those rights.

The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance also hosts bi-monthly National Stakeholder Virtual Conversations, to which all LGBTQ+ rights organisations are invited to participate, raise concerns, share opinions and views, and receive feedback, guidance, and support. This forum, among other existing multi-agency communication mechanisms, can and will be used to effectively and efficiently address the emergence of any forms of conflict against LGBTQ+ and gender diverse persons.

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