

PRESS RELEASE

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For immediate release

GRANGER EXPRESSES DISMAY OVER RAMOTAR'S TIRADE

Leader of the Opposition, Brigadier David Granger has expressed dismay over remarks attributed to President Donald Ramotar in an interview published last weekend in the state-owned *Guyana Chronicle* newspaper.

President Ramotar accused the Opposition of pursuing a strong "racial" line, of "manipulation" of the elections and of acting in "bad faith." The interview – which carried the bizarre title: "King Solomon, two mothers and the converse leadership qualities of the PPP/C and PNC aka APNU-AFC examined in a chat with President Donald Ramotar", was written by Parvati Persaud-Edwards.

Mr. Granger was astonished at the fact that President Ramotar's remarks were factually incorrect. They had the added effect of fostering the false impression in the public mind that the Opposition parties had actually broken the law by practising racism and perpetrating electoral fraud. In negotiations, according to President Ramotar, the Opposition was untrustworthy.

These charges Mr. Granger said, had the potential to undermine the bases of the current tripartite discussions taking place among A Partnership for National Unity, the Alliance for Change and the People's Progressive Party/Civic. President Ramotar's remarks – to the effect that "*they renege on their promises and act in bad faith*" – are certain to sour the atmosphere of the talks and impair the goodwill APNU has tried to nourish.

Mr. Granger was shocked that, despite the gravity of these charges, President Ramotar did not offer a shred of evidence. President Ramotar claimed that the Opposition actually "*penetrated GECOM and controlled [to some extent] the elections machinery, where they were not even taking instructions from the Chairman or the Chief Elections Officer and they were doing a lot of manipulation, but could not explain how this could have happened.*" He also claimed, without reason, "*For sure, I think we had over 50%. I think we lost some votes, no doubt, but I don't think we lost enough to bring us under 50%, but the results were through manipulation. My own realistic assessment was that we had probably between 52 – 53%.*"

Mr. Granger was alarmed at President Ramotar's claim of racism. Ignoring the PPP/C's poor performance over the years, Ramotar claimed, baldly, "*I think we lost some support there [in Linden] largely because the Opposition carried a very strong racial line in their campaign.*"

Mr. Granger said that President Ramotar's remarks are "*untrue, unstatesmanlike, untimely and unhelpful,*" and should be withdrawn.

OFFICE of the LEADER of the OPPOSITION
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