

BELIZE-GUATEMALA JOINT COMMUNIQUE

The Delegations of Belize and Guatemala attended today with great satisfaction and optimism the installation of the Panel of Facilitators at the Headquarters of the Organization of American States (OAS), which will assist both of our governments in resolving our territorial differendum. We are confident that with the participation of Sir Shridath Ramphal and Mr. Paul Reichler, and with the additional support of the Secretary General of the OAS, César Gaviria, we will be able to reach an agreement on this matter that has long divided two neighbors.

Following the installation ceremony, we held a meeting to review the progress that has been made to date and to discuss the future steps of the dialogue aimed at achieving a definitive resolution of the territorial differendum. In particular, the Defense Ministerial meeting, held August 12, 2000, and the first session of the Mixed Commission, held August 28, 2000, were discussed.

After a positive and productive discussion, we agreed on the following procedural matters:

- All issues related to the territorial differendum will be addressed by both Parties solely within the framework of this process while it is underway, to the exclusion of any other political, diplomatic, or judicial forum.
- In order to protect and consolidate this process, both Parties will exercise caution and restraint in the treatment of all issues related to the differendum, and in particular, they will cooperate to avoid incidents on the ground conducive to tension between them.
- Maintaining peace and finding a solution to the differendum are the supreme goals of both States. Each State will act in good faith. Furthermore, each State will act based on the principles of due process and mutual respect.
- The Panel of Facilitators will be responsible for guiding the process and shall have the broadest freedom to interpret the documents signed on July 20, 2000, and to make recommendations.
- During the week of September 18 to 22, 2000, the Panel of Facilitators will visit both countries to gain a broader understanding of the issues.
- Prior to the visit, both Parties will present to the Panel of Facilitators, proposals for measures designed to avoid incidents on the ground which could generate tensions between them.

- After the visit, the Panel, in consultation with the Secretary General, will suggest the date and location for the next Ministerial meeting.
- To Accept the Panel's recommendation that in future meetings, both delegations include representatives of their respective militaries.
- To request that the international community provide assistance and cooperation in support of this process.
- To accept the generous offer of the Secretary General to lend technical and logistical support to the Panel of Facilitators.

We reiterate our deep gratitude to the Secretary General for the invaluable support he has provided to our negotiations, and for his willingness to continue this assistance.

Washington D.C, August 31, 2000

Assad Shoman
Senior Ambassador with Ministerial Rank
Belize

Gabriel Orellana Rojas
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Guatemala