

**ADDRESS BY THE HON. MOHABIR ANIL NANDLALL SC MP  
ATTORNEY GENERAL & MINISTER OF LEGAL AFFAIRS OF  
GUYANA AT THE 147TH INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY IN LUANDA, ANGOLA.**

Madam Chair and distinguished delegations, I bring you greetings from the Government and the people of Guyana. “*Parliamentary Action for Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions*” - the theme under which this conference is being held, is most opportune in today’s world. For only when there is justice, there will be world peace. Here, I speak of legal, social and ecological justice. Justice is guaranteed by the Rule of Law and it is strong institutions that ensure the maintenance of the Rule of Law. The alternative is anarchy, war and human degradation.

At the national level, a strong legal framework, transparent and accountable governance, vibrant democratic institutions, a robust Parliament, an independent judicial system and, at the global level, compliance with International Law and conventions - all concatenate as guardians of the Rule of Law and Justice, so essential for universal human progress and social advancement. Nationally and internationally, public institutions must be adequately resourced, and those who man them must discharge their functions faithfully and fearlessly. It is only then that they will be able to attract and enjoy public trust and confidence.

It is for this reason that we must ensure that those who are elected to form governments, sit in Parliament and appointed to act in public institutions are done so by processes that are lawful, democratic and transparent. Those who attempt to corrupt and pervert these processes are enemies of human progress and must be dealt with as condignly as possible.

If these basic but yet fundamental requirements are met, these institutions shall ensure and guarantee respect for human rights and freedoms. They will swiftly resolve disputes in accordance with law and fundamental justice. In short, they will secure the rule of law and deliver human progress.

Nationally, Government and Parliament alike must also ensure access to justice. Justice must not only be available to the rich and the powerful, but must be equally available to the poor and the indigent. States must therefore strive not only to ensure the availability of institutions of justice far and wide, but must also strive to ensure that citizens have the means to access these institutions. The justice system itself must not be cumbersome but simple to engage. It must not be a cloistered virtue, but must suffer the scrutiny and fair criticism of the ordinary man.

Globally, nation States must comply with International Law, Agreements and Conventions, and must be bound by decisions and processes of international organisations such as the United Nations (UN) and the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Much have been said about the war in Ukraine, the conflict in Gaza and conflicts elsewhere. However, I wish to place on the record, a situation which is evolving in my country, Guyana. The Republic of Venezuela proposes to pass a referendum in that country on the 3rd of December, 2023, seeking to annex to Venezuela, more than two thirds of Guyana's sovereign territory. This reckless and unlawful move is intended to further Venezuela's baseless claim to Guyana's territory - a dispute long settled by Arbitration in 1899. Venezuela perseveres with this illegal conduct despite that this issue is pending between the two States at the International Court of Justice upon the direction of the UN Secretary General.

Actions like these not only undermine public institutions but engender conflicts and violate the very thematic fundamentals of this conference.

In the circumstances I call upon the IPU to condemn the actions of the Republic of Venezuela and demand that Venezuela respect the legal process of the International Court of Justice. Time is of the essence!