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Inquiry in Guyana

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International Commission of Inquiry into the Death of Dr. Walter Rodney

On June 13, 1980, Walter Anthony Rodney was killed by a bomb blast in Georgetown, Guyana. His death has been called an assassination committed by the then ruling People's National Congress, based on the known facts and circumstances surrounding his death. On June 13, 2013, the Government of the Republic of Guyana, following a direct request from the Rodney Family, announced that it approved the establishment of an International Commission of Inquiry (Rodney COI) into the assassination of Dr. Walter Rodney.

The Commission is a Presidential Commission - the Act issuing the Commission, including its Terms of Reference, was published in the Official Gazette of Guyana on February 8, 2014. The Commission is investigating the years 1978-1980, including the context and environment of the time, up to and including Dr. Rodney's assassination to determine why Rodney was killed and by whom.

Sir Richard Cheltenham, K.A., Q.C, Ph.D, Chairman (Barbados), Mrs. Jaqueline Samuels-Brown, Q.C. (Jamaica) and Mr. Seenath Jairam, S.C. (Guyana/Trinidad) comprise the Commission. The work of the Commission is in progress.

Several past investigations have been conducted, but none with the resources, authority, scope, magnitude or mandate of the Rodney COI. The number of witnesses is expected to reach 100 - some witnesses have requested that they remain anonymous, due to the sensitive nature of their testimony. All witnesses have been granted immunity.

There has been both support and opposition to the Rodney COI. Those opposed cite the cost, remoteness in time, the terms of reference, the appointment of one of the judges, the poisoning of the political environment and the potential of opening a so-called "Pandora's Box". Those in support herald the COI as long overdue, worth the investment of time and resources, the timeliness with respect to the dwindling number of living witnesses, the possibility of finally discovering the truth and the potential for healing

The Rodney COI is committed to transparency, impartiality and integrity - all of the hearings are public. The first session was held on April 28 - May 2, 2014. The Rodney Commission is in its second session of hearings, May 27 - June 6. During its sitting sessions, the Rodney COI is generally from 9-1:30 pm, subject to specific scheduling updates. The proceedings can be viewed online at <http://www.ncnguyana.com/home/>, and Demerara Waves is carrying the audio live at (<http://www.caribnewsdesk.com/>).

The public is invited to provide any and all leads, records, articles, statements, reports, publications, testimony and/or information. All information, questions or concerns should be directed to the Secretariat, as follows:

WALTER RODNEY COMMISSION of INQUIRY
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GUYANA