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LEAD Project...

By Staff Reporter - May 2, 2014



U.S. Government regrets visa revocation of implementing official
 THE United States (U.S.) Embassy in Georgetown said, yesterday, the action, by the Guyana
 Government, to revoke the work permit and visa of International Republican Institute (IRI)

resident Country Director Glenn Bradbury is regrettable.

The documents were issued to Bradbury on September 25, 2013, and in a statement to the media, the Embassy said: "The decision to revoke Mr. Bradbury's permit is contrary to our understanding of the Government of Guyana's commitment to review, together, the LEAD programme and to the spirit of the discussions proposed by the Government of Guyana itself." Head of the Presidential Secretariat (HPS), Dr. Roger Luncheon, made the revocation disclosure on Wednesday at his weekly post-Cabinet press briefing in Office of the President, Shiv Chanderpaul Drive, Georgetown.

He explained that the decision was based on the conclusion that the "immigration laws of Guyana have been offended" by Bradbury's actions in the country.

Luncheon said Government understands that the revoking was communicated by Bradbury to his employer, the United States Embassy in Guyana and the Canadian High Commission, as he is a Canadian citizen.

Professional profile

Bradbury, according to his online professional profile, has more than 20 years experience in the House of Commons of Canada as a Senior Parliamentary Assistant and Policy Advisor to Members of Parliament and amassed considerable expertise in several areas, including governance, parliamentary and committee procedure, legislative drafting, regulatory regime reform, public policy analysis, strategic communications, media relations, reputation management, stakeholder engagement, management issues and public affairs.

The IRI Country Director has been in Guyana since July 2013 and his company, is tasked with the implementing of the controversial US\$300M Agency for International Development (USAID) funded Leadership and Democracy (LEAD) project.

In its statement, the U.S. Embassy maintains that the LEAD is "designed to benefit" the Government and people of Guyana.

"The LEAD project implements the objectives described in the USAID Assistance Agreement for Governing justly and democratically, reached between the United States Government and the Government of Guyana in 2009," the Embassy said.

The U.S. Embassy added that it welcomes the willingness of the Government of Guyana to engage in discussions with the United States on democracy and governance, and specifically in

relation to the USAID LEAD project.

However, the HPS said, Wednesday, that the current Administration is, at present, awaiting a “timely and official” word from the U.S. Ambassador to Guyana, Mr. Brent Hardt, on Government’s reiteration of both its willingness to engage in talks over the project, as well as the condition that its implementation be halted to facilitate those discussions.

“We will not negotiate under duress,” he insisted.

Luncheon said the question put to the U.S., through Hardt, is whether or not that country is interested in re-engagement on the project, given that its implementing be halted or not.

The HPS met, last Thursday, with the U.S. Ambassador at OP and reported that the meeting was an opportunity to allow the past actions of Hardt, in moving ahead with the undertaking, despite Government’s clear objections, in the interest of moving forward from a consensual position.

Amazing assertion

“It was an amazing assertion by the U.S. Ambassador to say the Government knew and were informed of the project’s implementation,” Luncheon remarked, referring to Hardt’s March 27 comments over the LEAD status.

The HPS reiterated that correspondence between the Guyana Government and the U.S. Ambassador had made clear this country’s Government’s position on the undertaking.

The first component of it seeks to encourage consensus building in the National Assembly and facilitate more effective interaction between the Assembly and citizens. The second aims to strengthen the effectiveness of the National Assembly and boost citizen engagement with it; the third is to motivate and better equip Guyanese youths to, constructively, engage in political and civic processes and the fourth involves civic and voter education relating to elections and local government reform.

The project was not approved by Cabinet and that was formally indicated to the relevant authorities on October 26, 2013.

(By Vanessa Narine)



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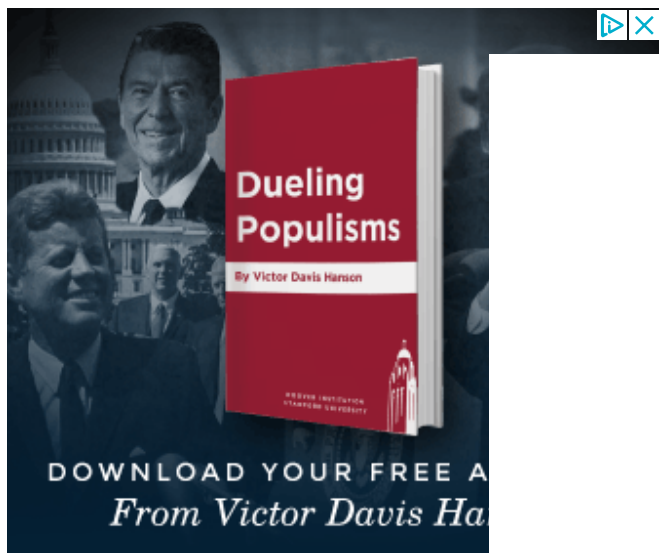
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The image is a banner for "SCHOOL OF THE NATIONS VACANCIES FOR". At the top, there is a colorful logo featuring various national flags. Below the logo, the text "SCHOOL OF THE NATIONS" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font. Underneath that, the text "VACANCIES FOR" is written in a larger, bold, black, sans-serif font. The banner has a dark blue background.

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CONTACT US



Lama Avenue, Bel Air Park, Georgetown, Guyana.





(592) 226-3243-9



gnneditorial@gmail.com (Editorial)

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