

APNU Manifesto 2011

A map of Guyana is shown, filled with the colors of the national flag: green at the top and bottom, yellow in the middle, and a black diagonal band with a red triangle pointing towards the bottom right. The text 'A Good Life for All Guyanese' is overlaid on the map in a large, silver, serif font.

A Good
Life
for All
Guyanese

A Partnership for National Unity

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A GOOD LIFE

Guyana is at breaking point after nineteen years of People's Progressive Party one-party rule. Our country, today, is on the way to becoming a criminalised state. Violent crime – arson, armed robberies, domestic abuse, banditry, piracy, contract killings and murder – has scarred our society.

Poverty and unemployment have created an army of beggars, drug addicts, destitute people, wandering girls and street children. University graduates, talented teachers, nurses and thousands of ordinary citizens race to migrate in droves from their homeland.

Our ten partners – the Guyana Action Party, Guyana Association of Local Authorities, Guyana National Congress, Guyana People's Partnership, Guyana Youth Congress, Justice for All Party, National Democratic Front, National Front Alliance, People's National Congress Reform and Working People's Alliance – have come together with a single vision and a common mission. We are committed to give full meaning to our national Constitution by creating an inclusionary democracy. Our Constitution enjoins:

The principal objective of the political system of the State is to establish an inclusionary democracy by providing increasing opportunities for the participation of citizens and their organisations in the management and decision-making processes of the State.

The tide of ideas in Guyanese politics has turned. A Partnership for National Unity has brought a new politics into being. We have, at the core of our commitment – a new covenant – between the citizen and the government. We believe passionately that all Guyanese are entitled to the benefits of a 'good life' in the country of their birth. This Manifesto will give them the assurance that such a life is attainable under the government of national unity that A Partnership for National Unity will establish after the 2011 general and regional elections. ■

David Granger

Presidential Candidate

WHO WE ARE

A Partnership For National Unity (APNU) is an open association of political parties, interest groups, civic organisations and individuals which comprises:

- Guyana Action Party (GAP)
- Guyana Association of Local Authorities (GALA)
- Guyana National Congress (GNC)
- Guyana People's Partnership (GPP)
- Guyana Youth Congress (GYC)
- Justice For All Party (JFAP)
- National Front Alliance (NFA)
- National Democratic Front (NDF)
- People's National Congress-Reform (PNCR)
- Working People's Alliance (WPA)

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

- Pearline McLean, William Pross, Joseph McIntosh, Noah Yahshuarun

AFFILIATE MEMBERS

- Front for Capital Reforms (FCR)
- Kingdom of Descendants of Africans
- National Emancipation Trust
- Guyana Local Authorities Association

The Partnership subscribes to six core principles:

- Active promotion of a healthy political and democratic culture in workplaces, places of worship and recreation and in organisations.
- Consensus in decision-making and respect for dissenting views.
- Steadfast rejection of discrimination in all forms.
- Commitment to defend the sovereignty of Guyana at all times.
- Commitment to the reasoned and peaceful resolution of conflicts and rejection all forms of violence as means for the settlement of disputes.
- Open membership to all Guyanese parties, organisations and citizens who subscribe to these core principles and to its social, political and economic programme.

OUR VISION FOR THE ECONOMY

- **Focused:** We must become more strategic.
- **Efficient:** We must make the leap, change old processes, and make technology a central part of the way we manage our affairs.
- **Transparent:** We must increase accountability and reduce political interference.

APNU is contesting the November 28, 2011 general and regional elections as a single list of candidates. APNU is committed to:

- the formation of a Government of National Unity to rid Guyana of winner-take-all politics;
- ensuring that our multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society will succeed through respect for the diversity, hard work, thrift and sacrifice of all its citizens;
- ensuring that all Guyanese – regardless of class, creed, gender, race or geographic location – enjoy a good life.

This will be achieved through the creation of an environment in which all citizens recognise the important role they play in building our country in which they can live productive lives – free from the ravages of poverty, secure in their homes and their communities and enjoy the benefits of political, social, economic and cultural development and freedom.

APNU's programme focuses on the sustainable development of Guyana and its resources, human and non-human, resident and in the diaspora. Our *Unity Charter* commits the Partnership to:

- Discussing the challenges facing our country and its people, forging consensus on policy ... involving the full utilisation of our human resources and necessitating the appointment of our best human resources to positions, based on merit. It is an inclusive approach that seeks to share ideas and prosperity as well

as access to resources, eschewing all forms of discrimination. APNU will be a listening administration.

- Undertaking constitutional reform to remove the scope for abuses and excesses carried out with impunity by the Executive and by the President, in particular. Part of the solution lies in reform of the National Assembly to ensure checks on the majority in the Legislature and on the Executive so that the interests of the nation as a whole and the interests of substantial minorities are taken into account.
- Ensuring that all citizens and residents are equal under the law and that the institutional requirements intended to facilitate the accountability of all arms of the State are effective.
- Separating and protecting the Judiciary and Constitutional Offices from the Executive and reforming and strengthening the Police Force. Under the new dispensation, therefore, an APNU administration will vigorously protect the rights of individuals and communities.
- Fostering a free enterprise economy in which the state pursues policies to facilitate rapid growth and development with the highest priority accorded to employment – particularly of our youth, protecting the vulnerable and ensuring a predictable, fair and enabling business environment.



1. GOVERNANCE

APNU is committed to ending ‘winner-take-all’ politics and building inclusive, responsive and accountable governance. Some of the proposals for accomplishing this goal are outlined below:

- Inviting all eligible and willing parties to participate in the Government on the basis of the seats they acquire.
- Introducing a mixed system of elections, combining constituency representation with a small number of seats elected by proportional representation to ensure that there is no imbalance between votes won and seats awarded.
- At local government level, reintroducing village councils, retaining Neighbourhood Democratic Councils (NDCs) and Regional Democratic Councils (RDCs), and introducing constituency elections at the RDC, NDC and village levels, with a provision for individuals to contest those elections and for lower tiers to be represented at higher tiers.
- Establishment of a Local Government Commission to facilitate, monitor and mediate the work of the local authorities, including the introduction of a professional local government service.
- Reforming the National Assembly to provide more scope and resources for the Sector Standing Committees to audit the operations of the respective Ministries.
- Creating a mechanism for community-based and non-government organizations to participate in the formulation and execution of policies and programmes at the local level.
- Re-introducing community development workers trained in guidance and counseling, facilitation, organization, project development, management, and implementation skills.

APNU will ensure good governance practices in all public agencies and institutions, embracing:

- Accountability (transparency, disclosure and redress) and strong oversight and monitoring

to ensure effective delivery of goods and services.

- The rule of law and respect for human rights.
- Genuine representation, inclusiveness and participation.
- Equality and equity; effectiveness and efficiency.
- Real access to information, to state media, and the freedom to set up private radio and television stations.
- Recourse to remedial bodies, such as the Ombudsman, Police Service Commission and Human Rights Commission.

Equality before the law, irrespective of wealth, rank or political connections will be the guiding principles underlying a strengthened judicial system.

APNU will move vigorously to stamp out the scourge of corruption. Rights to personal property will be protected where the asset has been fairly acquired.

Business activity will be facilitated by the strict observance of physical and intellectual property rights and by corporate codes of conduct. The following citizens' proposals will have our support:

- The establishment of a Public Procurement Commission.
- The establishment of a Budget Office and the strengthening of the Office of the Auditor General.
- Ministers and senior government officials will be required to declare their assets.
- The curtailment of immunities, pension plan and other iniquities of the Executive Presidency.
- Full respect for the rule of law and the human rights of all citizens. ■



2. A VISION FOR OUR ECONOMY Purposeful Growth and Sustainable Development

A People-Centred Economy

Guyana needs a sustainable economy for poverty eradication and social and economic development in order to achieve a better future for all. This will be achieved through the informed and smart use (protection and utilisation) of Guyana's natural resource endowment, including our human resources. These policies, in order to achieve this public good for all Guyanese, will be holistic; intra-generational (providing adequate resources for the current generation) and inter-generational (providing adequate resources for future generations) "with increasing opportunities for the participation of citizens and their organisations in the management and decision-making processes of state, with particular emphasis on those areas of decision making that directly affect their well being."

We cannot continue to gamble with our future. Many of the policies of the past nineteen years depended on luck and tricky statistics. Economies like ours, which rely on a few export commodities and hope for continued high prices, are at serious risk. Our people deserve an economy based on sound fundamentals, framed within a cohesive medium-term economic development plan. Neither the National Development Plan nor the Low Carbon Development Strategy will take us where we need to go.

The international community joined together to forgive a significant portion of our debt under various programmes over the last two decades. However, our debt is growing again. Worse yet, while the average Guyanese does not benefit sufficiently from the Government's increased spending, we all know that everyone will feel it when it comes time to repay. If we do not manage

our debt properly, Guyanese will be burdened with higher taxes, fewer services, and an uncertain future. We have to do more to balance our long-term capital inflows and exports with our imports, otherwise we will face challenges with our currency position, ability to compete globally, and assure a sound future for our sustainable development plans. It is well known that our inflation numbers are unreliable and therefore affect consumer confidence and planning. It is clear that there is greater uncertainty about our economy than the PPP admits.

Our vision for the economy

Focused: We must become more strategic.

Efficient: We must make the leap, change old processes, and make technology a central part of the way we manage our affairs.

Transparent: We must increase accountability and reduce political interference.

Up and Out

APNU in government will create an economy geared to unleashing the potential of the Guyanese people and its resources. The concept is simple: “Up and Out.” We will concentrate on moving economic activities up the development chain and reversing the trade balance by beginning to export more than we import.

Citizens are urging APNU to nurture a vibrant, flexible, modern, and people-centred economy through knowledge- and skills-intensive and natural resource-based development, diversifying the economy’s output, markets and encouraging innovation in industry, education and training.

Diversification must be intelligent. It is not just about producing more stuff. We all know how many investors, big and small, took on important ventures, especially in agriculture, only to see them

fail or bear little fruit. This is due to an unfocused, disorganised approach to diversification. The size of our population requires us to be more systematic, very strategic, and more embracing of technology and innovation. We envision the diversification path mainly through agriculture, forestry and mining, tourism and financial services, Information, Technology and Communication.

APNU in a new administration will promote economic activity by fostering an environment for private sector growth, particularly in these sectors. The policy framework will give incentives to domestic and international investment, higher value production, export orientation, introduction of technology and innovation, employment creation, and higher skilled training activities; and activities that reduce poverty.

A more structured approach to developing Guyana’s economy which concentrates public expenditure around core areas will guide the development and implementation of a multi-annual, results-based, budget framework.

Transparency: A People’s Government

APNU will waste no time in establishing transparency in economic management by adopting a “nothing to hide approach,” especially with public expenditure processes.

Budget and expenditure preparation processes will be transformed. The timeline for preparing the budget will be extended in order to incorporate inputs from civil society and private sector *in advance* of the budget’s approval.

Budget items will be fully aligned with national development priorities of the people of Guyana. Capital expenditure allocations will be informed partly by results, impact on poverty, and the performance of the respective line ministries.

The administration will ensure that people’s money is spent where there will be the greatest impact on their well being and future.

The mainstreaming of e-transparency will be a

cross-cutting tool of APNU in government. APNU supports the regular gathering, analysis, and dissemination of important public sector data for enhancing accountability, reducing corruption, and maintaining its compact with the people we serve. By employing web solutions, APNU in government will enable more regular updates on revenue sources, tax exemptions and expenditure by category. We believe that it is only fair to be this open with our fellow Guyanese. After all, we have “nothing to hide.”

Transparent economic management also requires the Central Bank of Guyana to be more independent and not continue functioning as another department of the Ministry of Finance. Our people deserve a well functioning central bank that works in their interest to set monetary policy that protects them from self-serving politicians. A more independent Central Bank will require greater overall capacity building. The Bureau of Statistics must do its job without let or hindrance. Business and economic decisions require up-to-date and timely data on inflation, growth, trade and other economic trends. The Guyanese people are not treated fairly when important data are not disclosed and perhaps not even used to shape policy decisions. We must amend our laws and regulations to ensure the process of collecting, analysing and disseminating key economic and population data is protected from political interference.

Efficiency: “Extending our Capacity”

Guyana must no longer suffer from “small country syndrome” where we tie our hands because we think that we are too small to do, and challenge, anything. International indices such as the Kauffman (which measures governance), the Doing Business Indicators, and the Global Competitiveness Index, all testify that our economy is very inefficient.

APNU recognizes that we have committed and capable public servants who want to be part of building the new Guyana. We have to think outside the box, undo old process, bring in new ones and

embrace technology, not only in Government, but throughout our society. We must also aim to reduce considerably the time it takes to process public transactions. Improved efficiency will help us to do more with the resources we have. Technology and training will go hand in hand as we work with key stakeholders to transform the public administration infrastructure of Guyana.

Private Sector and the Government

The private sector is a key partner in building a more diverse, vibrant and balanced economy. APNU in government will encourage private enterprise (local and international) to flourish and to play a vital role in generating growth and prosperity. We will encourage firms to collaborate in utilising key services where economies of scale are available for moving up the production chain (higher value) and become more export oriented.

APNU in government will enforce the rule of law so that the sanctity of contracts can stand and, in the process, facilitate safe and efficient commercial transactions and investment. We will work to make our Courts operationally independent and reinforce their capacity to deal with finance, scientific and commercial issues, including restrictive practices, monopolies and consumer protection. We plan to support the following measures:

- Enhance the State’s capacity to regulate and protect citizens from the increasingly widespread predatory behaviors by groups and individual economic actors.
- Make use of modern communications and information technology to bridge the divide between the Government and the people. For commerce, this means that institutions and procedures will be reformed to reduce the cost (money and time) of doing business and the lack of accountability.
- Establish the rights of consumers and enforce acceptable practices and standards of consumer protection including in the areas of hire purchase, and services such as insurance and medical care.
- Ensure an end to the financial strangling of

the judiciary, constitutional offices and Service Commissions.

External Financing

APNU in government will hold firmly to the maintenance of debt sustainability, prudential fiscal behaviour, and the achievement of unassailable development impact for every dollar spent. We are mindful of the significant concessional financial and grant resources extended to the people of Guyana to promote their development. In its engagement with external financial actors, APNU in the new administration will support:

- Value for money and development impact
- Development of local capacity
- South-south cooperation
- Maintaining concessionality for external financing

Guyana will partner with appropriate international and bilateral institutions to enhance the well being of all our peoples in a manner that is technically, environmentally, socially, and financially sound.

Our economic strategy focuses on augmenting transparency, concentrating on core areas, boosting productivity, and delivering results while maintaining macroeconomic stability.

Public sector employees' rights

We will pay special attention to improving efficiency and establishing feasible, agreed, improved and acceptable standards for the delivery of services to the public in the areas traditionally dominated by the state – public health, education, social welfare and policing. In this respect, both fiscal support and legislative measures will be employed to support improved standards of service which will be systematically monitored. Emphasis will be placed on strengthening supervisory skills throughout the public sector.

APNU will work to bring an end to the alarming erosion of the rights of Public Sector employees which began in 1992 with the arbitrary firing of senior officials and the subsequent use

of contractual officers and consultancies to mask unacceptable and odious workplace discrimination, unjustified pay differentials, and appointments to levels unwarranted by experience and competence. This hides the real public sector wage bill and seduces officers into taking illegal or improper actions.

Economic transformation

High and sustainable levels of economic growth for Guyana will be possible through strategic planning for the revitalisation of regional and local economies; investment in human capital and knowledge; infrastructure development; and the strengthening of the state's regulatory capacity.

APNU will facilitate measures such as:

- Enlarging the size and scope of education and training institutions to prepare young people with the knowledge, skills and attitudes required for individual and collective development; renewing the subvention for the Critchlow Labour College, and supporting training on-the-job for coastland and hinterland workers.
- Reducing taxes and duties within the context of a general reform of the tax system (see separate 20:20 Plan).
- Reforming government expenditure aimed at getting government to do only what is necessary and efficient for government to do, within the framework of a market driven economy.
- Improving the efficiency of government, reducing 'red tape', simplifying bureaucratic (but necessary) requirements and improving coordination among government agencies.
- Strengthening the Stock Exchange
- Working within the context of the Initiative for the Integration of the Regional Infrastructure of South America.

Employment for all

Double digit unemployment and an even greater degree of underemployment in Guyana have had extremely serious social consequences over the last two decades. Besides wasted and unfulfilled

lives and dysfunctional families, there has been sustained emigration and an upsurge in crime of unprecedented proportions. The surest recipe for alleviating poverty is a well paying job.

Job creation is therefore one of APNU's first priorities. The army of unemployed includes unskilled, semi-skilled, skilled youth, men and women, as well as university graduates. To help achieve full employment, APNU will seek to achieve an average rate of economic growth of at least 7% through the following measures:

- Stimulating and facilitating large and small private sector activity, including various incentives and simplifying the system of licensing and permits required for doing business.
- Initiating potentially profitable new labour-intensive value-adding ventures with private entrepreneur collaboration.
- Introducing tax allowances based on the number of new jobs created. In order to keep enterprises honest, such an allowance will be related to the size of the wage bill; and
- Strengthening Labour Exchange and Employment Bureau institutions for greater access and easier matching of labour supply to labour demand.

Human resource development

APNU's goal of economic transformation requires holistic growth and development of our human resources. This will include, for example:

- Attracting and retaining the best administrators, teachers, instructors and lecturers at all levels of our education system and regulating private education institutions for quality of service, safety and other relevant standards.
- Attracting and retaining a wide range of health care professionals for the public health system and regulating the private health system to ensure quality, safety and other key standards.
- Promoting, and funding where necessary, on-the-job and lifelong training of people in every sector of the economy.

- Promoting and funding research in every area of importance to Guyana's economic and social development so as to ensure that at every level of society decisions are informed by knowledge and sound analysis.
- Support for the development of non-government and civic organizations; libraries, community centers and grounds for learning, reflection and recreation; and initiatives for integrating marginalized young people into the decision-making processes of the community and nation.

Regulatory capacity

The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) will be empowered with the necessary technical, management and financial capacity to effectively regulate all public utilities.

The Guyana Gold and Mining Commission (GGMC), the Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC) and all agencies involved in the natural resources sector will be similarly empowered and mandated to review, design and implement in collaboration with key stakeholders a system for fair and equitable revenue assessment and collection; sustainable natural resource use, management and development; compliance with and enforcement of all relevant regulations; and an acceptable mechanism dispute resolution.

Transport development

APNU in government will consult on the construction of a deep water harbour located in the Demerara/Essequibo area since Demerara is still the hub of all import/export activity to and from the country. Fertiliser, imported food, drink and mechanical imports, even the outward shipping of sugar, rice and other commodities will all become increasingly more economical with the development of a deep water harbour.

The production potential of the Brazilian states of Roraima and Amazonas, which total 800,000 square miles, would create many jobs in Guyana if we are to assist them to transport their products

through this country. Goods to and from Boa Vista and Manaus and the states of Roraima and Amazonas can pass through Guyana on roads built by Guyana and Brazil to the ocean to the deep water harbour. The tolls to traverse our roads and use our sea-ports alone will earn significant revenue.

Hinterland airstrips, major and key secondary roads to mining and forestry sites, Amerindian villages and other communities outside of main settlement areas will be upgraded to facilitate ease of communication, transportation and access to Guyana's natural resources. APNU will support a more decentralised approach to road infrastructure development.

APNU in government will collaborate with municipalities to ensure that roads and bridges are effectively constructed and maintained. In the medium term, the option of another bridge across the Demerara River will be explored to meet growing demands and expansion in the Essequibo Islands, West Demerara and the housing and agriculture sectors.

APNU is open to consideration of premium public transport systems which may be priced higher but offer a better quality of service with subsidies for senior citizens, school children and the differently-abled.

APNU in government will facilitate the early completion of the IDB-supported Initiative for the Integration of the Regional Infrastructure of South America (IIRSA) to interconnect South American economies through transportation, energy & telecommunications links.

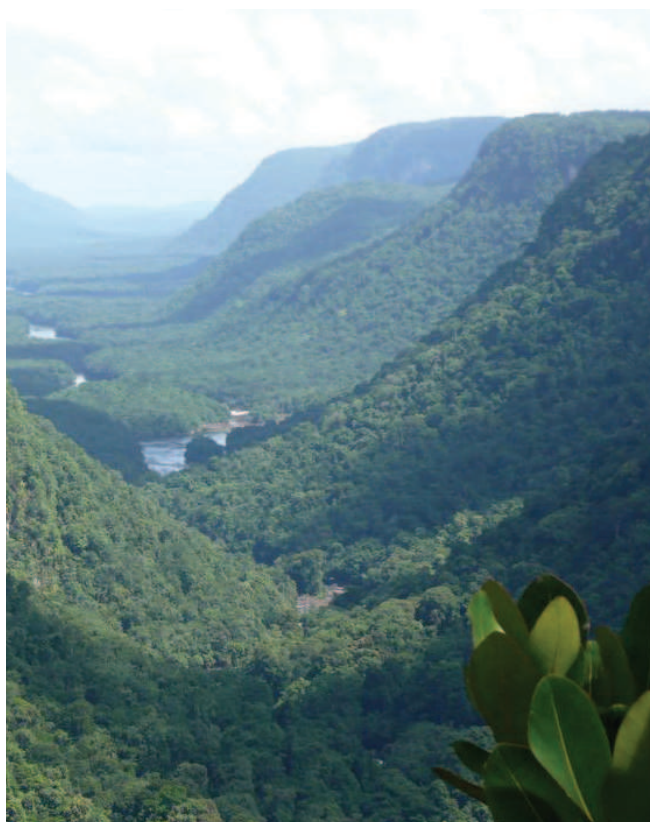
Serious attention will be given to revitalising and restructuring the Central Transport Planning Unit in the Ministry of Public Works and Communications to give greater focus and direction to a well structured and integrated approach to transport infrastructure development and management. National transport policy will be shaped by well established international conventions, codes and customary practices, and autonomous regulatory institutions.

APNU will place emphasis on giving full effect to the various international instruments to which Guyana is party in the maritime and aviation fields by facilitating the drafting and implementing of the requisite subsidiary legislation and regulations. Although Guyana acceded to the Shipping Act in 1998 and a Maritime Administration Department was established, development in the maritime sector has been constrained and constricted.

The ports and shipping industry will also be developed through the drafting and implementation of a Port Master Plan for a phased approach to port infrastructure development and the effective dredging and maintenance of the ports, harbours and rivers on which local and international traffic depend.

In respect of maritime and aviation security, search and rescue plans will be updated. There will be increased surveillance in the territorial waters of Guyana as a deliberate strategy to decrease the increasing incidents of piracy and armed robbery. A functioning national maritime and aviation security committee will be established with wide inter-sectoral involvement.





Tourism

APNU in government will facilitate the development of a tourism policy with key governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. The issues which will be addressed include the following:

- The contribution of Tourism to GDP must be acknowledged and recognized, disaggregated and not clumped in a group.
- Zoning of land use and the creation of buffer zones.
- A specialized training regime, a separate and dedicated training institution for the tourism and hospitality industry.
- The high cost of travel to hinterland locations, including insurance costs.
- A regulatory framework with mandatory requirements on security, safety and quality standards; and appropriate fiscal incentive regimes.
- Pursuance of emerging markets such as China; opportunities in thematic tourism and niche

markets; a Destination Marketing Plan; and certification of Guyana as an “Eco Tourism” destination.

Manufacturing & Services

Manufacturing is critical to a country’s development. The sector urgently needs a comprehensive assessment and diagnosis of what is required for the way forward.

APNU in government will work with stakeholders in the manufacturing and service sub-sectors to design policy initiatives to address a number of issues, for example:

- Export market opportunities for products and services particularly within the confines of the current and potential Free Trade Agreements and Partial Scope Agreements.
- Promotion of local joint ventures and partnerships.
- Reduction of transaction costs and time.
- Examination of possible exports of trade in services.
- Facilitation of small- and medium-sized manufacturing enterprises to develop strategic alliances with various research institutions with respect to acquisition of new technologies, technology transfer and product development.

Balanced development

APNU will energize all our peoples and mobilize our resources to serve the needs of all of the country’s communities – rural, urban and hinterland.

APNU will take steps to expand and diversify the agricultural base so as to ensure a greater degree of food security and realise the longstanding goal of becoming the food basket of the Caribbean.

Balanced sectoral development and a more diversified economy will be necessary, partly due to the need to spread risks across sectors to minimise the shocks from downturns in the world economy and partly because of the ethnic concentration and varying performance levels in the existing economic sectors. ■



3. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: EDUCATION, THE ARTS AND SPORTS

Education

Our education system is in crisis. Our small population cannot accept the Ministry of Education's estimate of 7,200 school dropouts yearly. APNU in government will approach the transformation of education in a spirit of collaboration by:

- Developing a child-centred and child-respectful education policy in discussion with the Ministries with responsibility for Education, Youth Development, Sports, Culture, Labour, Human Services, and Health; teacher training institutions, the Guyana Teacher's Union, the Teaching Service Commission, teachers, children, parents and guardians.
- Encouraging communities to mobilize their resources to nurture young people.
- Encouraging voluntary cooperation and collective action in providing community-level goods and services (for example, children's playgrounds, libraries and recreation centres); and involving the diaspora in supporting community-designed and executed projects.
- Promoting universal, systematic and institutionalised training of children and young people in the knowledge, skills and attitudes required for personal and collective development, strategic planning, parenting, environmental sustainability, civic rights and responsibilities, and good governance.

APNU in government will place the highest priority on the education, life skill and other developmental needs of children with differing capacities while being fair to teachers by supporting:

- The establishment of special schools and compassionate rehabilitation centres, with trained personnel, adequate equipment and materials to meet the needs of young people in difficult circumstances.
- The development of a programme to identify and effectively nurture gifted children.
- School curricula re-design for different environments and different regions of our country.
- The transferring teachers with the welfare of teacher, school and student in mind, and not as a means of punishment.
- Re-hiring retired teachers who can mentor younger teachers in the system and assist their professional growth and career prospects.
- Encouraging teachers, through adequate

salaries and better conditions of service, to give their full effort during the normal classroom hours, thereby allowing time for the cultural pursuits and play children need to be healthy and well-rounded.

- Rewarding teachers for furthering their education and training, especially on their own initiative, and promoting them based on annual appraisals.
- Improving facilities, standards and practices at all teacher training institutions to produce better trained, equipped and motivated teachers.
- Mobilizing communities to physically improve and better equip their schools, installing computer laboratories and technical and vocational courses in all secondary schools.

Parents from our poorer households rightly complain that “free education” is not free. APNU will work to reduce the disabilities so many of our children and youth face because of poverty by:

- Understanding and addressing the factors causing truancy.
- Introducing free nutritious meals at nursery and primary levels.
- Removing contingency fees for enrollment in schools.
- Making required exam fees tax deductible
- Providing subsidies to offset the cost of tertiary level education; and bursaries for qualified students in need.

The Arts

The Arts in Guyana have declined as a profession, hobby, public entertainment and inspiration, and contributor to the expression of our national identity. They have not been treated as a national good. APNU will work to restore the Arts as a matter of priority, facilitating the development of a National Policy on the arts with three main planks:

- *Development of Core Arts* (for example, music, literature, visual and performing arts) for individual and collective activities of professionals or art lovers. The core arts will

form the basis for arts education, collections, and public performances.

- *Development of Creative Industries* (film and television production, broadcasting, electronic games, architecture, design and fashion, publishing, media, advertising) to harness a range of creative and business skills for commercial production purposes.
- *Preservation and Promotion of Guyana’s Cultural Heritage* of shared and varied experience.

APNU will work for the development and mainstreaming of the Arts and

- Ensure that Government supports the Arts in and among all groups, peoples, and regions of our country.
- Support organisations and education institutions which offer training in the Arts, restore or add the Arts to all school curricula, and offer incentives for teachers in the Arts.
- Facilitate the staging, display, production, creation, publication and broadcasting of the Arts, expanding and upgrading of museums, galleries, theatres and special schools.
- Strengthen the role that the Arts play in relating the Guyana experience through, for example, establishing dedicated websites for Guyanese arts; supporting heritage and community-based tourism; and ensuring the proper reproduction, storage and preservation of manifestations of our art products.

Sports and recreation

Deficiencies in sports and recreation in Guyana include limited opportunities for citizens (Amerindian youths, women, elders, and persons with disabilities, especially) to engage in sports; the conceptualisation of sports as mainly for competition or for the talented and *not*, more properly, *also* for recreation and health; the marked decline in the number of achievements by our sports persons at regional and international levels; the politicisation of the public administration of sports; victimisation of sports associations; corruption and official incompetence.

APNU will work for the rescue of sports through advocating for making sports broad-based (“Sports-for-All”); promoting excellence in sport (“Sports for Personal and National Pride”); and supporting sports for national income generation through, for example, sports tourism, making Guyana an attractive venue for regional and international competitions.

Under APNU’s “Sports-for-All” policy, we will work to provide opportunities for citizens to learn and play indoor and outdoor sports in all regions of Guyana for recreation, entertainment and health, regardless of age, gender, disability, social or economic status or political affiliation.

To stimulate and achieve joy and excellence in sports, APNU will support the holding of friendly matches in and between communities, and a properly structured competition system in various sports across the country; adequately reward and recognise achievements; institutionalise training and coaching in schools and communities; establish a formal system to identify and develop talent; and increase the potential of sports as a rewarding career. ■

- Reduce the crime rate and violence as a matter of urgency.
- Ensure that our anti-corruption, anti-narcotics and anti-money-laundering policies are fully articulated as a core standard for all Ministers, Permanent Secretaries and others in public service.
- Make our society more child-friendly, and ensure that elders, physically and mentally disabled citizens, enjoy the dignity and respect they deserve.
- Put our children at the centre of public policy, laws and budgets.
- Foster an environment of respect for decency and integrity in family, community and national affairs – leading from the top.

Children

Many children are in crisis, partly because to earn money, parents are forced into jobs with excessively long shifts like security guard work, occupations like vending that require extended periods away from home, or work abroad, leaving their children behind. The increased movement of Guyanese



4. SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT

Restoration of Society

APNU in government will immediately embark on a programme for the restoration of Guyanese society even as it pursues economic growth. We will be working to:

- labour in all race groups has meant an increase in child-shifting and child-headed households. In the medium- to long-term, the solution is the kind of economic development that provides what the ILO defines as decent work. But there are actions we can take immediately for the protection of all the vulnerable including: children and elders. We will:
- Invest in partnerships with NGOs, faith-

based organisations and educators to have community child-watch programs, after-school programmes for sport, homework, childcare at the community and street level, and checking on home-alone children.

- Promote more community involvement in child protection e.g. parents alerting organizers that they're working nights.

These programmes, which may include volunteer youth, will be supervised by properly trained and resourced government employees.

The Rights of the Child must be fundamental, and the best interests of the child a primary consideration in all actions whether undertaken by public, private or social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities, or legislative bodies.

Elders

Our elders are experiencing increasing levels in their cost of living, and the savings some have secured are being gutted by devaluation and low returns. An efficiently run pension system must provide a basic safety net to enable senior citizens to maintain a reasonable standard of living during their retirement. APNU in government will work to:

- Provide special assistance to elders through higher and inflation-adjusted pensions; improved social security benefits; lower prices for state-provided utility and health services; and decent elder care homes.
- Review the age for formal retirement from the public sector.
- Encourage retirement savings in a tax-effective manner to avoid penalising those who choose to save for retirement.
- Implement an emergency response mechanism to address their special needs and vulnerabilities.
- Establish formal and informal support systems to assist families to take care of their elderly and support the construction of retirement homes.

Persons with disabilities

Physically or mentally disabled persons have the right to special care, financial assistance, education, training, health care services, rehabilitative services, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities in a manner that is conducive to achieving the fullest social integration and development. Disabled children whose parents cannot afford the necessary services are growing up disadvantaged.

APNU in government is committed to enabling a similar special assistance package for physically and mentally disabled citizens, as that outlined for elders, as well as to:

- Ensuring that our laws and policies respect rights of persons with disabilities.
- Implementing comprehensive assessment and periodic evaluation of their situation.
- Conducting a review of our educational policy to ensure that special education is provided for persons with disabilities, abled persons and a smooth transfer from special school to regular school.
- Establishing formal and informal support systems to assist families to take care of disabled persons in their households.



People on public assistance

Review of the present Safety Net programmes is essential to ensure that these meet the needs of our poor and vulnerable and lift the destitute to a human standard of living and participation in transforming Guyana. APNU in government is committed to:

- Reviewing the Public Assistance policy, increasing public assistance, and reintroducing Public Assistance interviews and recommendations at the regional level.
- New innovative programmes including cash transfers or food stamps, jobs on public works scheme.

In connection with the National Insurance Scheme, APNU in government is committed to ensuring that:

- Recommendations of the 2007 NIS Reform Report are reviewed and steps taken to put the Scheme on a sound financial footing.

Gender equity

Providing the basis for girls and boys, women and men to achieve their full human potential is both a moral imperative and a requirement for economic and social development which uses the potential and serves the interests of all people. In Guyana women are not achieving their full potential: they continue to perform the majority of unwaged work; occupy the majority of the lowest-paid and least regulated jobs; are far more subject to domestic violence, sexual violence and sexual harassment, including in the workplace. They are under-represented in positions of power, in both the state and private sector, in spite of their higher numbers in tertiary education and the superior educational performance of females compared to males at all levels.

To address the problem at its root APNU in government will:

- Examine and take steps to correct the negative impact of economic policies and working conditions on women's unwaged work and on children (boys *and* girls) and families.
- Encourage more family-friendly working environments, for example, child/family-care facilities; alternative hours of waged work, where possible, for women and men caring for young children or elders, chronically sick or severely disabled relatives; and maternity and paternity leave.
- Ensure equal pay for *work of equal value*.
- Immediately ratify and implement the ILO Convention #189 which recognizes domestic workers as workers.

Other key actions APNU will ensure include:

- Improving Maternal and Child Health Services, refusing complacency about the level

of maternal mortality.

- Sustained popular education on the prevention of hypertension, diabetes, breast and cervical cancer and fibroids, in particular.
- Combating gender and other stereotyping in educational choices.
- Providing second-chance educational opportunities for male school dropouts and girls who leave the system early due to pregnancy.

APNU will work to effect genuine 50:50 equality in Parliament, and as a proactive step in this direction commits to the global standard for the balance between women and men in governing bodies which is 40/60 – that is, neither sex should have less than 40% or more than 60% representation.

APNU endorses and commits to the implementation of the National Domestic Violence Policy (NDVP) developed in a consultative process between civil society and government, and as an essential part of ending domestic and sexual abuse, will promote a sustained campaign to uproot the cultural acceptance of violence against the less powerful.

Young men and young women

Young people comprise at least two-thirds of Guyana's population. Our success as a nation relies on youth realising their potential in a timely and effective manner.

Employment not only serves to provide the basic needs of our youth but is also a means for young men and young women to discover their unique identities and talents and guarantee their individual development. Although youths graduate from various tertiary institutions every year ready to enter the job market, they remain unemployed because of slow economic growth, corruption and nepotism.

APNU's vision (which has guided the Action Plan for Youth) for Guyanese young men and young women includes:

- A Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES) to finance and develop individual and group youth enterprises with a Technical Support Unit,

monitoring, and mentorship in collaboration with the Private Sector and non-governmental organizations.

- Strengthening existing youth programmes to make them more relevant, responsive and effective.
- Providing greater opportunities for young people to become entrepreneurs, through formal or non-formal education and rewarding youth innovation and ingenuity in the form of tax breaks and interest waivers.
- Consulting with youth at community level throughout the country on developing resource centres for information, training, refuge, recreation, relationship and crisis counseling by peers and professionals, and guidance on employment creation.
- Knowledge and skills training centres in agricultural areas focusing on agriculture related science and technology.
- National Youth Council to oversee youth programmes.
- A genuine representative National Youth Parliament.
- Youth Crime and Violence Unit.
- National Apprenticeship and Service Programme.
- Youth Leadership Development Institute.
- A National Entrepreneurial and Business Institute for young Guyanese.



5. HINTERLAND DEVELOPMENT

Hinterland development will be a top priority because it remains a disadvantaged zone and because of the threat to our coastal communities of sea-level rise. APNU in government will support a development strategy geared to benefitting the indigenous inhabitants and other local communities. Hinterland peoples will be empowered with the requisite capital resources and capacities for agricultural development; modern housing and road construction; manufacturing and services.



Indigenous peoples

The indigenous peoples of Guyana (Akawaio, Arawak, Arecuna, Carib, Makusi, Patamona, Wai-Wai, Wapichan, Warau) reside and have their being in the hinterland and constitute a rapidly increasing section of the population.

APNU in government will celebrate and preserve our Amerindian heritage and work to ensure that they enjoy their full rights under our constitution, the ILO Convention #169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, and Article 27 on “The rights of minorities” issued by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The Guyana constitution is clear: *“We, the Guyanese people, value the special place in our nation of the Indigenous Peoples and recognise their rights as citizens to land and security and to their promulgation of policies for their development.”*

APNU believes that the full protection of the rights of the Indigenous Peoples in the Constitution and in other laws is the bedrock for the realisation of their economic, social, cultural and political aspirations within Guyanese society.

APNU recognises that all post-independence governments have made improvements in the laws and conditions of the indigenous peoples of our country, but there is still significant progress to be made in this regard.

Since independence, in 1966, international law governing the rights of Indigenous Peoples has advanced immeasurably, and Guyana, as a member of the international community and in adherence to its treaty obligations under international law, has more than a moral and ethical obligation to the first peoples of Guyana, to ensure that the national legal framework meets acceptable standards for the protection of their rights.

Since 2006, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) made a number of recommendations. The UN Committee urged Guyana

“to recognise and protect the rights of all indigenous communities to own, develop and control the lands which they traditionally occupy, including water and subsoil resources, and to safeguard their right to use lands not exclusively occupied by them, to which they have traditionally had access for their subsistence, in accordance with the Committee’s General Recommendation No. 23 and taking into account ILO Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples.”

Guyanese indigenous peoples have over the years, consistently advocated for their right to water and subsurface resources to be included in the land titles granted to them. The PPP administration has persisted in disregarding its treaty obligations under international law to fully protect the water and subsurface resource rights of the indigenous peoples. APNU will uphold all international Treaty obligations.

The indigenous peoples of Guyana, and all over the world, have maintained that the protection of their right to their lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used and acquired, is not only fundamental to the realisation of their economic, social, cultural and political rights but to their very survival. The protection of the right to lands, territories and resources cannot be overstated.

The Indigenous Peoples, similar to all other peoples, aspire to fulfil their true potential and to

achieve excellence in any meaningful pursuit of life and, despite the many challenges and difficulties they have faced, some have achieved distinction in their chosen field of endeavour.

Agricultural Development

The hinterland regions of Guyana – the Barima-Waini, Cuyuni-Mazarun, Potaro-Siparuni, Upper Takutu-Upper Essequibo, and Upper Demerara-Berbice (Regions 1, 7, 8, 9, 10) cover 76.62 percent of the country’s land mass. The population therein, mostly Amerindian, is about 113,000 persons, 15 per cent of the national population. Population density is extremely low.

APNU’s vision is for hinterland communities to be food secure. A food security policy for the hinterland will also result in savings in transportation costs for staples in some hinterland households, and broaden the resident skills base.

Traditionally, the nine indigenous peoples met their food needs through subsistence agriculture, hunting and fishing. With the upsurge in mining and, to a lesser extent, logging contiguous to many of their communities, these traditional food sources have been severely compromised by environmental degradation and habitat loss. To compound matters, young men especially have been leaving their villages for more lucrative jobs in mining and forestry. The result has been an increase in suffering, especially in villages and communities distant from Regional centres.

APNU in government will work with all stakeholders for a Hinterland Policy which includes building and sustaining vibrant region-specific agricultural and economic development. This will require:

- Promoting environmentally sensitive food production systems based on agricultural diversification, water management and efficient land use and the establishment of well resourced extension services to facilitate technology adoption by farmers and farming groups.
- Facilitating access to affordable credit for individuals and groups.

- Facilitating the acquisition of appropriate technology and equipment for various levels of production.
- Enhancing marketing arrangements for producers of primary and value added commodities.
- Placing traditional beef cattle rearing on a scientific footing to take advantage of the international demand for 'organic' beef, while the nascent sheep and goat rearing enterprises will be strengthened to address the dietary animal protein needs of villagers in the first instance, as flocks are built up to meet the significant local and CARICOM demands for sheep and goat meats.
- Policies to ensure that the Intermediate Savannas, Upper Demerara and Berbice Region, long touted as the 'next frontier for agricultural development,' are effectively used for integrated, industrial crop and livestock production and agro-processing. The focus will be on the production of substantial portions of the regional food needs, grain and other concentrate feeds for the local animal production sector.

A modern Agricultural Research and Development Institute will be established as a priority. This will not only have a regional, but also a national, remit to address the production concerns of small and medium scale operators who do not have the resources to conduct their own on-farm research and technological innovations

Infrastructural Development

Infrastructural development is critical for Guyana's economic transformation because of the country's physical size (particularly in relation to its population), geographical positioning, terrain and topography, and historical settlement pattern that is predominantly coastal.

APNU in government will work on developing arterial road and air transportation links and port networks with the interior. Priority will be given to constructing the Linden-Lethem highway. An important complement will be the construction of a deep water harbour (with spinoff benefits

that Guyana will derive) that will also stimulate Guyana's trade with Brazil and serve as a gateway for our CARICOM partners.

APNU supports the construction of a network of subsidiary roads that will open up access to a number of waterfalls sites, thus stimulating our eco-tourism industry and hinterland industrial activity. ■



6. AGRICULTURE

A fundamental consideration for the future success of our critical agriculture sector must be the effectiveness of the decision-making structure from the highest level and its consequential vertical impact.

The fact is that for too long development of traditional agricultural products – sugar and rice in particular – has been directed and/or moderated within a 'Ministerial' box. As a consequence the box kept expanding to involve almost every other crop.

The justification for the centralised model has dissipated in the face of the fundamental global changes in doing business: proactively, creatively, in partnerships with local/overseas investors recognising the demand to comply with the highest international quality assurance standards.

It is time therefore to recognise the need for relevant structural changes in management, as

well as in operational styles, to satisfy current and future expectations.

Human Resource Development

Critical to these organisational arrangements, and to the proposal for growth and diversification of the sector, must be as rapid a development as possible of the relevant technical skills, for which the established academic/training institutions will have to be upgraded; and/or suitable partnerships (including regional partnerships) organised. One dormant linkage that must be resuscitated and strengthened is with the Caribbean Agricultural and Research Institute (CARDI) to assist in critical areas of agricultural research.

The fishing industry, a major foreign exchange earner, will be given the requisite assistance to revive its productivity, with the help of advice from appropriately qualified personnel.

We will need to reorganise the management of sugar, rice, aquaculture, livestock, coconuts and other crops, by respected skills, and competencies - in appropriately designed organisational structures that project images of credibility to counterparts; and assurance of quality products and services to clients and farmers.

APNU in the new government will work to:

- Create a flexible, broad-based, integrated, innovative and environmentally sensitive agriculture sector to satisfy the demands of domestic, regional and international competitive markets.
- Create sustainable enterprises through the application of cost-effective management of traditional and modern technologies, in order to increase volumes and quality of diversified agricultural produce.
- Establish programmes for technical and financial support; improved land tenure arrangements; meaningfully involve our young men and young women in the sector; and disseminate knowledge and skills to agricultural, farmers and other community

organizations and individuals through extension services.

- Implement capacity building, including the conduct of basic and applied research.
- Complement cost-effective production with enhanced processing and marketing.

Developmental priorities

Identification of profitable markets will be a factor informing the phasing of specific developmental priorities.

With Guyana's rainfall trends indicating a change in distribution, it is important that future development be planned to take account of the environmental conditions.

Intensive and urgent action must be taken to rehabilitate/expand, as necessary, current drainage and irrigation deficiencies, especially the Demerara and Potaro rivers but including the Mahaica and Abary rivers and the Lama Conservancy management. We have no confidence in the Hope canal which will probably not solve the problem of flooding but has the capacity to create a greater flood hazard on our east coast in case of failure. It is also clear that the PPP's support for farmers in all areas is particularly poor even for the rice industry which has now become our second biggest GDP earner.

APNU in government will significantly strengthen state support for proper drainage, irrigation, roads and negotiating markets.

Access to markets will involve not only creative packaging of produce, but also an imaginative packaging of Guyana as a serious 'Agriculture' player.

Looking into the future, APNU will target the fertility of our hinterland to grow established, as well as new, marketable crops.



Sugar

The sugar industry continues to experience contraction in production and escalation in costs, with current labour costs set at 65% of total cost, even though the labour force has been reduced by some nine thousand employees over the past decade.

The industry is now faced with a shortage of labour, recent attendance patterns being as low as 45%. This is compounded by the most recently published admission by the CEO of GuySuCo of a substantive experience and skills shortage in the management and supervisory levels of the corporation - contributing to under performance of the industry.

We believe that to keep the sugar industry viable we will have to find creative ways to retain whatever manual labour is left and to diversify the industry to cultivate products more suitable to our bed field layout which makes mechanical harvesting very difficult, expensive and probably impossible, but in the interim, as a short-term policy we believe that concentrating on producing more ethanol may be a better strategy for GuySuCo at this time.

Rice

This sector, which is ingrained in the fabric of rural Guyana from the Corentyne to the Essequibo, even now in these perilous times engages over 12,000 farmers, supports an additional 10 per cent of the country's population directly and many more indirectly. It has suffered as a result of the PPPC's paradoxical and distressing attitude. Thus, apart from limited attention to drainage and irrigation works, there have been no substantial technological improvements, largely because of inadequate research and a poorly equipped rice extension service.

That the industry has been virtually 'marking time' is reflected in the fact that in 2010 production was exactly the same as in 1964, i.e., 360,000 tonnes rice. This is notwithstanding the high levels of

investment during the PNC administration in the MMA-ADA, Black Bush Polder and Tapakuma irrigation projects to facilitate expanded rice cultivation. Further, national productivity levels are still about 60 per cent below that of other rice-producing countries. An upgrade of the industry is warranted. In so doing, the rice industry will directly contribute to improvement in the social condition of rural communities.

APNU in a new administration, through the Guyana Rice Development Board (GRDB) and related agencies, will therefore immediately embark on:

- Collaborating with the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) to develop new varieties suitable for our peculiar coastal conditions and the needs of targeted markets;
- Encouraging of the cultivation of varieties specifically for the animal feed industry (as an expanding animal agriculture sub-sector cannot subsist on rice milling by-products);
- Refining rice crop management techniques that enable improvement in yields and the quality of rice in environmentally sustainable ways;
- Provision of access and the transfer of technologies for simultaneously rearing tilapia with the rice crop, as a means of augmenting farm incomes of small rice farmers particularly upgrading the technical capabilities of the rice extension service and related service providers;
- Providing incentives for millers to improve their mills so as to increase yields and, hence, their profitability and facilitating financial institutions to improve the credit facilities available to farmers, millers and exporters;
- Addressing the deficiencies in the National Drainage and Irrigation Authority and Water Users Associations so as to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness in water management and the enhanced maintenance of related infrastructure; and
- Facilitating food manufacturers in developing value-added (convenience) foods and

incorporation of rice in a variety of food products for the local and regional markets.

Success, in this context, will underline APNU's policy of ensuring hinterland communities are food secure. It will also result in savings in transportation costs of hinterland household staples, and broaden the resident skills base.

Traditional beef cattle rearing will be put on a scientific footing to take advantage of the international demand for 'organic' beef, while the nascent sheep-and goat-rearing enterprises will be strengthened to address the dietary animal protein needs of villagers in the first instance as flocks are built up to meet the significant local and CARICOM demands for sheep and goat meats.

APNU administration will, for example, institute policies to ensure that the Intermediate Savannahs of the Upper Demerara-Berbice Region – long touted as the 'next frontier for agricultural development' – is effectively utilised for integrated, industrial-level crop and livestock production and agro-processing. The focus will be the production of substantial portions of the regional food needs, grain and other concentrate feeds for the local animal production sector.

A modern Agricultural Research and Development Institute will be established as a priority. This will have not only a regional but also a national remit to address the production concerns of the small and medium scale operators who do not have the resources to conduct their own on-farm research and technological innovations.

Cash crops and fishing

Cash crop farmers are leaving the land because of poor drainage everywhere. APNU in government will work to improve drainage, roads and markets for our farmers.

The production of prawns is a cause for concern. In 2006 we produced 1,665 tons of prawns. By 2009 it had dropped to 710 tons. Piracy and illegal fishing are rampant.

There is also no marine biologist to advise us. Overfishing and poaching by Venezuelan and Surinamese ships are seriously depleting and destroying our fishing grounds.

We also believe that the sugar cane fields in Guyana are tailor-made for aquaculture. The growing of Tilapia is proving to be very lucrative. To destroy the sugar fields which are in fact natural 10-acre ponds, most of which can be flooded by gravity, to level them for housing, is foolhardy in the face of the fact that they are, compliments of our ancestors, natural aqua-culture ponds.

The fishing industry, a major foreign exchange earner, will be given the requisite assistance to revive its productivity, with the help of advice from appropriately qualified personnel.

APNU in government will also work to upgrade and finance a better fisheries department within the Ministry of Agriculture to ensure that our fishing grounds are not abused. Illegal fishing and piracy in Guyana's waters will be vigorously addressed. ■



7. HEALTH & NUTRITION

Health

Around the world demographic health indicators have improved in the past 25 years. Improved technologies and communication, general improvement in economies and reduction in

infectious diseases have been mainly responsible.

Guyana, however, continues to struggle among CARICOM countries to rise from just above Haiti. In Belize, task-shifting has *real* extended care to the remotest parts.

Guyana does not have the accountability framework to make all our achievements sustainable. When it has not been the legitimacy to enforce regulations; it has been majoritarian arrogance in not recognizing that accountability relies on impartial and unbiased enforcement of all rules and regulations.

APNU in government will promote and support the following general and specific measures to improve Health and Wellness:

- Significant improvement of benefits to health sector workers to enhance retention.
- Strengthen local government structures to improve local level accountability for health outcomes, environmental health and sanitation, and increase health promotion.
- Strengthen the technical capabilities of the health workers at all levels through training and re-training with major emphasis on strengthening supervisory skills.
- Maintain the strength of the Public Health Programmes in the Ministry of Health and provide incentives for innovative and creative leadership.
- Strengthen the procurement practices utilizing objective scientific tools and increase oversight of the sufficiency and quality of the consumables.
- Develop a Master Plan for transparent capital expenditure open to public scrutiny.
- Strengthen peer review bodies through more comprehensive legislation enhancing their autonomy but ensuring that regulation of professional practice and conduct is more accountable to the public and state in general.
- Strengthen health surveillance units and laboratory services in general but more particularly in regions where malaria is endemic, especially since the hinterland is becoming a geographic engine of our economic

growth.

- Strengthen and make more predictable the referral services including the development of emergency services with more effective capacity.
- Strengthen the delivery of primary care services to promote greater integration of services in general and more particularly to meet the needs of remote communities including environmental surveillance.
- Couple investment in advanced tertiary medical services to the training of doctors and para-professionals to support adding value in the use of technologies.
- Encourage the use of private medical insurance by providing tax rebates for medical care.
- In reviewing and rebuilding the NIS, consider allowing pensioners to continue to use their personal physicians instead of the public services for routine care.

Nutrition

Guyanese face a range of nutritional problems, mostly related to poverty but also to a poor understanding of the importance of good nutrition. Good nutrition is essential for the optimal physical and mental development of children and for adults to lead healthy and active lives. Young children, especially those from poor families, are most vulnerable to malnutrition.

Knowledge of good nutrition is essential, but it must be supported by the family's economic ability to grow or purchase nutritious foods.

A hungry child cannot learn well at school. Many schoolchildren, especially those in poor coastal or remote Amerindian communities, arrive at school without breakfast and return to inadequate meals at home.

Adults face a growing problem of nutrition-related chronic diseases, such as diabetes and hypertension. Good nutrition in pregnancy can reduce maternal mortality and low birth weight babies.

To address these issues, and to achieve household

food and nutrition security for all Guyanese, government ministries must work together to increase food production, reduce poverty, and improve access to quality health care and good nutrition for Guyanese of all ages. Good nutrition must be recognized as a key goal and outcome of national development.

APNU in government will work to:

- Ensure that all households in Guyana have year-round physical and economic access to a nutritionally adequate food supply.
- Employ trained community nutrition workers to provide practical home-based advice to poor families on good breast feeding and young child feeding practices.
- Prevent and/or treat severe malnutrition in young children by means of locally manufactured foods, under the guidance of well trained health professionals.
- Ensure that all school children are able to benefit fully from educational opportunities, by establishing appropriate school feeding programmes.
- Train health professionals to provide counselling on good nutrition in pregnancy and on the dietary management of diabetes and hypertension, based on the most up-to-date scientific knowledge. ■

8.

OUR ENVIRONMENT

APNU commits itself to participating in the development of a comprehensive environment strategy. In a new government, APNU will consider the establishment of a Ministry or Department of the Environment and Natural Resources to rationalise, harmonise and implement policies and invigorate action with respect to the built environment where we live and work and the natural environment upon which we depend.

APNU will work to improve environmental health in our communities – on the coast and in the hinterland – through actions that:

- Use all forms of informal and formal education to increase everyone's understanding of the interconnectedness between our environment and our actions and thus our existence and foster problem-solving approaches that require contributions from citizens.
- Build capacity of our national institutions and community-based organisations to solve issues related to environmental health.
- Improve systems for the disposal of domestic and industrial waste, including harmful air emissions.
- Ensure clean, affordable and accessible water for all that matches water quality with water



- use, that protects our water sources and that considers integrated water management a cornerstone to our health, our food supply, our biodiversity, and our resilience to climate change, especially with our low-lying coasts.
- Convert our public spaces, i.e., our schools, training centres, universities, playing fields, ministries, into areas that can model sustainability and for knowledge generation and sharing.
- Strengthen our agricultural sector so that it is resilient to climate change, and eliminate ground water contamination from agrochemical use.
- Ensure the strict control of agrochemicals and associated products that are harmful to the consuming public.
- Strengthen our sea defences, prevent flooding, soil erosion, solid waste contamination and other forms of degradation, and safeguard our unique flora and fauna.
- Integrate land use practices, water management, and human settlement into planning and development.

The Low Carbon Strategy

APNU supports all efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and recognises the urgency of taking action on all factors needed to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

APNU in government will facilitate a national review of the framework of the Low Carbon Development Strategy.

In order to address climate change, APNU will support the development of policies and plans to address drought and flood consequences for farmers, communities and businesses to improve drainage and irrigation, develop resilient crops, establish and maintain national weather records; secure the coast.

APNU will vigorously pursue the conservation of our biodiversity resources (plants and animals)

some of which are particular to Guyana in the interest of enhancing the lives of Guyanese as a whole. In government, we will work to:

- Require specific conservation measures for vital eco-systems for example, the North Rupununi wetlands, a potential Ramsar Site.
- Ensure that everyone is knowledgeable, proud and respectful of the biodiversity throughout Guyana through integrated educational projects and materials from primary to tertiary levels and in all aspects of informal education.
- Establish community-based and other types of projects for the inventoring, zoning, and mapping of these resources and the popular dissemination of these actions.
- Strengthen and empower the EPA to carry out its regulatory functions.
- Review agreements where industrial and agricultural activities threaten sensitive eco-systems.

Energy and the environment

APNU in government will work to develop an integrated Energy Plan that will deliver a reliable, stable, affordable and adequate power supply in the short- and long-term. We will also work to:

- Ensure the flow of petroleum from proven Guyana-Suriname basin reserve; and
- Encourage the development of alternative energy for domestic and industrial use





9. NATURAL RESOURCES

Forestry

There have been many national initiatives that have clearly stated the national commitment to maximise in-country processing of forestry resources for the benefit of the Guyanese people. These include:

- The Constitution of Guyana
- The National Development Strategy
- The National Forest Policy
- The National Forest Plan

In spite of this and in the face of the growing need for timber on the domestic market and for value-added production, the contribution to GDP from the forestry sector has fallen in the last four years from 4.17% in 2006 to 2.73% in 2010.

Contrary to all recommendations, there has been a marked increase in the export of logs, rough sawn and poorly dressed green lumber principally to China, India and the Caribbean. Added to this, value-added and downstream processing has declined significantly. This has reduced the potential impact of the sector on employment. The MOU with Norway allows the controlled cutting of timber and downstream processing.

An assessment on the reasons for the sector's under-performance include the following:

- Under-capitalisation of entities needed for value-added production
- Inadequate marketing facilities, training and technology
- Export of logs
- Inefficient and ineffective harvesting

APNU in government will prioritize and facilitate through incentives a comprehensive and strategic plan to substantially increase value-adding of our forest production.

Mining Sector

APNU in a new administration will encourage companies operating in Guyana to broaden their ownership bases to include ordinary Guyanese employees. Guyanese will earn shares in the companies they work for along Employee Share Ownership Plans (ESOPs) and other similar mechanisms.

Royalty on gold will be maintained. If a given company satisfies the government that it has implemented a satisfactory ESOP or other ownership-broadening mechanism, it may, for a limited period, be given a royalty discount.

APNU in government will support and strengthen the small and medium-scale mining sector by:

- Guaranteeing areas for the conduct of small (including artisanal) mining and immediately review and implement a strengthened lottery and auction system for the allocation of land currently held in reserve and provide more fiscal incentives to small and medium scale mining;
- Designing and implementing a lottery system to facilitate free access to modern equipment, to bring about improved mineral recovery for owners of dredging operations who satisfy agreed criteria;
- Providing ongoing technical guidance and training to small and medium scale miners in the areas of exploration, excavation, processing, environmental management, mine closure and mine administration and finance.

APNU in government will work to:

- Provide dedicated training courses and facilities for the gold, diamond and quarrying industries in collaboration with the technical institutes, miners' associations, and equipment suppliers;
- Provide incentives for the establishment in the mining areas of laboratories, custom processing and plant hire facilities and enable the private sector to conduct Mineral Resource Assessments in selected areas;
- Encourage and support members of relevant agencies such as the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC), and the University of Guyana (UG), as well as members of the mining sector to attend and participate in relevant local and foreign conferences and meetings concerning the petroleum, mining and quarrying sector;
- Design and implement a system to issue exploration and mining rights to solid minerals in the marine environment and review the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) with the aim of implementing the system in Guyana;
- Collaborate with international agencies and selected petroleum producing countries to design and implement the optimum system

to manage Guyana's petroleum production sector in the event of a discovery of petroleum in Guyana;

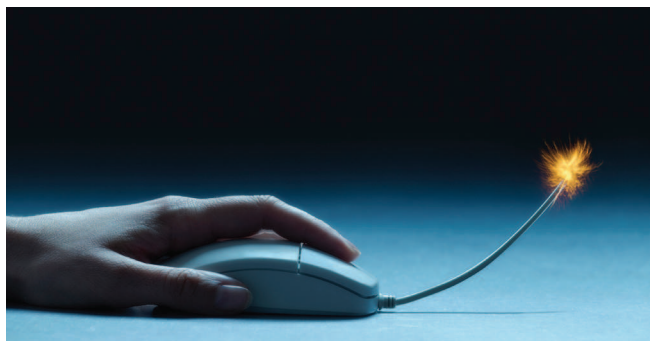
- Commission suitable studies to evaluate and make recommendations on: the competitiveness of the economic and fiscal regime for large, medium and small-scale mining; the legislative and regulatory framework governing large, medium and small-scale mining; the social, environmental and economic impact of large, medium and small-scale mining and the obligations of the LCDS and land-use planning as they relate to the successful continuance and development of large, medium and small-scale mining.

APNU in government will ensure a critical re-assessment of the bauxite industry, directing it toward establishing its own refinery. In this regard, consideration will be given to:

- Cancelling existing Exclusive Exploration rights on identified bauxite deposits and mining leases on bauxite deposits which were issued more than five years ago and remain unexploited;
- Assembling a team comprising qualified and experienced mining engineers and persons experienced in Guyana's mining conditions to undertake a detailed feasibility study of the development of a mine centered around one of the large deposits in the Linden area; and
- establishing a team comprising competent international consultants and qualified Guyanese technical and financial personnel to undertake a detailed study of the feasibility of a 1-1.5 million type alumina refinery based on Linden bauxite and Ituni laterite; and based on the results of the mine study and the alumina refinery feasibility studies, approach major actors in the alumina and aluminium industries to form a consortium for the establishment of the refinery.

We will consider proposing to the consortium members an arrangement under which the Guyana Government undertakes the development and

operation of the bauxite mines through a public company and guarantee the supply of bauxite under an agreed pricing formula. ■



10. INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

In this era of rapid technological change, APNU's vision is to:

- Ensure that Guyana can source and acquire the latest technology, assimilate it (adapting while adopting), disseminate, and diffuse it throughout the society.
- Modernize our primary, manufacturing and services industries by providing enhanced tax incentives for research and development and supporting the commercialisation of promising new products and services.
- Make all of Guyana internet-ready via appropriate fibre optic cable connections, with the main cities and towns being internet hotspots, by cooperating with established service providers.
- Strengthen our educational and training institutions to provide the basic knowledge and skills required to absorb new technology.
- Devise incentives for foreign investment enterprises to transfer technological advances via meaningful training programmes.

Digital Nation

APNU's vision is that all of Guyana is prepared for a world transformed by technology. It will

promote a paradigm shift in lifestyle and work habits, where the power to harness and mine data will differentiate between winners and losers, the firm assumption being that your closest competitor may not necessarily be the traditional brick and mortar shop across the street but a company or entity located in Asia.

APNU is convinced that only via an all-pervasive and ultra-high speed broadband network will Guyana be ready to embrace and fully exploit the boundless opportunities that an ICT-enabled future presents.

Major infrastructural investment is a critical necessity to spur the development of new knowledge-based sectors. This will act as a catalyst in developing and deploying innovative interactive digital services to homes, schools and businesses.

Digital Nation 2015 (DNGT 2015) is a comprehensive three-year master plan carefully crafted by globally respected experts in their respective fields to help prepare all of Guyana for that exciting transformation from a mostly commodities-driven economy to a fully-fledged and respected player in the Digital Economy. In addition to helping Guyana to exploit new economic opportunities and enhancing the vibrancy of the global ICT sector, the nationwide broadband network (NBN) will offer effective open access to retail service providers to bring about a more competitive broadband market which will immediately result in the creation of a wider range of next generation services for all end users.

Information Communication Technologies hold great promise for all the other sectors of the economy. Greater use of ICT will help firms reduce their costs, enhance their productivity and increase their overall efficiency, and thus make a greater contribution to economic growth.

A comprehensive ICT policy should address, at minimum, six key objectives:

- **ICT infrastructure** for accessible, generally affordable, universal, and reliable ICT facilities

and services.

- **Legal and regulatory framework** to create an enabling legal and regulatory environment that recognises that ICTs are now tradable and that the ICT sector (including telecommunications) must be organised along competitive lines to ensure growth and development within the sector and the economy as a whole.
- **Human resource development** of the knowledge, skills and attitudes required for ICT use across all sectors.
- **Industry** use of ICT to create an enabling and conducive environment for investment and the development of a vibrant and sustainable economy.
- **Government** as an active participant and user of ICT (to simplify government transactions, improve accountability, make interaction between citizens and the Government easier and quicker, advance rights like the access to information)
- **Security** to significantly improve the effectiveness of law enforcement by utilizing existing fixed and mobile network infrastructure.

APNU in government will also work to:

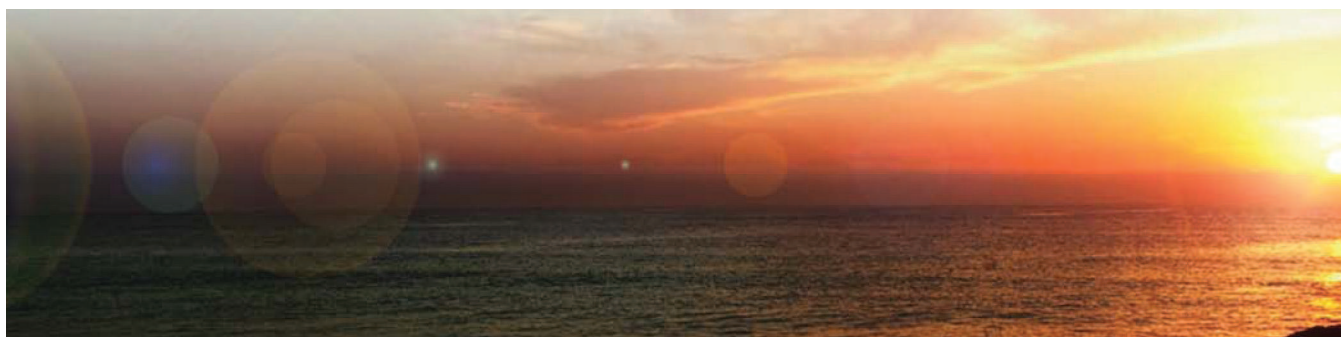
- Ensure an enabling environment for the creation of an information society.
- Employ ICT in Government operations and service delivery for efficiency and effectiveness.
- Encourage public Internet access and the use of computers and other ICT equipment within Government.
- Encourage easy, secure and efficient ICT-based access to appropriate Government information systems and services.
- Promote affordable access to computers and the Internet at the community level.
- Encourage and support the use of ICT to predict, monitor and respond to disasters and in environmental management.
- Improve the management and monitoring of licensed and unlicensed wireless frequencies.
- Permit the population to provide feedback and opinions on issues and policies through secure

online polling mechanisms.

- Review the One Laptop Per Family project to maximize the returns on hard-earned taxpayer dollars since in 3 years, the majority of netbooks distributed will cease to function. Options being considered include subsidizing the purchase of more capable laptops or PCs from select qualified distributors if a family prefers something with more capacity than a netbook computer.
- Equip schools with more reliable and lower-maintenance computer labs by utilizing available technologies.
- Review telecommunications legislation to level the playing field and encourage fair competition and expansion of infrastructure in the sector.
- Significantly improve the response time of emergency and other services with state-of-the-art technological solutions.
- Provide all police outposts across Guyana with access to data to aid the reporting and response to criminal activity while improving law enforcement collaboration.

Guyana will be marginalised if we do not grasp quickly how to exploit the potential of ICT which is transforming every facet of life. Alternatively, we will enjoy unprecedented benefits (economic growth, improved quality of life, increased freedoms, better educational and entertainment opportunities) if we grasp ICT's potential to usher in change.





11. PUBLIC SECURITY

Almost every year since Mr. Jagdeo became President in 1999, the US Department of State through its annual reports (*International Narcotics Control Strategy; Human Rights Practices; Trafficking in Persons*) has criticised the PPP administration's failure to ensure human safety and public security.

The administration also deliberately derailed its own National Drug Strategy Master Plan and the DfID-funded £ 4.9M Security Sector Reform Action Plan. It pretended to be serious about combating crime by establishing the Steering Committee of the National Consultation on Crime, the Border and National Security Committee and the Disciplined Forces Commission then routinely ignored their recommendations.

As a result of these deceptions, the lethal use of illegal firearms, gang-related assaults and organised narcotics trafficking pushed up the rate for serious crimes. There are now about two armed robberies on average every day and an average of about three murders per week.

Other grave threats to human security – such as allegations of torture against the Guyana Defence Force, Guyana Police Force and Guyana Prison Service – are still to be investigated by an impartial commission. The PPP has refused to investigate the massacres in Lusignan, Bartica and Lindo Creek. The need for comprehensive security sector reform is evident.

Public security is the bedrock of a safe human

society and the crime situation is both the most pressing and most depressing problem facing ordinary Guyanese today. APNU pledges the ensure protection for all citizens, communities and institutions from threats to their well being.

APNU in government will work to:

- **Reduce crime and fear of crime** especially the high rate of armed robberies, murders and domestic violence by improving policing and maintaining police teams that spend more time on the beat to deter, detect, prevent or investigate crime. There will be zero tolerance on racially motivated violence and violence against elders, children, women and other vulnerable members of the society.
- **Respond quickly to new threats** including cybercrime; and make full use of DNA technology to strengthen our ability to solve serious crimes – especially in cases of rape, murder and manslaughter.
- **Reform the Police Service** in line with recommendations of the *Report of the Disciplined Forces Commission*, especially with regard to strengthening and improving training, increasing salaries, and providing an independent Police Complaints Authority with an investigative team of trained police investigators directly responsible and accountable to the Authority.
- **Reinforce Police investigative capabilities** especially with regard to rebuilding a modern and effective criminal intelligence system and Criminal Investigation Department.
- **Restructure the Police Service and redeploy police in the hinterland**

providing aircraft, maritime craft, all terrain vehicles (ATVs) and the equipment needed to fight banditry, piracy, terrorism and other violent crime.

- **Regulate immigration to eliminate ‘backtracking’** and establish an immigration system that ensures that everyone understands that immigration will be controlled and that the rules will be firmly enforced.
- **Ensure a credible National Drug Strategy Master Plan** to suppress narco-trafficking, arrest and punish traffickers.
- **Transfer functions not requiring police training** to civilian agencies or trained employees. These include the examination of vehicles for road fitness certificates, processing of passport applications, typing and secretarial work, and the serving of summonses and similar or related duties in rural areas; and
- **Recruit competent personnel on ethnically diverse basis**, revitalise the cadetship schemes, provide a full complement of police, and bring the level of staffing up to its required strength.

Public security is an imperative in the development of our country. No country can develop if its citizens live in constant fear of criminal attack. No families can be healthy if members are fearful and vulnerable. No entrepreneur will invest funds in an environment rife with crime and corruption. APNU attaches high priority to making our families, communities and country safe.

Public Safety

APNU in a new administration will ensure a needs assessment of the Guyana Fire Service. We will ensure that fire hydrants are supplied with adequate water for fire-fighting purposes. In addition, we will work to:

- Establish additional fire stations in new housing areas between Ogle and Rosignol and Georgetown and Timehri; and
- Re-establish the GFS auxiliary.

As the prison population increases, APNU in government will work to improve the Guyana Prison Service and:

- **Ensure a commensurate increase in the actual and authorised strength of personnel.**
- **Install adequate monitoring devices and warning technology in prisons.**
- **Introduce a constructive regime of activities geared to occupy prisoners’ time beneficially, such as learning useful skills.**
- **Provide sufficient human and material resources to relieve overcrowding and modernise the Georgetown Prison, and expand the Mazaruni Prison.**

National Defence

APNU in a new administration is committed to strengthening the capability of the Guyana Defence Force to protect the territory and the vital interests of the nation. We will work to:

- **Acquire adequate inshore patrol vessels to define the state’s territorial integrity, suppress illegal fishing, narcotics trafficking, gun-running, illegal migration and contraband smuggling and funds for financing of regular, long-range maritime and aerial surveillance patrols;**
- **Acquire surveillance aircraft and adequate aerial and radar surveillance resources to maintain the state’s territorial integrity and define its borders, to interdict contraband activities and detect illegal fishing and other violations of its maritime zone; and**
- **Increase the human resources and material support given to the Coast Guard, Engineer Corps and Air Corps.**

APNU recognises that public security and national defence are imperative for the development of our country. No country can develop if its citizens live in constant fear of criminal attack or its territory is constantly under threat. No entrepreneur will invest funds in an environment rife with crime and corruption. We attach high priority to making our country safe.



12.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

The overarching focus of APNU's foreign policy will be Guyana's national interest, principally the security of the state and its people and the social and economic development of all its citizens.

In pursuit of these objectives APNU will seek national consensus on major policy frameworks and initiatives. Emphasis will be placed on:

- Securing Guyana's territorial integrity.

- Developing respectful and beneficial relations with countries in our neighbourhood.
- Beyond our neighbourhood, bilateral relations will be conducted on a selective basis in keeping with our national interest.
- Participation in multilateral agencies such as the United Nations, OAS, UNASUR, the Commonwealth, Caricom in recognition that such institutions play a beneficial role with regard to small states like Guyana.
- Recognising the constructive role of global civil society.
- Maintaining relations with International Financial Institutions (WB, IADB, IMF, etc) while seeking to effect changes in their policies to advance the interest of developing countries especially small states.
- Re-energising the regional integration process and the CARICOM Single Market and Economy initiative.
- Encouraging diversification of Guyana's trade and investment relations with the rest of the world so as to reduce its vulnerability to external economic shocks.
- Promoting engagements and transactions with non-traditional trading partners, especially the newly emerging economies, to reduce fragility and volatility and increase levels of economic resilience.
- Develop diplomatic relations with strategically placed countries where possible and appropriate, as part of a joint CARICOM mission.
- Striving for better coordination in the forging of regional foreign policy positions and more effective cooperation and cohesion in the negotiation of economic agreements with Third Parties.

APNU in government will rebuild, and strengthen where necessary, the capacity of the relevant state institutions to enable them to effectively implement policies.

Conclusion: A COMMON CAUSE

A Partnership for National Unity is a movement for the creation of a community with a common cause. It promises to establish a just society in a stable political environment with a thriving economy. Most of all, it promises to build and secure the future for our youth and our children.

A good life depends, at the personal level, on a sound education, satisfactory employment, economic opportunity, individual equality, political empowerment and social protection for the vulnerable and, at the national level, on good governance, a sustainable environment, national unity and public security.

Voters at the next elections will have endured the PPP administration for 19 years, during which our values have been eroded and our quality of life has been compromised. A Partnership for National Unity pledges to restore our youth's faith in the future.

There is much to be done to transform our country but, with the support of the majority of Guyanese, A Partnership for National Unity will succeed because of its commitment to the ideal of a good life for all Guyanese. ■



APNU

A PARTNERSHIP FOR NATIONAL UNITY



A Good Life for all Guyanese!

VOTE

APNU

