

# Fact Sheet 1

## EXECUTIVE PRESIDENCY

We believe that the post of the **Executive President** is outdated and counter-productive towards fostering harmonious ethnic relations and development. Representatives of our two main political parties have held this office for 12 years, and 18 years respectively, and things have gone from bad to worse over time. At various times during their periods in opposition, both parties have denounced this most un-West Indian and harmful model of managing our affairs.

Everyone knows that placing virtual unlimited and unaccountable power in the hands of one person cannot be good for the practice of our democracy. It has been proven here that “absolute power corrupts absolutely”. **We have always held this view and intend to begin changing it within 120 days of getting into government.** We advocate for separating the functions of our Head of State (President) who will be “**Guardian of the Constitution**” from those of our Head of Government (Prime Minister) answerable to the people's representatives in the National Assembly.

**Our Head of State should be a non-executive President** and a person of integrity who holds the confidence of the vast majority of our citizens. A non-executive President can play the much-needed role of helping to bring together the divided racial, ethnic, religious strands of our society, and ensure that the rule of law and constitutional offices are protected from political influence.

In this respect, given our position that the Head of State of our divided country should be one who holds the respect of the majority of our citizens, we will advocate for an acceptable way of presenting prospective candidates for the holder of this office to be a person of integrity who would be respected by the vast majority of our citizens.



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# Fact Sheet 2

## AFC PRESIDENTIAL AND PRIME MINISTERIAL CANDIDATES

From the beginning, we have been a strong and steady advocate of term-limits. Our Party's Constitution requires that the terms of our current office-holders “*be rotated as far as possible*”. We will do our best to honour our Constitution. At the last National Executive Committee (NEC) meeting on June 12, the NEC reaffirmed the Party's commitment to the principle of rotation of the Presidential and Prime Ministerial candidates and will recommend to the Delegates at the National Convention that the positions be rotated so that Khemraj Ramjattan will be the AFC's Presidential candidate and Raphael Trotman will be our Prime Ministerial candidate along with any other person who has been properly nominated in keeping with the party's constitution.

Under the Party's Constitution, the National Convention of the Party must confirm and ratify the Presidential, Prime Ministerial, and Parliamentary, and Regional Democratic Council candidates of the party. The Party's Constitution also permits any member of the party in good standing, to be offered as a nominee for Presidential, or other candidate, by any of the party groups. The Delegates' Convention will be held in November 2010. Ultimately, it is for the Delegates to decide.



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# Fact Sheet 3

## AN ELECTORAL COALITION

We regard a coalition as a political compact comprising groups and individuals who share a similar vision of **Change** for Guyana's future. We are committed to the principle of a Coalition to contest the next election. However, an effective coalition can only be a partnership between groups of political, economic, labour and civil society organizations which share common beliefs. This partnership must seek the views, opinions and support of the citizens of Guyana to implement a programme of change and economic, political, and social development. This programme will be unveiled to the people long before the elections are held.

We hope we can stimulate healthy debate and discussion on issues such as the objectives of a coalition, the criteria for participation and the principles, policies and practices that should apply to the partnership. **It is important that we know and implement what the people want as against what we want or feel is best.**

We are firm believers in the good sense of our citizens. We are satisfied that their wisdom and their judgments are the only foundation for charting the course towards a stable future and designing an effective coalition.



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# Fact Sheet 4

## THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN FOR 2010-2011

Make no bones about it. Everyone knows that campaigning for the next election has started. The expertise that our main political parties have acquired over the past 50 years in promoting division between our six races is already apparent. Divide and rule is the tactic used. **Reject it!**

Racial stereotypes, abusive language, personal insult and characterizing free thinkers as traitors to their race, are now the standard fare of our newspapers, radio and television stations as well as in the use of the Internet and its new technologies such as Facebook.

The AFC wishes to be held to the highest standards of public scrutiny. We have never, and will never, descend to using these tactics as the means of garnering political support.

Our appeal will always be to the best instincts of those who support us. Outside of this support, our appeal will always be to citizens who are tired of divisive politics and weary of crime and corruption. We are satisfied that the vast majority of Guyanese wish for a peaceful and productive future for themselves and their families.

These citizens, in communities all across our country, keep telling us that they wish to be involved in the task of building a just, fair and stable society where citizens respect the rule of law and where their fundamental rights will be protected.

We are not suggesting that these objectives will be easy to fulfill. Here's what we are saying:

- that every citizen must demand opportunities for hard work and honest sacrifice as the only route to personal success;
- that the practice of collecting taxes and distributing the country's wealth and natural resources as gifts for supporters must be condemned as criminal acts;
- that we all share responsibilities for rooting out the bribery and corruption that has become the new way of conducting public business;
- that pandering to the worst instincts of human beings and promoting obscene new levels of racial division only serve to insult the intelligence of citizens, demean the respect we ought to have for each other and further destroy our social relations.

As a young political party that is committed to the task of helping to build a safe, secure and productive future, our task is to give strength and hope to all members of our six races.



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# Fact Sheet 5

## THE “UNCONSTITUTIONAL” THIRD TERM

We are convinced that Bharat Jagdeo will be the Presidential candidate for the PPP in the next year's General Election. Steps are already being taken to achieve this. For us, however, it doesn't matter who that candidate is. Over these past 18 years, the methodology of the PPP is clear to everyone. In the words of one writer in the letter-to-the-editor columns, it is CONTROL, CONTROL, CONTROL. Those who support this manipulation of our sacred Constitution will soon reveal themselves.

We have an urgent duty to end the pain caused by this grotesquely centralized system where one man is cloaked with all-knowing wisdom, where the winner has taken everything, and where the people's resources continue to be distributed as though these are the Executive President's personal property.



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# Fact Sheet 6

July, 2010

Dear Citizen,

The relationship between any two major ethnic groups sharing the same space is inherently fragile, and is particularly vulnerable to any effort aimed at increasing the levels of mistrust that will always exist within such an arrangement.

We have noted the recent attempts by the State media to cause division within the Alliance For Change by suggesting the existence of two opposing factions within the party. The gist of the story is that these factions are lined up behind Mr. Trotman and Mr. Ramjattan respectively, and that they themselves are engaged in a leadership battle and are going around behind each others' backs seeking alliances with the PNC and the PPP respectively.

The story is clearly consistent with the illogical political polarization of Afro and Indo Guyanese from which the PPP has benefited at previous elections. While not explicitly promoting division along ethnic lines, it clearly plays on the element of mistrust. Given the realities which prevail here, any mistrust generated will ultimately manifest itself in ethnic terms. Any attempt by the State editors to feign a lack of awareness of the implications and effects of their reporting would be disingenuous.

One of the hallmarks of a modern and progressive society is the maintenance of strong and independent institutions. The blatant undermining of the independence of the State media is indicative of an approach to governance practiced by the current administration that is neither modern nor progressive. By using the NCN's *strongest signal* and the Guyana Chronicle's heavily subsidized pages to spread information that is untrue and harmful to the AFC, the PPP government is tampering with Guyana's democracy and fomenting ethnic mistrust. The specious reasoning that the state media is actually providing a balance to the bias of the private media is an insult to the intelligence of our people. Those political flunkies who espouse this nonsense in defense of their actions ought to be ashamed.

It is clear that the PPP does not wish to engage the AFC at the next national election and is seeking to destroy it in advance. Without wishing to belittle anyone's intelligence we wish to state that only a complete fool could look at Guyana after almost half a century of independence and conclude that the PPP and the PNC provide all the political variety that we could possibly require, and that another strong party is unhelpful and unnecessary to the national need.

Yours Sincerely,

**AFC Leadership**



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# Fact Sheet 7

## THE AFC'S POSITION ON THE LOW CARBON DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) in its simplest definition is a Government of Guyana initiative that seeks to preserve Guyana's forest in exchange for monetary compensation from developed countries. We in the AFC have always held firmly to the view that every effort should be made to conserve our forests and curb our carbon emissions, while being paid for it. This is nothing new and was already very well set out in the National Development Strategy over a decade ago.

Because trees take in carbon gases as part of their continuous production of food, the more trees there are, the more carbon will be absorbed and thus less damage will result to the Ozone Layer. Most of these gases emanate from developed countries and some huge developing ones. Since most developing countries have cut down the majority of their forest and produce large amounts of carbon, they encourage countries like Guyana that still have large pristine forests, to keep them intact to absorb carbon produced so that the Ozone Layer can be protected. It is only right that we be compensated for keeping our forest intact to save the earth.

The AFC believes that Guyana, as are other developing nations, is entitled to benefit from funding being provided by the developed world to encourage the lowering of carbon emissions without sacrificing growth and development, and moving our people off of the poverty line. We remain very concerned about the process of consultations, or lack thereof, the absence of a reference to the National Development Strategy, and with serious issues of transparency and accountability that attach themselves to these vast amounts that have been pledged.

The Government of Guyana entered into an agreement with Norway to receive millions of US dollars over a period of time to keep its forest standing. This agreement has the potential to affect the lives and livelihoods of many people. The problem is that the government has unilaterally entered into the agreement without adequately consulting with the populace. As a result groups like the miners, forest exploiters and the Indigenous community protested the Government's decision to get into the agreement. These groups justifiably fear the agreement will have negative impacts on their lives. Because of improper consultations, most people do not have a clear understanding of what the LCDS is, and its implications for them.

The party believes that decisions concerning agreement like the one entered into with Norway should only be made after "free, prior and informed consent" has been given by the Guyanese people, and especially from those who will be directly affected such as our indigenous brothers and sisters. We also believe that the lives of stakeholders (miners, foresters, ecotourism providers, and others) are likely to be affected by the LCDS and they have a right to be consulted and to be a part of the decision making. It is also necessary that hinterland communities be assisted to implement any projects funded by the LCDS programme to ensure that they are holistically sustained. We believe that the LCDS in its present form does not provide a balance between forest preservation, and sustainable development of the resources that we are blessed with as a nation.

Finally, the AFC will continue to monitor the LCDS and will lobby against perceived negative effects on stakeholders and campaign for implementations considered necessary to benefit the Guyanese people.



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# Fact Sheet 8

## THE ALLIANCE FOR CHANGE WILL PROTECT, AND PRESERVE, INDIGENOUS PEOPLES CULTURE, HERITAGE AND WAY OF LIFE AND RAISE THEIR OVERALL STANDARD OF LIVING.

The AFC welcomes the long-delayed establishment of the long overdue Indigenous Peoples Commission (IPC); this is so despite our strong reservations concerning the inclusion of political appointees and functionaries as members who take away from the appearance of impartiality.

Article 149G of our Constitution states: **“Indigenous peoples shall have the right to the protection, preservation and promulgation of their languages, cultural heritage and way of life”**. To some, these are words only; and to the AFC this is the basis on which everything that touches, concerns, and affects our Indigenous brothers and sisters will be dealt with. We intend to give true and full meaning to this hallowed provision. The Party will also honour all provisions under the **Amerindian Act 2006**, including, making the payment of the 1.7B\$ due, owing an payable by the State.

Therefore, in relation to the working for the development of the Indigenous community and the preservation of their culture and heritage, the AFC unequivocally declares that **“we will provide what the PPP/C failed to deliver.”**

- **Improved Hinterland Education**

The AFC commits to ensure that existing schools have adequate accommodation, staffing and school supplies. New schools will be strategically built, based on population density and access to the University of Guyana will be guaranteed.

- **Modern North West (Region 1) Ferry Service**

The AFC will provide a modern, safe and reliable ferry service that will service the North West District.

- **Electrification of Communities**

The AFC will ensure that communities be given electricity to enhance their development. Communities like Annai, Rupununi District, with strong ecotourism and business prospects will be given first priority and other communities that have similar prospects.

- **Roads in The Hinterland**

The AFC will provide roads with integrity in areas like Mahdia and other parts of Region 8, Port Kaituma, Mabaruma and the Lethem to Georgetown road.

- **Better Health Care in The Hinterland**

Hospitals, clinics, and health huts in the hinterland will be fully equipped, supplied with drugs and staffed to improve the health care of the people.



Unlocking Guyana's Potential

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