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Aan
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Foundation for the Rights &
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Date: February 23, 2025

Subject: Urgent Call for Support for the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Suriname

Attachments: Declaration of VIDS regarding the new draft law on Collective Rights of Indigenous and Tribal Communities

Dear Sir/Madam,

On behalf of the Indigenous communities Kalynia and Lokono based in the Netherlands, united under the Foundation for the Rights and Development of Indigenous Peoples (ROI) and the Foundation for Commemoration of the Slavery Past (SHS), and on behalf of the representatives of the Tribal communities in the Netherlands, including Okanisi, Paamaka, Matawai, Quinti en Saamaka, we bring to your attention an urgent issue affecting the Indigenous and Tribal peoples of Suriname. These communities are in an extremely precarious position.

The Government of Suriname plans to enact legislation that violates international legal standards, threatens serious human rights abuses, and undermines fundamental rights and freedoms. This contradicts the judgments of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights from 2015 and 2007, in which Suriname was condemned for violations against the Kaliña, Lokono, and Saamaka communities. Despite these rulings, compliance by Suriname remains grossly inadequate.

Furthermore, we would like to draw your attention to recent events that highlight inconsistencies in Suriname's human rights policy. At a special meeting of the Permanent Committee of the Organization of American States (OAS) on February 10, 2025, in Washington, D.C., Suriname's Minister Albert Ramdin advocated for the strengthening of multilateralism and regionalism. Notably, Mr. Ramdin is currently in the running to be appointed as the Secretary-General of the OAS. This raises serious questions about his ability to promote international order and respect for human rights while severe human rights violations against Indigenous and the Tribal communities are occurring in his own country.

This letter, including documents detailing our concerns and the situation, has also been shared with Dutch ministries, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to bring widespread attention to this issue. We urge you and your departments to treat this situation as urgent and to initiate international action to protect the rights of the Indigenous and the Tribal communities in Suriname.

We also request that you bring this issue to the attention of the head of the Human Rights Department of the European Union for widespread support and active intervention.



We rely on your urgent action and support.

Kind regards,

Mrs. A.U. Arrindell-Stjura (Chairperson of ROI),
Foundation for the Rights & Development of Indigenous Peoples (ROI)

And on behalf of the following stakeholders:

The Association of Indigenous Village Heads in Suriname (VIDS)

Foundation for Commemoration of the Slavery Past (SHS)

Mr. Sylvester Ede Kabiting Aboikoni, representative of the Tribal Peoples in the Netherlands: Okanisi, Paamaka, Matawai, Quinti, and Saamaka