

1 July 2022

Excellency,

I have been following the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the Republic of Suriname and welcome the constructive engagement of the Government of Suriname during the 39<sup>th</sup> session of the UPR Working Group in November 2021.

As the final outcome report on the review of Suriname was recently adopted by the Human Rights Council at its 49<sup>th</sup> session, I would like to take this opportunity to follow up on a number of areas raised in the two reports that my Office had prepared for the review of Suriname – the Compilation of United Nations information and the Summary of Stakeholders' submissions – which I consider in need of particular attention over the next four and a half years, until the next cycle of the UPR. In identifying those areas, I have considered the statements and recommendations made by 53 delegations and the presentation made and responses provided by the delegation of Suriname. I have also considered the actions taken by the Government of Suriname to implement the 116 recommendations fully supported as well as those that were partially accepted during the second cycle of the UPR. The aforementioned areas cover a range of issues, which appear in the annex to this letter.

I welcome the accession by Suriname to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, just a few days following the 39<sup>th</sup> session of the UPR Working Group. I also welcome the abolishment of the death penalty in the Military Penal Code in August 2021, following its abolishment in the Penal Code in 2015, and I encourage Suriname to continue working actively towards the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

I note the issue with the overcrowding in prison and detention facilities, which persists, and encourage Suriname to improve conditions of detention. I commend the efforts taken to address trafficking in persons, including through the first response trafficking in persons' protocol. I strongly encourage Suriname to step up its efforts in the investigation and prosecution of perpetrators of trafficking in persons, in particular in the interior of the country.

I am aware of the high number of cases of domestic and child abuse and welcome the creation in 2017 of the National Council on Domestic Violence, as well as the establishment of a children's helpline. I encourage Suriname to pursue its efforts to make essential services such as health and education accessible to all, including in rural areas, and I commend the country for the opening in October 2021 of a high school in the interior of the country. I also encourage Suriname to combat all forms of discrimination and ensure the meaningful participation of indigenous peoples in decision-making on all matters affecting them.

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H.E. Mr. Albert RAMDIN  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Republic of Suriname

I encourage Suriname to develop a comprehensive national human rights action plan in order to achieve concrete results in the areas highlighted in the annex to this letter and to facilitate preparations for the fourth cycle of the UPR. My advice to all Member States is to develop and implement national action plans in close consultation and cooperation with all stakeholders, in particular the national human rights institution and all civil society organizations and, where necessary, with the support of international organizations, including my Office and other United Nations entities, under the leadership of the United Nations Resident Coordinator.

I also encourage Suriname to establish a national mechanism for comprehensive reporting and follow-up to recommendations received from all international and regional human rights mechanisms and to treaty obligations, linking them to the Sustainable Development Goals. To this end, I strongly recommend the use of the OHCHR practical guide on this topic, which is available at:

[http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/HR\\_PUB\\_16\\_1\\_NMRF\\_PracticalGuide.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/HR_PUB_16_1_NMRF_PracticalGuide.pdf)

Please note that I am sharing my advice with all Member States as they go through the third cycle of the UPR with a view to assisting States with the implementation of the recommendations, following the review. One important measure that can positively contribute to follow-up action is voluntary mid-term reporting. Therefore, I strongly encourage all Member States to submit a voluntary mid-term report two years after the adoption of the UPR outcome report. In this regard, I encourage the Government of Suriname to consider submitting a mid-term report on follow-up to the third cycle of the review by 2024.

As stated by the Secretary-General in his 2017 report on the work of the Organization (A/72/1, paragraph 98): *“The Human Rights Council’s universal periodic review process is now entering a new cycle, with every Member State scheduled for a third round of scrutiny. We will work to strengthen the relevance, precision and impact of the Council’s recommendations, including by providing better support to Member States in implementation, stronger collaboration with United Nations country teams and the establishment of national mechanisms for human rights reporting and follow-up to link the universal periodic review to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.”*

I look forward to discussing with you ways in which my Office may assist Suriname in relation to the areas identified in this letter and its annex.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Michelle Bachelet  
High Commissioner for Human Rights

cc: H. E. Mr. Kenneth AMOKSI  
Minister of Justice and Police  
Republic of Suriname

Mr. Dennis ZULU  
United Nations Resident Coordinator a.i.  
United Nations Multi Country Office Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname, Saint Maarten,  
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Mr. Alberto BRUNORI

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Ms. Michelle BRATHWAITE

Regional Coordinator for the English-speaking Caribbean and Suriname  
OHCHR Regional Office for Central America and the Caribbean  
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## Annex

### **Scope of international obligations and cooperation with international human rights mechanisms and bodies**

- Ratifying the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Convention against Discrimination in Education.
- Extending a standing invitation to the special procedures of the Human Rights Council.

### **National human rights framework**

- Establishing and operationalizing a national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles.

### **Implementation of international human rights obligations, taking into account applicable international humanitarian law**

#### **A. Cross-cutting issues**

##### *Equality and non-discrimination*

- Enacting legislation to explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

##### *Development, the environment, and business and human rights*

- Combating all forms of corruption.
- Mitigate the negative impact of mining on indigenous populations.

#### **B. Civil and political rights**

##### *Right to life, liberty and security of person*

- Abolishing the death penalty and, as a first step, immediately establishing an official moratorium on executions.
- Investigating reports of excessive use of force by police and holding those responsible accountable.
- Taking steps to modernize Surinamese prisons to an acceptable standard of safety, capacity and sanitation.

- Amending legislation to explicitly prohibit corporal punishment in all settings, including in the family, in day-care and afterschool care facilities, schools, alternative care settings and residential care.

*Administration of justice, including impunity, and the rule of law*

- Ensuring that all children under 18 years of age are protected by the juvenile justice system and promoting restorative justice and alternative measures to detention.

*Prohibition of all forms of slavery*

- Continuing efforts to combat trafficking in persons and guaranteeing assistance to victims, including the creation of shelters.

**C. Economic, social and cultural rights**

*Right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work*

- Strengthening labour inspectorates and monitoring mechanisms in the formal and informal sectors.
- Ensuring the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.

*Right to social security*

- Implementing a national social security system.
- Creating a nationally defined social protection floor as part of the Social Protection Floor Initiative of the United Nations.

*Right to an adequate standard of living*

- Continuing efforts to eradicate poverty.
- Ensuring access to improved water sources and sanitation facilities, especially for people living in the interior of the country.

*Right to health*

- Ensuring access to essential health services for all and improving the health-care infrastructure, in particular for those living in rural communities.
- Addressing the high rates of mortality of infants and children aged 5 years and younger, and the high maternal mortality rates.
- Strengthening the quality and availability of mental health services and programmes for children.
- Ensuring the provision of comprehensive sexuality education as part of the school curriculum.

*Right to education*

- Improving access to primary and secondary education for all children, with a special focus on indigenous children.

- Strengthening efforts to reduce the premature dropout rate, including addressing the reasons for the non-completion of schooling.
- Ensuring the provision of inclusive education for children with disabilities.

#### **D. Rights of specific persons or groups**

##### *Women*

- Ensuring the implementation of the law on domestic violence, providing adequate protection for victims of domestic violence, holding perpetrators accountable, and giving victims adequate legal and psychosocial support.
- Ensuring that shelters and health-care services are accessible to all victims of gender-based violence, especially to those from rural backgrounds.
- Combating gender stereotypes and prejudices and achieving gender equality.

##### *Children*

- Intensifying efforts to combat child trafficking and sexual exploitation.
- Ensuring mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse and exploitation and ensuring that acts of sexual abuse and exploitation are effectively investigated and that perpetrators are brought to justice.
- Effectively addressing child labour in both the formal and informal sectors.
- Continuing efforts in eliminating child, early and forced marriages.

##### *Persons with disabilities*

- Enacting a law to prohibit discrimination against persons with physical or mental disabilities in education, services or employment.

##### *Indigenous peoples*

- Ensuring the meaningful participation of indigenous peoples in decision-making on all matters affecting them and ensuring full and swift implementation of the various judgments made by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights regarding the land rights of indigenous peoples in Suriname.

##### *Refugees and asylum seekers*

- Putting in place individual screening and assessment procedures to ensure the systematic and early identification of refugees and asylum seekers, in particular women and girls who have been victims of or who are at risk of gender-based violence.

##### *Stateless persons*

- Ensuring that all children born in the country are registered and provided with official birth certificates.