

## **Presentation membership Coppal of the Progressive Reform Party (VHP)**

Mr President Manolo Pichardo,  
Distinguished Vice Presidents,  
Honorable delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It's a privilege and honor for me to present the application for membership of the Progressive Reforming Party (VHP) in this Plenary Ordinary Meeting of the Permanent Conference of Political Parties of Latin America and the Caribbean (Coppal).

I have the honor to convey the warm greetings of the President of the VHP, mr Chandrikapersad Santokhi, who unfortunately is not able to participate in this meeting, due to prior commitments. However he wishes the meeting all success.

The Progressive Reforming Party (VHP) is currently the biggest opposition party in the Surinamese parliament with eight of the 51 seats. The President of the party is Chandrikapersad Santokhi, since 3 July 2011. According to current statistics, the Progressive Reforming Party is the second biggest political party of Suriname. Currently the National Democratic Party (NDP) of Desi Bouterse is in power since 2010.

Suriname has a multi-party system with many political parties in which no one party has a chance of gaining power alone, and parties must work with each other to form coalition governments. The VHP has been in several coalition governments for 30 years, since its establishment in 1947.

Over the years the VHP has continually adapted to the changing social and political developments. On the basis of change processes taking place nationally, regionally and internationally, the VHP involves itself to adjust to renewal and change processes.

The mission of the VHP is striving for an economically healthy, livable and attractive Suriname with sustainable social security for every citizen. It stands for national unity, solidarity and a socially just society

The vision of the VHP is to help shape the development of the Surinamese society, through the function of a broad organization. It wants to achieve this by creating conditions that ensure sustainable development of Suriname and sustainable security for every Surinamese citizen.

Political parties alone cannot bring sustainable development in a country. Given this fact, the VHP launched the theme: 'Enhancing Unity & Partnership' in the Surinamese society in the year 2017. By engaging and building trust with political partners, business partners, trade unions, religious and other social organizations, the VHP, through 'Unity & Partnership' is in quest of joint actions to reach the common aim towards the building of the nation.

The same which the VHP is seeking with regard to cooperation and support at the national level, the same can be applied regionally and internationally if we want to look forward to the future in the next 20 years to come.

The VHP will commemorate its 70th anniversary next year on 16 January 2019. The party has positioned itself to meet common challenges facing the region and its hemisphere.

In this regard the VHP sees the role of COPPPAL as a crucial forum in promoting cooperation, exchanges and constructive political dialogues and at the same time expresses its appreciation for the useful work done so far by the organization.

Against this background the VHP presents its application for membership in this XXXVI Plenary Ordinary Meeting of the Permanent Conference of Political Parties of Latin America and the Caribbean.

We would be privileged to be a member of Copppal - a gathering of almost all the major political parties of our region exchanging ideas on all important issues of our times - which in itself is a tribute to the foresight and vision of the founding leaders of Copppal.

With regard to the central theme of this meeting: 'Towards the construction of inclusive societies and equitable in Latin America and the Caribbean' we have a responsibility as political parties in our respective countries, to ensure that our people remain invested in the political process. This is only possible by enforcing the highest standards of transparency and accountability in our government and political institutions.

We must work towards concerting positions in the interest of mutual benefit in improving the standards of living of our people, with the focus being on building mutual trust and confidence at the political, social, economical and people to people levels to the advantage of the entire region of Latin America and the Caribbean

To cope with the multiple challenges arising from the rapidly changing international political and economic environment, the VHP is committed to promote and pursue understanding through channels of political dialogue.

Finally I would like to congratulate the Partido Revolucionario Democrática (PRD) with its 50th anniversary and at the same time thank the PRD for the hospitality and a great job done in organizing this meeting.