

Paramaribo, 8<sup>th</sup> of May 2023

To : The United Nations Special Reporter on the rights of Indigenous Peoples  
H.E. Fransisco Cali Tzay  
hrc-sr-indigenous@un.org

Dear Excellency,

The undersigned, Jennifer Vreedzaam in her capacity of member of The National Assembly of the Republic of Suriname, presents her compliments tot the UNDP Suriname Country Office and requests your attention for a briefing regarding recent violations of the rights of Indigenous Peoples in Suriname.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May 2023, a group of indigenous people of the village of Pikin Saron, physically protested against the presence of employees of companies. The concerned companies are exploiting the forests for timber export and mineral exploitation and the rights of the local indigenous population in and around the village of Pikin Saron are at stake.

The villagers have, at numerous occasions, communicated to the Government of Suriname, their concerns with regards to the negligence of their rights, after discovering that the land they are living on and their forefathers lived on, is being issued by the Government of Suriname to private third parties. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May 2023, the protesters, all of Indigenous descent, were chased by the Police and the confrontation escalated around a nearby indigenous village of Bigi Poika, where the group of protesters were randomly shot at with guns and two of the protesters were killed. While the Police has made a doubtful public statement, the Government of Suriname has failed to give a sequentially proven recount of the events which took place. The bodies of the deceased show clear signs of extreme physical abuse and so far the Government has not clarified the events. The families of the victims are denied limited access to the bodies by the Police and the Government of Suriname is not responsive to The National Assembly of the Republic of Suriname where questions and inquiry requests regarding the incidents were raised in the National Assembly Meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> of May 2023.

The undersigned regretfully determines that the Government of Suriname is clearly in violation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), more in particular, articles 3,7,8 and 19 of the UNDRIP. The undersigned strongly requests the support of the United Nations Special Reporter on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and attention of the United Nations Development Program. A copy of this letter shall be sent to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Rights.

The undersigned is of the opinion that the Rights of Indigenous people should be guaranteed by the Government of Suriname. Please find attached pictures of the victims.

Sincerely,  


Jennifer Vreedzaam  
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