



**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY REGGY NELSON,
AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SURINAME TO THE FRENCH REPUBLIC
FOR THE CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE FINAL
OUTCOME OF THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW FOR SURINAME
SEPTEMBER 21, 2016 - GENEVA, SWITZERLAND**

Mr. President, Esteemed Members of the Human Rights Council, Representatives of the United Nations Member States, Representatives of the Civil Society, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am privileged to address the Council today, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Suriname, on the occasion of the consideration and adoption of the final outcome of the Universal Periodic Review for Suriname.

I wish to recall the constructive review held during the twenty-fifth session of the Working Group on May 2, 2016 and the commitment of Suriname, expressed through the Head of Delegation, Her Excellency Jennifer Van Dijk-Silos, Minister of Justice and Police, to implement the recommendations that we support during this cycle and to work towards addressing the challenges faced, with the expectation that we will receive the support and assistance of the Council.

Mr. President,

During the review Suriname received one hundred and forty-eight (148) recommendations, of which the majority (one hundred and five (105) were supported during the Working Group session and forty-three (43) were deferred, as they required further consideration.

In this regard I wish to note that from the remaining recommendations, requiring further consideration, eleven (11) recommendations further enjoy the support of Suriname; Representing over 75% of the recommendations that enjoy the support of Suriname, inclusive of those already accepted in the May session of the Working Group.

It is also worth noting that the Government has already started with the implementation of a few recommendations.

Mr. President,

Please allow me to clarify the position of the Government of Suriname with regard to the recommendation 135.1, which is partly noted and supported.

The part related to the ratification of the Convention against Torture and other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment was already accepted during the Working Group session.

However the Government at this stage can only note the rest of the recommendation as it relates to the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; the Optional Protocol on the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women as well as the ILO Convention 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries.

Ratification of the Conventions and Optional Protocols requires further national consultations and amendments of national legislation and policies to comply with the obligations contained in these instruments.

With regard to recommendation 135.33 I wish to inform that the Government of Suriname at this stage can only note the reference to sexual orientation and gender identity.

Suriname reiterates that as a multicultural society, the subject of sexual orientation and gender identity requires a broad based consultation process at the national level, involving all sectors of society, including the civil society.

I wish to inform that on the 30th of August 2016 a working group "Diversity and Inclusivity" was established with the mandate to conduct hearings with the civil society. Against this backdrop, a workshop is planned for the 17th of May 2017 to discuss the outcome of these hearings.

The Government of Suriname wishes to reassure that an all-inclusive policy will be in accordance with Article 8 sub 2 of the Constitution of Suriname, which underscores the principle of non-discrimination- on the grounds of birth, sex, race, language, religious origin, education, political beliefs, economic position or any other status.

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As it relates to other recommendations under the chapter of “noted”, I wish to state that these require further broad based consultations with relevant stakeholders. The Government is therefore not in a position to pre-empt the outcome of these consultations.

Mr. President,

As stated during the abovementioned review in May last, the Government of Suriname remains committed to the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in Suriname. Furthermore and in keeping with article 8 of the Constitution of Suriname, we remain committed to doing so based on the principle of equality.

The constructive dialogue during the working group session and the subsequent recommendations, especially those that enjoy the support of Suriname, provide an impetus for the Government to continue the implementation of policies aimed at ensuring the enjoyment of all human rights for all. Furthermore these recommendations constitute a solid framework for our country’s human rights agenda.

The Government of Suriname reiterates that the promotion and protection of human rights is inextricably linked with the achievement of sustainable development. Therefore in our long term sustainable development strategy measures are included that would guarantee that a human rights based approach is taken.

In closing I wish to assure you of the commitment of Suriname to work towards the implementation of the recommendations that enjoy support.

I thank you.