



The Indigenous Peoples Conservation Rights in Suriname a United Nations (UN) Declaration: Review of the Declaration Implementation

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INTRODUCTION

Located in the northeast of the South American continent, Suriname, since its rediscovery by colonial powers in the late 15th century, has undergone transformations to its natural, social, political and economic landscape to emerge as the resource-rich¹, multiethnic sovereign state it is today. The first people of Suriname also known as Amerindian people and globally recognised and referred to as Indigenous People(s') (IPs) are the first natives of Suriname who originally inhabited the state before the arrival of the colonialists. Included in the Surinamese Coat of Arms are two Arawak Indians symbolising the importance of this group of people. In the subconscious mind of the contemporary thinkers, in 1975 when Suriname became an independent nation and the unveiling of the coat of arms, some form of gratitude was given to the IPs that added value towards their recognition. The star on the coat of arms represents the various continents that inhabitants came from to Suriname; they migrated from Africa, America, Asia, Australia and Europe. However, more emphasis is placed on other ethnic groups such as Indians, Africans, and Indonesians during and after the colonial period 1500-1975, with little or no consideration or respect given to the IPs who, being natives or locals, have lived, cultivated, protected and preserved the wild and eco life of Suriname. Although the IPs have been relegated to an almost second class citizen status in Suriname, today, they have risen and are demanding their fair share of equal rights like any other citizen in Suriname, confirming that they are part of the Suriname constitution and equal partners in the share of property and gains of natural resources that they carefully protected over time. This basic humanitarian right of access and ownership of lands was globally adopted in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in September 2007. This paper, therefore, seeks to review the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as it pertains to its implementation in Suriname, and specifically to examine the status of implementation of Article 10 of the Convention as it treats with the issue of land rights of IPs. For this review, qualitative exploratory research was selected as the most appropriate methodology for this purpose.

¹ The International Monetary Fund, 2013, Suriname 2013 Article IV Consultation, Washington D.C, IMF Publication Services, Available: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2013/cr13340.pdf>, Accessed on 9th September 2014.

Exploratory research² is most useful in situations in which limited information is available and the researcher wishes to have flexibility to explore areas of research. Also, the same methodology was used innumerable by other researchers seeking to explore topics or issues that were new and emerging. Both primary and secondary sources of data will be used for this review. In this review, primary data sources would consist of adopted declaration or Convention with specific articles. In contrast, the secondary sources of data are the reports, data and documents from periodical reviews and meetings conducted. Newspaper articles, creditable online sources and review session's statements and speeches will also fall under the secondary sources of data classification.

SURINAME'S CULTURAL BACKGROUND

Suriname is home to a diverse range of ethnicities, races, religions and languages. Although the original inhabitants were IPs or Amerindian, Suriname's population has grown to include the descendants of African slaves, indentured workers from India, Indonesia and China, and European settlers. While the official language of Suriname is Dutch, the various ethnic groups have maintained their respective languages which have led to at least fifteen different languages being spoken and many Surinamese citizens being bilingual or multilingual.

THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF SURINAME

The international community has not adopted a definition of IPs and the prevailing view today is that no formal universal definition is necessary for the recognition and protection of their rights. The characteristics of IPs based on The International Labour Organization (ILO)³ Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169) applies to:

² Cooper, D. and Schindler, P., 2006, Business Research Methods 9th edition. Boston, McGraw-Hill.

³ International Labour Organization, 2013, Understanding the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (no.169), Geneva, International Labour Organization Department Publications, Available: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---normes/documents/publication/wcms_205225.pdf, Accessed on 9th September 2014.

- Tribal peoples whose social, cultural and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions or by special laws or regulations.
- Peoples who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonization or the establishment of present State boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions.
- The Convention also states that self-identification as indigenous or tribal shall be regarded as a fundamental criterion for determining the groups to which the provisions of this Convention apply.

In Suriname, there are two groups of peoples who are classified as IPs. The Amerindians or First Peoples, is the second largest minority⁴ population in Suriname, who have primarily settled along the upper courses of large rivers in the interior and consisting of various tribal groups such as the Akurio, Carib, Trio, Wayana, Warao and Arawak, who have added to the diversity of Suriname's population. The Maroons, is a distinct group descended from runaway slaves during the colonial era, and settled in the interior and based on their customs, traditions, descent and settlement, in accordance with the ILO Convention are also classified as IPs. However, for the purpose of this paper, focus would be placed primarily on the First People or Amerindian Community of Suriname.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND ITS APPLICABILITY TO THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DECLARATION

Human Rights⁵ refer to the promotion of universal respect for and observation of human rights and the fundamental freedom for all. This view is enshrined in the United Nations'

⁴ Permanent Mission of the Republic of Suriname to the United Nations, 2014, Country Facts, New York, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Suriname, Available: <http://www.un.int/wcm/content/site/suriname/cache/offonce/pid/2879;jsessionid=2110BE3E160FAD E7D64637220897D373>, Accessed on 9th September 2014.

⁵ Heywood, A., 2011, Global Politics, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, Chapter 13, Pages 303- 309.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights from which other Conventions and treaties such as the 1966 International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights, and the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights emerged, and are altogether referred to as the International Bill of Human Rights. The concept of Human Rights is rights to which people are entitled by virtue of being human; they consist of freedom despite race, religion, gender and other differences. The fundamental principle is that human beings are entitled to those rights and they cannot be removed; these are grounds for living a genuinely human life. The nature of the right is an entitlement to act or be treated in a particular way. The IPs Declaration is constructed to primarily take into consideration the fundamental aspect of honouring a Human Rights agenda the freedom and respect of all peoples as a nation. Despite they are socially and culturally differently opinionated than the wider community the same mutual respect is expected amongst all citizen. The IPs Declaration seeks to reconcile and include those marginalized tribal peoples to express their rights such as freedom, no form of discrimination, equality, rights to access land, self determination, nationality, cultural, beliefs, language and many other rights. This Declaration has been adopted globally, however, its practical implementation is one that nations are in the process of adapting and ensuring that applicable law stemming out of the Declaration are consulted and drafted for its effective and efficient inclusion in the nation's constitution. Just like many other United Nations Declarations, the inclusion of the Human Rights component is necessary for the effective implementation, the impact is global, however, it is the responsibility of nations to effect the change to remain current with the ever changing world.

EXISTING DECLARATIONS THAT INCLUDES THE LAND RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Over the last two decades, the global community has recognized that special attention needs to be paid to the individual and collective rights of IPs. As a result, a number of international declarations address some fundamental aspects of IPs' land rights or include provisions relevant to them in the Convention to offer some form of protection and inclusion.

The main objective of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention on Indigenous and Tribal People's⁶ is that indigenous and tribal peoples shall enjoy the full measure of human rights and the fundamental freedoms without hindrance or discrimination. This Convention pays specific attention to those peoples for protection of their rights. This proposal was drafted since 1957 with relevant and subsequent recommendations put forward for amendments. The Convention was adopted as an International Convention in 1989. The Convention seeks to protect the right of equality and discrimination; land; recruitment and condition of employment; vocational training; social security and health; education and means of communication; and many more. Suriname has to date, not ratified this Convention and sadly only 22 countries have done so and have taken measures to implement its principles at the domestic level. The ILO Convention on the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples certainly would have had a direct impact on the then and current situation in Suriname as it pertains to the rights of equality, discrimination and access to land and other rights of the IPs. The then government of Suriname was fully aware of the implications this process would have had and chose not to deal with the adoption and ratification of this Convention.

The Biological Diversity Convention⁷ has as its objective, the conservation of biological diversity. This is the sustainability of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of the natural resources. This includes having appropriate access to natural resources and the appropriate transfer of relevant technologies, taking into account all rights of the resources and technologies, and through appropriate funding. The importance of protecting the rights of IPs was recognised in this Convention in the form of their close and traditional dependence, together with other local communities, on biological resources. It is important to equally apportion benefits arising from the use of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices relevant to the

⁶ International Labour Organization, 2013, Understanding the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (no.169), Geneva, International Labour Organization Department Publications, Available: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---normes/documents/publication/wcms_205225.pdf, Accessed on 9th September 2014.

⁷ United Nations, 1993, Convention on Biological Diversity, Rio De Janeiro, United Nations Treaty Collection, Available: <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/MTDSG/Volume%20II/Chapter%20XXVII/XXVII-8.en.pdf>, Accessed on 9th September 2014.

conservation of biological diversity and sustainable use of the resources. While this section of this Convention offers a vague form of protection to the IPs with regard to land rights, this did not specifically offer protection to them as a minority group in Suriname- the section applied to other local communities which comprise of larger dominant ethnic groups. This Convention came into effect in 1992 and Suriname signed and ratified it in 1996. Little or no implementation took place during that period and beyond, as the then government did not even recognize the IPs' protection and conservation rights.

There are many other International Conventions such as: The Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989⁸; The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966⁹; The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966¹⁰; The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination 1966¹¹. Most of these Conventions affect the rights of IP's directly or indirectly and are inextricably linked. However, it is the state's responsibility to ensure the ratification and implementation process takes effect. Additionally, this process is further monitored and evaluated by the various United Nations Human Rights Committees that are set up to ensure that countries comply with these Conventions by way of country reports.

UNITED NATIONS' DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

⁸ UNICEF, 1990, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, London, Giacomo Pirazzi, Available: http://www.unicef.org.uk/Documents/Publication-pdfs/UNCRC_PRESS200910web.pdf, Accessed on 9th September 2014.

⁹ United Nations, 1976, United Nations Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, New York, United Nations Treaty Collection, Available: <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%20999/volume-999-I-14668-English.pdf>, Accessed on 9th September 2014.

¹⁰ United Nations, 1976, United Nations Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, New York, United Nations Treaty Collection, Available: <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/MTDSG/Volume%20I/Chapter%20IV/IV-3.en.pdf>, Accessed on 9th September 2014.

¹¹ United Nations, 1969, International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination, New York, United Nations Treaty Collection, Available: <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/MTDSG/Volume%20I/Chapter%20IV/IV-2.en.pdf>, Accessed on 9th September 2014.

The United Nations Declaration on the Right of the Indigenous Peoples¹² guided by the purposes and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and good faith in the fulfillment of the obligations assumed by states in accordance with the Charter. Those IPs are equal to all other peoples, while recognizing the right of all peoples to be different, to consider themselves different, and to be respected as such. IPs are entitled to the full range of rights established under international law. They should not be subject to any form of discrimination, given access to land, should receive equal treatment, should be able to participate fully in public life, and have a right to maintain their distinctive identities, cultures, languages and ways of life.

The Declaration came into effect in September of 2007 which can be considered very recent and in the process of being implemented in member states. Most states have undertaken constitutional reforms and adopted laws recognizing distinct indigenous identities and the multicultural character of the state. In most cases, those reforms have not been able to eliminate the legacy of historical discrimination against IPs. According to Article 10 of the Declaration, which deals specifically to land rights, IPs shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories. No relocation shall take place without the free, prior and informed consent of the IPs concerned and after agreement on just and fair compensation and, where possible, with the option of return. In most states this is the fundamental burning matter since IPs' lands have been disproportionately affected by development activities by the state because they often contain valuable natural resources including timber, minerals, biodiversity resources, water and oil among others. The land and resource matters are often at the heart of the tensions between indigenous groups and states and are often the source of human rights violations. Some of the matters that confront many indigenous groups globally are ownership rights, the right to adequate homes and protection from forced evictions, natural resource management questions, management and use of protected areas and or nature reserves, benefit sharing, protection from environmental impacts and guarantees for sacred or cultural sites. These matters may be resolved through

12 United Nations, 2008, The United Nations Declaration on the Right of the Indigenous Peoples, New York, United Nations, Available: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf, Accessed on 9th September 2014.

discussions and negotiation where national laws are in line with the individual and collective human rights of IPs.

RELEVANCE OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DECLARATION TO THE CONSTITUTION OF SURINAME

Although the Surinamese constitution¹³ refers to “WE, THE PEOPLE OF SURINAME, inspired by the love for this Country and the belief in the power of the Almighty and guided by the age-long struggle of our People against colonialism, which was terminated by the establishment of the Republic of Suriname on 25th November 1975”, the preamble noticeably excludes the native Amerindian population who have inhabited Suriname before the arrival of colonisers. Under Chapter V Article 8 individual rights and freedom: All who are within the territory of Suriname shall have an equal claim to protection of person and property. No one shall be discriminated against on grounds of birth, sex, race, language, religion, education, political opinion, economic position or any other status. As it further recognizes Chapter VI: social, cultural and economic rights and obligations Section 8 Article 34 the right to property: Property, both of the community and of private persons, shall fulfill a social function. Everyone has the right to the undisturbed enjoyment of his property, subject to the limitations which originate in the law. Expropriation shall take place only in the general interest, pursuant to rules to be laid down by law and against compensation guaranteed in advance. Compensation need not be previously assured if, in case of an emergency, immediate expropriation is required. In cases determined by or pursuant to the law, the right to compensation shall exist if, in the public interest, the competent authority destroys or renders property unusable or restricts the exercise of property rights.

Suriname had voted in favour of the Declaration and was adopted with 143 votes for, 4 votes against (Australia, Canada, New Zealand and United States) and 11 abstaining on the 13th September 2007. Suriname placed great importance on the promotion and protection of all human rights, including IPs. Suriname’s Government has a responsibility to all its constituents to prevent discrimination and marginalization of any group in

¹³ The Organization of American States, 2000, The Constitution of The Republic of Suriname, Paramaribo, The Waterfront Press, Available: http://www.oas.org/juridico/PDFs/mesicic4_sur_const.pdf, Accessed on 9th September 2014.

society. Granting special rights to one group might run contrary to the concept of equal treatment. The Declaration could not be understood to initiate any activity that would jeopardize a State's territorial integrity and political unity as it relates to the right of self determination of all. The implementation requires Government, United Nations Agencies and IPs to reaffirm and renew its commitment with the understanding to cooperate in order to fulfil the implementation of this Declaration for a holistic inclusion of all people in the constitution of Suriname.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DECLARATION IN SURINAME

The right to land is a very contentious issue between the government of Suriname and the indigenous and tribal peoples. This is one of the fundamental challenges that to date still remains unresolved. The governments before 2010 have not paid any key interest with regard to the land rights of those peoples and kept delaying the issue as long as possible. This land right situation requires an amendment in the Surinamese Constitution and is one of the more challenging and tiring processes to undertake in ensuring mutual cooperation between both parties are met. The current government sought assistance from the Human Rights Council on measures needed to secure indigenous and tribal peoples' land and related rights in Suriname from the Special Rapporteur on the rights of IPs, James Anaya¹⁴: the summary of this report includes, the observations and recommendations made, build on discussions held during the Special Rapporteur's visit with parties concerned on the matter. After a brief assessment of the State's international legal obligations with regard to the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples, proposed outlines of a process for moving towards developing legislation and related administrative measures to secure these rights were made to the government. Suggestions made about the basic contents of the legislation, while emphasizing that this legislation should be the outcome of a participatory process, assisted by relevant international institutions, in which indigenous and tribal peoples are themselves involved. The report may be followed by further consultations with the Government and with indigenous and tribal peoples in Suriname as progress is made

¹⁴ James, A., 2011, United Nations General Assembly Human Rights Council Eighteenth session Agenda item 3 Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development, Available: http://unsr.jamesanaya.org/docs/special/2011-special-suriname-a-hrc-18-35-add7_en.pdf, Accessed on 9th September 2014.

towards the adoption of legislation to secure these peoples' rights. This report was accepted by the government of Suriname in August of 2011. Following the recommendations as suggested in the report the government convened a first ever National Land Conference in October of 2011 with the indigenous and tribal people for a consultation process and chart the positive way forward in achieving a mutual consensus between both stakeholders. The conference took place with an unresolved result as this consultation was stopped immediately by the President of the Republic of Suriname on the second day after receiving a resolution from a represented leader for and on behalf of the indigenous and tribal peoples demanding the right of land and access to resources above and below which was not a part of the original negotiations and led to the government abandoning talks and thus denied the indigenous and tribal people's request for such, without any tangible result. The president of the Republic of Suriname decided unilaterally that the National Assembly, the Parliament, should decide further on the land right issue. Despite all this, the indigenous and tribal peoples of Suriname still believe that a respectful dialogue will bring about a solution to the land rights issue in Suriname, but they maintain that this solution must be compliant with international standards on indigenous and tribal peoples' rights, and they are hoping that this dialogue will continue soon. The Inter-American Court of Human Rights has specifically affirmed that, like IPs, the Maroon tribal peoples of Suriname have individual and collective rights, including collective rights over lands and natural resources, which are protected by the American Convention on Human Rights¹⁵, a multilateral treaty to which Suriname is a party. The Inter-American Court has issued two judgments related to tribal peoples in Suriname, *Moiwana*¹⁶ village versus Suriname of 2005, and *Saramaka*¹⁷ versus Suriname of 2007 Suriname is yet to make good

¹⁵ The Organization of American States, 1967, American Convention on Human Rights, San Jose, Department of International Law, Available: http://www.oas.org/dil/treaties_B-32_American_Convention_on_Human_Rights.pdf, Accessed on 9th September 2014.

¹⁶ Thomas M. A., 2005, *Moiwana Village v. Suriname: A Portal into Recent Jurisprudential Developments of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights*, 25 Berkeley J. Int'l Law. 268 (2007), Berkley, Available: <http://scholarship.law.berkeley.edu/bjil/vol25/iss2/6>, Accessed on 9th September 2014.

¹⁷ The Inter-American Court of Human Rights, 2007, *Saramaka People v. Suriname*, Judgment of 28 November 2007, Inter-Am Ct. H.R., (Ser. C) No.172 (2007), San Jose, Available: http://www.corteidh.or.cr/docs/casos/articulos/seriec_172_ing.pdf, Accessed on 9th September 2014

on the judgments in granting the title of the land to the community. During national elections¹⁸ in 2010, the current ruling government promised to legally recognise the land rights of indigenous and tribal peoples in Suriname before the end of its term in 2015. Suriname still has no legislation on the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples, and several international Human Rights bodies have insisted that Suriname recognises these rights.

The challenges the government and the indigenous and tribal peoples faced in overcoming those rights the access to land in Suriname is that firstly, the Constitution does not recognize their identity as peoples and secondly, the Constitution in Article 41 states clearly that natural resources are the property of the nation and must be used to promote economic, social, and cultural development in Suriname. While the rights of the indigenous and tribal peoples claims to possess, develop, control and use their communal lands and to participate in the exploitation management and conservation of the associated natural resources. This is the primary obstacles that both parties are holding on their positions with no compromise or solutions at the moment. The status of progress and implementation of the Declaration at United Nations Commissions Meetings held over the period where Suriname is required to report or make comments on the matter of the right to land issues and the recognition of the IPs in the Constitution, remained unresolved. They continued to report this as a very important matter and required time for its process and implementation; however, there is progress ongoing such as consultation with the parties involved. Further reference is made by the Commission on the status of the 2 Inter American Court judgements as mentioned before, of which the rulings have not been upheld by the Surinamese government given its present constitution stand point. It is further noted as well that it is imperative that Suriname take steps to fully implement the judgment of the Court, in order to avoid a prolonged condition of international illegality in both cases as the judgment ordered. Hence, these judgments of the Inter-American Court imply international legal responsibility on the part of Suriname in regard to all the indigenous and tribal peoples of the country under the American Convention. This in turn strengthens the indigenous and tribal people's right for government to take immediate

¹⁸ Forest Peoples Programme, 2011, President of Suriname shuts down Land Right Conference following clear demands from Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, England and Wales, Available on: <http://www.forestpeoples.org/region/suriname/news/2011/12/president-suriname-shuts-down-land-rights-conference-following-clear-de>, Accessed on 9th September 2014.

action and awaits its compliance. The Suriname government has to establish a clear workable process to develop the laws and administrative measures and need to comply with its legal obligations and to maintain continued dialogue between the government of Suriname and indigenous and tribal organizations in the country.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the content and analysis of this review the main issue in the Declaration of the IP's rights hinges on the issue regarding the land rights in Suriname. The other rights as mentioned in the Declaration in the context of Suriname adherence, is somewhat in the process of good implementation and compliance status.

- There is the need to establish proper reporting mechanism in place to monitor and evaluate the progress of the implementation of the various rights in Suriname for accurate and consistent reporting. It is noted as well that under this United Nations Declaration of IPs there was no country report from Suriname received by the commission. Since its ratification, information consisted mainly from statements and progress status reports made by Suriname representatives.
- Suriname need to amends its constitution for inclusion of the indigenous and tribal people and the right to land in order to comply with the international treaties signed and conformity with the Human Rights Convention. The recommendation on the way forward in achieving this goal by the United Nations Special Rapporteur James Anaya was accepted by the Suriname government and attempted the first step the need for consultations. The following steps remained prudent in its entirety and are recommended to continue to engage in the process:
 - The need for consultations with indigenous and tribal peoples, any legislation or administrative regulation to secure the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples in the country should be the outcome of a process involving adequate consultations with these peoples,

- Formation of a joint commission or other platform for consultations on new legislation, keeping these basic elements in mind, some formally structured platform and corresponding procedure should be established to advance the consultations with indigenous and tribal peoples on the development of legislation and any related measures to secure their rights,
- Mandate of the joint commission as its first task, a joint commission of the kind suggested should establish an agreed upon timetable, as well as clear and measurable benchmarks by which progress for development of the relevant legislation and any related regulatory measures may be assessed,
- Technical and financial assistance by international experts and institutions in order to generate confidence in the process of developing laws to secure indigenous and tribal peoples' rights to lands and resources and related rights, and to ensure that this process is carried out in accordance with relevant international standards,
- The legislation to be developed and its basic content both parties have information and draft notes of what the legislation should cover as to the form and issues the legislation should address,
- Other laws or regulations to be developed there are various other matters relating to their rights that should be considered and drafted immediately ensuring all issues are covered since the process is one of its kind and not the traditional norm to amend the constitution,
- Harmonizing the constitution and existing laws and policies finally, it will be necessary for the government to review existing laws and the constitution to ensure their consistency with the protections for indigenous and tribal peoples to be enacted.

CONCLUSION

There exist a love and hate relationship between the government of Suriname and the indigenous and tribal people decades ago and somewhat still is. Both parties have matured in their behaviours by acknowledging that there is a problem and IPs took conscious and

bold effort in voicing their concern with the government. While the government in the past did not pay any attention, the struggle continued by the IPs ensuring that they remained committed to the cause. While strides have been made towards acceptance and recognition of IP in the way of electing the first Surinamese President of indigenous descent, and as a result, there has been a growing level of indigenous integration in the primary, secondary, tertiary education system and employment in government as well as private sector. Additionally, while the government has begun to comply with the international treaties regarding IP rights to leave no culture marginalised, as it pertains to land rights of IP's, this remains a major stumbling block that requires intense mediation between both parties. The indigenous and tribal peoples remain optimistic that this consensus will be achieved in the not too distant future with the government of Suriname. The matter is referred to the Suriname National Assembly, the Parliament, the highest legislative arm of the country, to decide further on the indigenous and tribal people rights to land and the necessary amendments to the constitution for the inclusion as People of one nation.

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