



**International Convention on  
the Elimination of All Forms  
of Racial Discrimination**

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**Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination**

**Combined sixteenth to eighteenth periodic reports submitted  
by Suriname under article 9 of the Convention, due in 2019\***

[Date received: 4 November 2019]

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

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## **I. Introduction**

1. The Republic of Suriname became a party to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination by succession on 15 March 1984. Pursuant to article 9 of the Convention and as requested in paragraph 47 of the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) on the combined thirteenth to fifteenth periodic reports of Suriname, the State Party submits this report covering the sixteenth to the eighteenth periodic report.

### **Scope**

2. The present periodic report covers the period from 2015 to July 2019. The periodic report outlines the achievements since the concluding consideration of the CERD on its last report of Suriname. Additionally, the challenges impairing the full enjoyment of the rights under the Convention are highlighted and the measures taken to address these are described.

### **Structure**

3. In accordance with the reporting guidelines for States Parties, this consolidated periodic report, contain in a single document the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth reports, and is divided into two main parts.

4. The first part, “General information and responses to the concerns and recommendations of the CERD”, describes the general political structure of the country and recalls the framework in which human rights are promoted and protected. Additionally, it also contains the responses of the Republic of Suriname to the prevention of racial discrimination and the recommendations formulated by the CERD in its previous concluding observations.

5. The second part of the report contains information on changes that occurred in Suriname in relation to substantive provisions of the Convention. In closing, the report presents conclusions and closing remarks.

## **II. General information and response to the concerns and recommendations of the Committee**

### **1. General Information**

6. Suriname is the smallest country in South America, its territory covers an area of 163,820 sq km, of which 94% is covered by pristine forests. Suriname is an independent constitutional democracy with a President as the Head of Government since 1975. The National Assembly (Parliament), has a single legislative Chamber of fifty-one (51) members.

7. Suriname is organized into ten (10) administrative districts. There are 62 resorts in the ten districts. Each district is headed by at least one District Commissioner appointed by the President. According to articles 163 and 164 of the Constitution of the Republic of Suriname, two types of local participation exist namely: (i) District Councils, and (ii) Resort Councils.

8. In accordance with article 139 of the Constitution, the Judiciary is headed by the Court of Justice (Supreme Court). It is the highest court in the legal hierarchy. Its members are appointed for life by the President according to article 141 sub 2 of the Constitution.

9. Suriname has an extensive educational system with free schooling compulsory until age 12. The adult literacy rate is approximately 89.6%. As a rule, all instruction is in Dutch. The system allows for schools from different religious groups (e.g. Roman Catholic, Moravian, Hindu and Islam) in addition to public schools up to secondary education.

Tertiary education includes training institutes, technical schools and the Anton de Kom University of Suriname, situated in the capital Paramaribo, with faculties of Medicine, Law, Social and Technological Sciences, etc.

10. The Constitution guarantees freedom of expression and freedom of the press. The media sector is fairly diverse, and internet access is not restricted. Articles 20 and 21 of the Constitution protect the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Association and Assembly, as well as the Right to Demonstrate.

11. In 2015, at the start of the reporting period, Suriname experienced a recession. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contracted by 2.6 % in that year and continued in 2016 with 5.1 %. The underlying circumstances contributing to this were the termination of bauxite production in the last quarter of 2015, and a sharp decline in the international prices of Suriname's main export commodities (gold and crude oil), thereby interrupting the experienced sustained growth of real GDP from 2001-2014 (averaging 4.4 %).<sup>1</sup> Relatively large fiscal and external imbalances, rising debt levels, and a drawdown of international reserves accompanied the economic decline. In 2016, Suriname signed a Stand-By Agreement (SBA) with the IMF, however mid-2016, the first and second reviews of the SBA did not proceed.<sup>2</sup>

12. By 2017, the economy recovered with a growth of 1.7 %. Growth of 2.0 % was projected over 2018.<sup>3</sup> Drivers of the economy are exports (oil and gold in combination with increased exports of timber and food products) and public investments in infrastructure financed by loans.<sup>4</sup> Inflationary pressures have decelerated, and the exchange rate has stabilized. Monthly inflation (year-on-year) declined from 48.7 % in January 2017 to 9.2 % in December 2017 and 5.4% up to December 2018<sup>5</sup>, after spiking at 79.2 % in October 2016 (attributed to higher costs for utilities and the exchange rate depreciation). After the currency depreciation of 102 % from 2015 to 2017, the exchange rate has since stabilized at a range of USD 1 – SRD 7.43 – 7,54, with a relatively low volatility of 0.27%.<sup>6</sup>

13. Suriname has an estimated population of 567,300<sup>7</sup>. Ninety percent (90%) of the population lives in the capital Paramaribo and the remaining coastal area. Suriname is among the least densely populated countries in the world with just three (3) people per square kilometer. With a GDP of USD 9,300 in 2015, the country is ranked as an upper middle-income country.

14. The Constitution and applicable laws are founded on the distinct character of Suriname. The country inhabits a rich mosaic in population groups, each with its own history and culture. The population comprises Indigenous Peoples and Maroons, who mainly reside in the interior. The coastal area is populated by Surinamese from African, East – Indian, Javanese and Chinese descent and various other ethnic groups, originating from many continents of the world. As a result, Suriname's adherence to equality, non-discrimination and respect for diversity emanates from the very fabric of the diverse multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-religious and multi-lingual society.

15. The Constitution stipulates in article 8 sub 2 that; “no one shall be discriminated against on the grounds of birth, sex, race, languages, religion, education, political opinion, economic position or any other status”. The keen awareness of these profound principles among the many ethnic groups has taught Suriname to peacefully co-exist by expressing tolerance, practicing respect for each faith, cultural background and the enjoyment of religious freedom.

<sup>1</sup> Source: World Bank, National Accounts data website.

<sup>2</sup> IMF Executive Board, Article IV Consultation with Suriname, January 24, 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Source: IMF Art IV Consultation, 2018.

<sup>4</sup> Source: Ministry of Finance. Financial Note 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Source: Central Bank of Suriname. Enhanced General Data Dissemination System, consulted October 2018.

<sup>6</sup> Source: Exchange rate historical dates, Central Bank of Suriname, consulted October 2018.

<sup>7</sup> Source: Demographic Data 2013-2016, General Bureau for Statistics, August 2017.

16. Within this context, laws and policies are established by the Parliament and the Government of Suriname in a well-balanced manner in order to guarantee equality, promote national unity and ensure the indivisibility of the nation. The social and economic objectives of the Government are aimed at building a national economy from which the entire population benefits, and in which equality and social programs such as healthcare and education are accessible to each citizen.

17. As an expression of genuine respect and peaceful co-existence, the different ethnic groups celebrate the National Day of Independence in addition to national holidays such as the commemoration of the Abolition of Slavery, Indigenous Peoples Day, Maroon Day, Eid Al-Fitr, and Hindustani (East – Indian), Javanese and Chinese Immigration.

18. Suriname cherishes its harmonious and interwoven multitude of cultures and religions as its greatest wealth. Suriname is a beacon of respect and tolerance of diversity, therefore it is honored to share its way of peace and dialogue with the world.

## **2. Responses to the Recommendations**

### **Definition and prohibition of racial discrimination**

19. Article 8 sub 2 of the Constitution states: No one shall be discriminated against on the grounds of birth, sex, race, language, religious origin, education, political beliefs, economic position or any other status. There are also provisions in several other laws which prohibit racial discrimination such as in the Penal Code of the Republic of Suriname, specifically the articles 126 sub a, 175, 175 sub a, 176, 176 sub b, 176 sub c and 500 sub a.

20. The definition of discrimination, contained in article 126 sub a of the Penal Code, applies to everyone, taking the principle of equality into consideration. In the articles 175 and 176 of the Penal Code, defamation of persons based on their sexual preference has been criminalized.

21. Article 500 sub a of the Penal Code criminalizes occupational discrimination, including discrimination based on sexual orientation.

22. Article 175 sub a of the Penal Code also prohibits organizations to promote and incite racial discrimination. In the latter article, instigation to hate, discrimination or violence has been criminalized.

### **Constitutional Court**

23. The institutional law which has to put the Constitutional Court into operation, as mentioned in article 144 of the Constitution, was placed on the agenda of Parliament on 18 July 2019 for discussion and was adopted on 30 August 2019.

### **National Human Rights Institute**

24. In December 2016, the Ministry of Justice and Police launched the National Human Rights Institute. The Institute is tasked with the promotion and protection of human rights in Suriname. Additionally, a general ombudsman will be linked to this Institute. The ombudsman will be divided into two divisions, one division for children and the other for adults. A transition period is planned that will be implemented in four (4) years, in which the Institute will be arranged in such a way that it will comply to the Paris Principles.

### **Discrimination based on descent**

25. The caste system is not institutionalized and the report from the Hindu religious leaders are that years ago there was a kind of system in which it was forbidden for certain families to become religious leaders or priests. Nowadays, the successful completion of the prescribed training is the deciding factor for becoming a religious leader or a priest.

26. After the abolition of slavery Suriname has not experienced any form of racial discrimination and/or racial hatred. Suriname is known for the union among its population despite the diversity. The inequality between Tribal Communities (Maroons and the Indigenous) who live in the forested interior, and other races, who live in the coastal area, is a result of territorial inequality. Those in Tribal Communities often have less access to facilities and services compared to those who are mainly located in the coastal and/or urban areas.

27. According to the stipulations of articles 175 and 176 of the amended Penal Code of 30 March 2015, it is forbidden to discriminate or insult ethnic groups. It should also be stated that according to aforementioned articles, persons who commit such acts of discrimination are individually punishable.

28. Though some individuals may experience some form of racial discrimination within their environment, it is not to the extent that it limits their possibilities. In that context, usually social norms are not adhered to, such as not greeting, or not wanting to stand or sit next to the person. Such experiences are usually not reported. Therefore, there are no organizations in Suriname whose main focus is on racial discrimination.

### **Combating human trafficking**

29. Articles 334 through 338 of the Penal Code cover the crimes against personal freedom: human trafficking and slavery. Suriname is equipped with legislation and policies to combat Trafficking in Persons (TIP). The Penal Code includes a section which provides the legal basis for law enforcement actions with regard to trafficking in persons, especially for women and children.<sup>8</sup>

30. The Penal Code was amended in 2006 and again in 2015, due to Suriname's ratification of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its supporting instrument, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children.

31. Suriname has committed itself to combat human trafficking in all its forms. To this end an inter-departmental coordination structure is in place using a victim-centered approach under the pillars of Prevention, Protection, Prosecution, Partnership and Policy. The Inter-Departmental Working Group meets monthly to facilitate the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national strategies in response to the TIP.

32. Victims of human trafficking could be everywhere in the country. It is up to the Government, society and neighboring countries to deter and put an end to this issue. To this end, Suriname is collaborating with neighboring countries; in CARICOM<sup>9</sup> context, and within CICAD<sup>10</sup>. With support of the United Nations and the United States of America, the Government of Suriname is kept informed of the latest developments.

33. In this regard, the Government of Suriname is implementing a National Action Plan 2019–2020 through an operational plan.

34. The identification and liberation of victims of human trafficking and human smuggling is one of the concerns of the Trafficking in Person department of the Police Force in Suriname.

35. The Sub-Directorate for Foreigners Affairs of the Ministry of Justice and Police is involved in this issue. Recently, illegal foreigners have been detained, who are possible victims of human smuggling. The vast majority of the group consisted of unaccompanied minors. In this context, important actions for this target group have been taken, namely:

- Providing shelter. In collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing, the availability of multiple childcare options has already been considered, including placement in children's homes.

<sup>8</sup> Article 334 (S.B.2015 no.44).

<sup>9</sup> CARICOM – Caribbean Community.

<sup>10</sup> Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission.

- Providing medical care, food and basic necessities for these minors.
- Following intensive research by the Consulate of the Republic of Haiti in Suriname, the minors have been reunited with their legal guardian.
- In cooperation with the Family Law Office (BUFAZ), policy is being developed regarding the establishment of a resident status for this target group.

36. In brief, policy regarding the refuge of minors who have directly or indirectly been the victim of human smuggling is being developed.

37. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing provides the foundation 'Hope for Children' with subsidies and food assistance. One of the target groups of this foundation are people in crisis situation, e.g. child victims of human trafficking. The goal is to place these children back within the home of the family as soon as possible. The Ministry doesn't have a specific policy on victims of trafficking but provides social care to all families and persons who register with the division Social Care. This division offers guidance and counseling to families, and if necessary, make the referral to other service providers. Residents with a residence permit can apply for other social services of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing.

**The table below represents the human trafficking data over the period 2015 July 2019**

Year	Number Cases	Number victims			Number suspects		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2015	9	1	12	13	7	15	22
2016	3	1	4	5	7	3	10
2017	4	0	4	4	3	5	8
2018	1	0	1	1	2	1	3
8 July 2019	3	0	3	3	2	2	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>47</b>

Source: Ministry of Justice and Police – Police Corps Suriname 2019.

38. From 2015 to date, twenty (20) cases regarding trafficking in persons were investigated. Twenty-six (26) victims registered of which seven (7) were foreigners. These foreigners comprised four (4) Chinese nationals one (1) male and three (3) females and three (3) minor girls with Guyanese nationality. The seven (7) abovementioned foreigners were returned to their country of origin on their request.

39. Human smuggling is covered by article 249 sub b of the Penal Code.

**The table below represents the human smuggling data over the period 2015 July 2019**

**Human Smugglers**

Year	Number of cases	Number of illegals	Number of suspects
2015	8	11	7
2016	36	18	27
2017	10	32	12
2018	29	218	30
8 juli 2019	8	44	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>88</b>

Source: Ministry of Justice and Police – Police Corps Suriname 2019.

40. From 2015 to date, ninety-one (91) cases of human smuggling have been investigated. Over the reported period, three hundred and twenty-three (323) illegal foreigners were arrested of which most had a Haitian nationality.

### **Migrants and Refugees**

41. The Sub-Directorate for Foreigners Affairs of the Ministry of Justice and Police was confronted with the issue of refugees and asylum seekers in 2015. Cases related to refugees and migrants are coordinated by the Suriname Red Cross in its capacity as the counterpart of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in collaboration with the UNHCR.

42. From 2015 onward, the Suriname Red Cross received requests from foreign nationals who were recognized by the UNHCR as asylum seekers and refugees to have a legal residence permit in Suriname.

### **The table below lists the number of asylum seekers over the period 2016 to date**

<i>Country of Origin</i>	<i>Number</i>
Africa	16
Bangladesh	1
Columbia	1
Cuba	295
Dominican Republic	18
Haiti	2
Jamaica	5
Venezuela	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>380</b>

*Source:* Sub-Directorate for Foreign Affairs of the Ministry of Justice and Police.

### **The table below represents an overview of the number of illegal minors with a Haitian nationality who have been detained over the period August 2018–March 2019**

<i>Period</i>	<i>Sex</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
August 2018	10	12	22
November 2018	06	04	10
February 2019	05	01	06
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>38</b>

*Source:* Sub-Directorate for Foreign Affairs of the Ministry of Justice and Police.

**The table below gives an overview of the number of applications received from the category Refugees/Asylum seekers, according to gender and country of origin in 2018**

Country	Sex			Refugees	Asylum seekers	Total applications	Total no. of Persons
	Male	Female	Minors				
Cuba	07	02	01	03	06	09	10
Dominican Republic	-----	01	01	----	01	01	02
Nigeria	01	----	----	01	---	01	01
Jamaica	02	----	----	02	---	02	02
Venezuela	-----	04	07	----	04	04	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>06</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>26</b>

*Source:* The Sub-Directorate for Foreigners Affairs of the Ministry of Justice and Police.

43. The actions taken by the Sub-Directorate for Foreigners Affairs of the Ministry of Justice and Police are:

- Granting the first residence status for an indefinite period originating from the refugee status in 2008 and the second in 2015.
- Establishing, by decision and its entry into force, a special category of foreign nationals in the asylum procedure from 21 March 2018 on. Starting from this date, foreigners who have been granted refugee/asylum seeker status have to submit a residence application digitally via the website. The residence permit once granted has a maximum validity of 2 years.
- Further steps regarding the rights of this group must be undertaken by other stakeholders.

44. In the case of statelessness of foreign nationals, the law on Nationality and Residency and the Aliens Act (1991) provide some safeguards with regard to statelessness. However, changes need to be made. The Aliens Act provides some safeguards concerning the legal protection of foreign nationals in Suriname.

45. When it comes to universal health for all and applying the concept of 'leaving no one behind', Suriname is experiencing positive developments on the one hand but is encountering challenges as well. The Ministry of Health is trying to increase the access to high quality health care in Suriname. Suriname has gone through important policy reforms in the past year, in order to advance in the direction of universal health.

46. In 2014, the Basic Health Care Insurance Act (BAZO) came into effect. The Government provides free Basic Health Insurance (BAZO) to children from 0 to 16 years of age and adults from the age of 60 years and above. The working population is insured through employers' health insurance programs. Persons from the age of 17 to 59 years who have no health insurance, have to register at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing to be eligible for BAZO. Foreigners who are citizens (registered with the General Bureau for Citizens Affairs) and live in Suriname may also apply for BAZO. If they meet all the criteria, they are eligible to receive BAZO. Children who are born to foreign parents are also eligible to receive BAZO. This provision also applies to stateless persons, refugees and displaced persons.

47. In 2018, the Ministry for Social Affairs and Housing evaluated the progress of the BAZO and one of the outcomes is that the naturalization of children born in Suriname by parents with another nationality could be a challenge.

48. Currently, two (2) new public hospitals are being built by the Government, to serve communities which are underserved, and to make more efforts to bring care to the most difficult to reach people deep in the interior of Suriname.

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**The table below indicates the medical clinics in the hinterland of Suriname per district**

<i>Clinic</i>	<i>Resort &amp; Head</i>	<i>Region &amp; Manager</i>
Poesoegroenoe		
Nj jacob kondre		
Kwakoe Gron	Midden suriname	Midden suriname
Bigi poika		
Pikien saron		
Witagron	West suriname	West suriname
Djoemoe		
Kajana	Djoemoe	
Semoisie		
Hekoenoeno		
Kambaloa	Debike	
Debike		Boven suriname
Pikien slee		
Goejaba		
Ladoani		
Jaw jaw	Ladoani	
Soekoenale		
Pokigron		
Doewatra		
Brownsweg		
Klaaskreek		
Nw lombe		
Phedra	Brokopondo	
Powakka	Noord	
Nw koffiekamp		
Marchallkreek		Brokopondo
Redi dotie		
Lebidoti		
Victoria/ asigron	Brokopondo	
Brokopondo	Zuid	
Balingsoela		
Cottica		
Gonini		
Agaigoni		
Stoelmanseiland		

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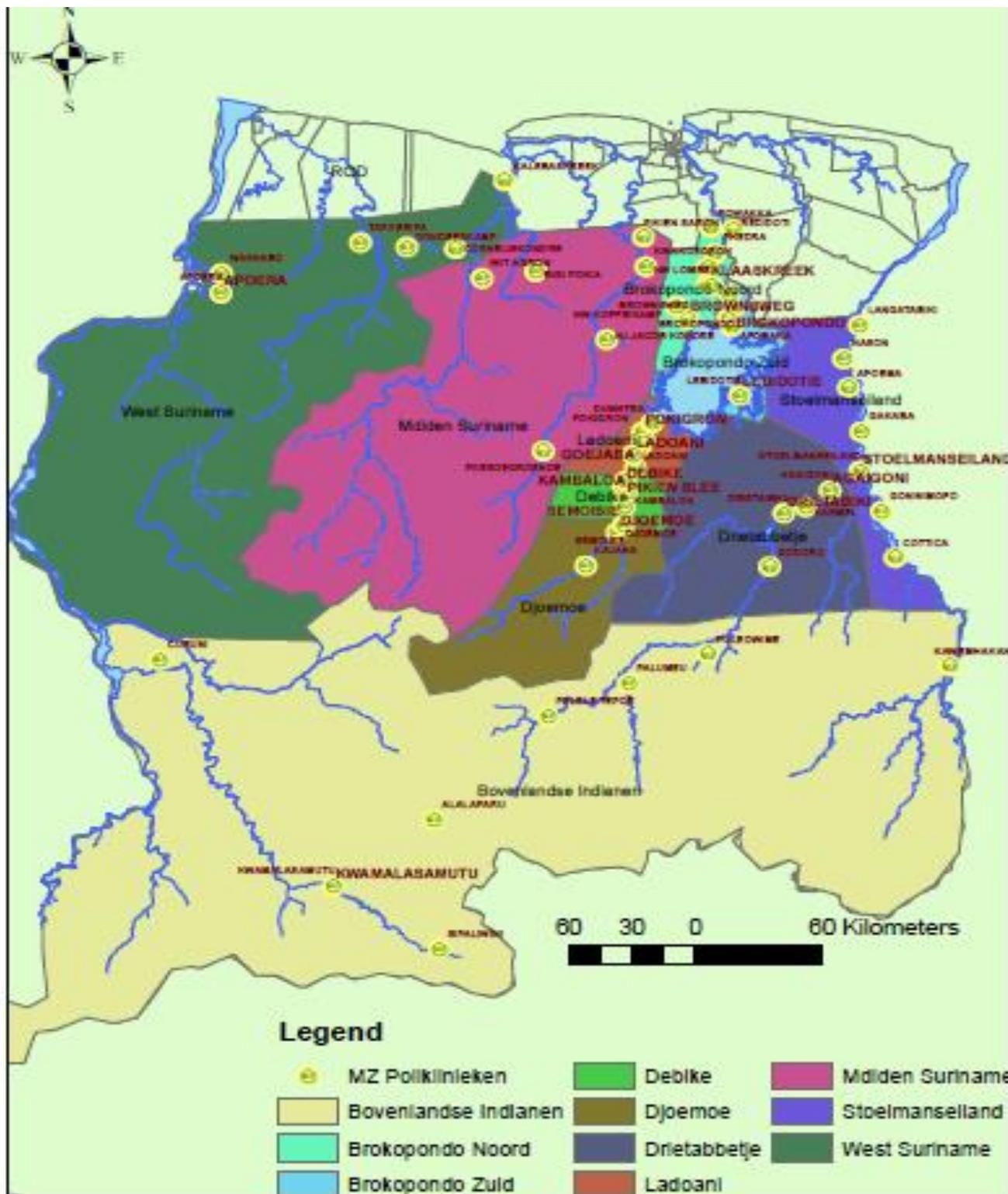
<i>Clinic</i>	<i>Resort &amp; Head</i>	<i>Region &amp; Manager</i>
Apoema	Stoelmanseiland	
Nason		
Langatabiki		Oost suriname
Gakaba		
Godoro		
Drietabiki	Drietabbetje	
Karmel		
Kwamalasamutu		
Pelele tepoe		
Puleowime		
Kawemhakan	Bovenlandse	Bovenlandse
Palumeu	Indianen	Indianen
Sipaliwini		
Alalaparoe		
Coeroeni		

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*Source:* Medical Mission Primary Health Care Suriname (MZPHCS).

**Map of medical clinics in the hinterland of Suriname per district**

Source: Medical Mission Primary Health Care Suriname (MZPHCS).



There are some areas in West Suriname which are no longer covered by the Medical Mission Primary Health Care. These areas are Apoera, Washabo, Corneliskondre and Kalebaskreek. These are now covered by the Mungra Medical Centre in Nickerie.

49. In striving to strengthen primary healthcare, the Ministry of Health is in the process of expanding the number of qualified medical doctors in the country.

50. Recently a ten (10) year National Strategic Plan for Health 2019 – 2028 was launched, using the four (4) strategies of universal health for all.

51. Additionally, a fiscal space study was carried out to look at potential options for increasing and optimizing public financing for health in an efficient and fiscally responsible manner, in order to expand access to care and implement effective interventions and ensure that health services are accessible to all.

### **Structural inconsistencies**

52. The Indigenous and Maroon Peoples enjoy the same individual rights as every other citizen in the country. The challenge is, on the one hand, to legally acknowledge the collective land rights of the Indigenous and Maroon Peoples who live in and use large tracts of forested areas, and on the other, ensuring that the natural resources benefit the entire population as prescribed by the Constitution. As explained in the following paragraph, the Government is working assiduously to resolve this complex problem. Several commissions, all inclusive, have been appointed by the President of the Republic of Suriname to address the issue of collective land rights of Indigenous and Tribal people.

### **Legislative framework – Exploitation of natural resources and the right to free, prior and informed consent**

53. Pursuant to the Constitution, all citizens of Suriname, including the Indigenous and Maroon Peoples, have equal rights, while all of Suriname's natural resources belong to the State. The collective land rights of Indigenous and Maroon Peoples in Suriname have yet to be regulated, taking into consideration all constitutional mandates. There are, however, some clauses in Suriname's legislation that protect Indigenous and Maroon Peoples' rights. In practice, the Government of Suriname acts accordingly.

54. Measures taken by the Government of Suriname in dealing with the existing structural inconsistencies faced by Indigenous and Maroon Peoples in the enjoyment of their collective land rights are as follows:

- In December 2016, a Presidential Commission on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was installed for the period of one (1) year.
- In March of the following year, a Presidential Commission on the Rights of Tribal Peoples was installed. Both commissions were tasked to formulate proposals to resolve the problem of collective land rights.
- On 7 August 2017, documents were submitted to the President of the Republic of Suriname, including a 'Joint Declaration' and a 'Roadmap to Realization of the Legal Recognition of the Collective Rights of the Indigenous and other Tribal Peoples'.
- On 22 December 2017, the 'Act on Protection of Residential and Living Areas of Indigenous and other Tribal Surinamese' unanimously passed in the National Assembly. The Act concerns amendment of article 4 of the Decree on Principles on Land Policy in Suriname of 15 June 1982. Its objective is to prevent the Government from granting any concession (license) in or in the surrounding areas of the Tribal Communities.
- On a figurative map, the protected areas are indicatively marked as circular areas, around the locations of residential and living areas, based on outer delimitation with a diameter of approximately 10 km. This method was chosen because there is no formally recognized village delimitation.
- On 29 June 2018, the President of the Republic authorized the Minister of Regional Development to proceed with the implementation of the Roadmap.
- On 30 November 2018, and in accordance with the presidential mandate, the Minister of Regional Development installed a Management Team and three (3)

technical commissions namely a Legal Commission, a Demarcation Commission and an Awareness Commission. The structure mentioned above comprises representatives of the Government, Indigenous and Maroon persons and relevant government institutions.

55. Based on its tasks, the Legal Commission must submit to the President of the Republic in September 2019 a draft legislative framework regarding the collective land rights of the Indigenous and Maroon Peoples in Suriname. This includes a law on Traditional Authorities. The Legal Commission, which comprises representatives of the Government, the Indigenous Peoples, the Maroons and the Notary Association, prepared proposals for draft legislation on:

- Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC).
- Cultural, environmental and social impact assessment studies.
- The continuation of traditional ways of living in nature reserves.

56. The Demarcation Commission is responsible for determining the traditional residential and living areas of Indigenous and Maroon Peoples, on the basis of which a collective property title could be defined.

57. Surinamese citizens, including the Indigenous Peoples and Maroons, have equal rights. It is notable that they participate on the highest level of government. Case in point, the President of the Republic of Suriname is a descendant of the Indigenous Peoples; there are Indigenous and Maroon representatives elected to the National Assembly; and there have been numerous appointments of Indigenous and Maroon persons as Ministers, in Government departments and in the Corps of District Commissioners, the Police Force and the Military.

58. The participation of Indigenous Peoples and Maroons in the design and implementation of standards and policies, is secured by the establishment of three (3) directorates within the Ministry of Regional Development, after a restructuring in 2016, namely:

- Directorate for Sustainable Development of the Indigenous Peoples.
- Directorate for Sustainable Development of the Tribal Peoples.
- Directorate of Development of Agriculture in the Interior.

59. The first two directorates have the specific task to consult, involve and empower the Indigenous and Maroon communities in the development of activities and projects for their communities, based on the FPIC principle. Additionally, the directorates are tasked with the responsibility to ensure that other governmental and non-governmental institutions follow the same principle.

60. In draft environmental law, the procedure for the granting of permits is regulated. The National Institute for Environment and Development in Suriname (NIMOS) is involved to advice on performing a social and environmental assessment for the relevant activity.

61. With respect to the licenses the following data is provided.

62. Since the amendment of Article 4 of the Decree Principles to Land Policy has been adopted in Parliament (but not yet proclaimed by the President) the granting of mining rights is taken into account. The amendment entails rights for exploration of building materials and rights for exploitation of gold and other minerals.

63. In the application procedure for mining rights at the Ministry of Natural Resources, the advice from the District Commissioner is taken into consideration.

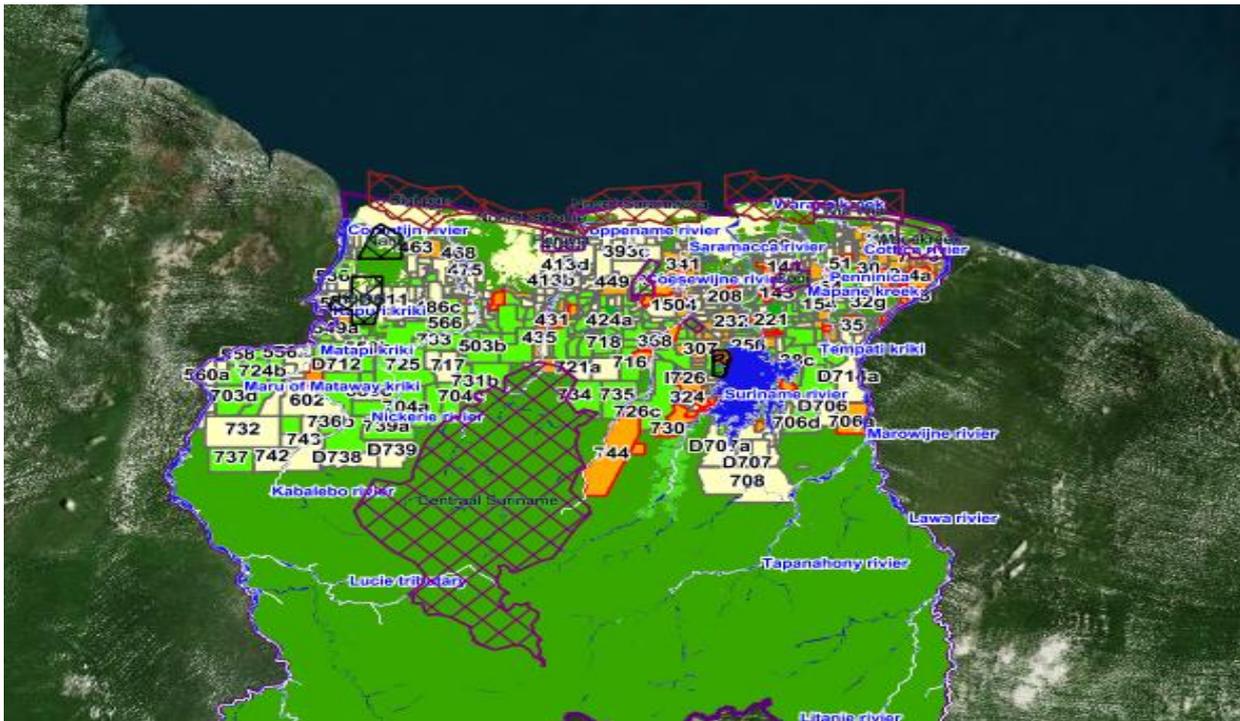
The table below lists the licenses issued over the period 2014 July 2018.

**Overview of valid permits in number and ha in the period 2014-July 2019**

Specification of law	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		Presently July 2019	
	Total	Ha	Total	Ha								
License	115	1 563 034	121	1 603 107	115	1 624 589	115	1 693 327	120	1 915 679	120	1 920 951
Community forest and logging licence	88	619 959	94	739 507	97	775 760	104	776 102	99	797 138	101	808 050
Permit for incidental timber extraction	2	168 163	3	168 363	4	174 178	4	174 178	3	168 552	3	171 720
Exploration licence	6	334 841	7	353 657	4	350 641	3	228	1	21 162	0	-
<b>Total ha</b>		<b>2 685 997</b>		<b>2 864 634</b>		<b>2 925 168</b>		<b>2 643 835</b>		<b>2 902 531</b>		<b>2 900 721</b>

Source: Ministry of Natural Resources.

The map below represents areas where timber licenses were granted.



64. From January 2015 to July 2019, two hundred and seventy-one (271) mining rights for gold and other minerals were issued. Rights to exploration, exploitation and small mining are added together.

65. From January 2015 to July 2019, one hundred and sixty-one (161) mining rights for building materials were issued. These rights have been issued in the Districts of Sipaliwini, Para, Brokopondo and Marowijne. According to the Geological Mining Services, no mining rights have been issued at Maho.

#### Health and environmental contamination

66. Suriname became party to the ‘Minamata Convention on Mercury’ on 31 October 2018, thus expressing its intention to eliminate the use of mercury. As part of the accession of Suriname to the Minamata Convention, the Ministry of Natural Resources and the NIMOS started with the implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP) for Artisanal and Small- Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) in Suriname with support of the United Nations Development Programme and the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

67. In June 2018, NIMOS requested input on the approach to address health issues from the Ministry of Health as part of the development of a National Action Plan for Suriname to reduce and where feasible to eliminate mercury use as required by the Convention.

68. The Ministry of Natural Resources is in the process of formulating the approach to health issues according to international standards. It is envisioned that this public health strategy will be a strategic framework towards the negative aspects of ASGM and the actions to be implemented, including those to address the negative health impacts on the Indigenous and Maroon Peoples.

69. In the meantime, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials, in the form of posters with warnings about eating certain types of fish in which mercury is found, are made available for the population living in the areas where mercury is used. Nutritional guidelines for food are drafted with regard to possible contaminated areas, which are under review.

70. The Surinamese society is characterized by its complex composition. For more than three hundred (300) years, people of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds live and work together peacefully. Suriname wishes to emphasize that it can only approach

problems of a national interest to groups within its territory based on this view and try to find solutions for the problems that arise. Based on this vision, Suriname has consulted in the recent past with all relevant groups to discuss matters, in particular the land rights issue, affecting the indigenous and other peoples living in tribal communities, to look for a solution. The Government of Suriname has not granted any new forestry licenses in areas where indigenous communities are currently living.

71. The Medical Mission Primary Health Care Suriname provides medical care in the interior, which is based on the Primary Health Care principles. This medical care system is aimed at prevention, treatment of illnesses and the promotion of the well-being of these communities. The core of this system are the medical assistants. These medical assistants are the first focal points in every way and could in most cases work independently due to protocol. These assistants are supported by medical doctors, medical specialists and others.

72. The geographical working area covers ninety percent (90 %) of the Surinamese territory, with about fifty thousand (50.000) persons, of which most live along the rivers. There are fifty (50) locations divided into five (5) regions. Currently, the Medical Mission comprises 132 medical assistants, 8 medical doctors, 22 clinic-assistants, 16 microscopic analysts, 51 support personnel and 146 freelancers.

#### **Participation in public life and decision-making processes**

73. Parliament comprises 51 members, of which fourteen (14) representatives are Maroon and two (2) representatives are Indigenous. The Government administration comprises sixteen (16) ministers, of which three (3) are Maroons. The Corps of District Commissioners comprises sixteen (16) commissioners, of which nine (9) are Maroons and two (2) are Indigenous.

#### **Access to Education**

74. The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture took measures to ensure access to education without discrimination to all persons. From 2012 on, primary education is free of charge. This policy also benefits the Indigenous and Maroon children. This education system is accessible for every child in Suriname. In some parts in the interior there are the so-called development workers who help to translate Dutch into the native languages.

In this context, the State refers to the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, MICS 6 Suriname, which will be published later this year.

75. Teachers in the District of Sipaliwini, the district which covers the larger part of the interior, get a 50% incentive. This is enshrined in Law (S.B. 9 October 2017, Teachers Re-evaluation Decision, article 8.2 and 8.3). There is an Institute called Centre for Training Suriname (Centrum voor Nascholing Suriname – CENASU), with the objective of training teachers all over the country. The outreach of scholarship programs is for everyone, so the Indigenous and Maroon students can apply for any program as long as they are eligible.

The table below represents the number of students at various levels of education in the districts Brokopondo, Marowijne, and Sipaliwini over the period 2010 up to 2018, provided by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture

District	Resort	Schoolnaam	2010			2011			2012			2013			2014			2015			2016			2017			2018				
			M	V	Total																										
BROKOPONDO	CENTRUM	Avond Mulo Brokopondo(OAM)																										2	31	33	
		Total																											2	31	33
	BROWNSWEG	AVOND MULO BROWNSWEG							1	74	75	1	78	79		99	99	1	117	118	2	113	115	3	103	106	7	111	118		
		Total							1	74	75	1	78	79		99	99	1	117	118	2	113	115	3	103	106	7	111	118		
	CENTRUM	MULOALBGO BROKOPONDO	180	243	423	213	295	508	231	328	559	261	377	638	263	407	670	276	427	703	274	434	708	283	437	720					
		MULOALBO BROKOPONDO																										290	460	750	
		Total	180	243	423	213	295	508	231	328	559	261	377	638	263	407	670	276	427	703	274	434	708	283	437	720	290	460	750		
KLAASKREEK	Sats/atv klaaskreek														12	7	19	23	9	32	38	11	49	36	18	54	49	15	64		
	Total														12	7	19	23	9	32	38	11	49	36	18	54	49	15	64		
<b>Total</b>			<b>180</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>717</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>872</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>617</b>	<b>965</b>		
MAROWIJNE	ALBINA	AVOND MULO 6 ALBINA																										5	30	35	
		AVOND MULO ALBINA														7	56	63	13	61	74							15	50	65	
		Openbare VOJ Albina	97	166	263	100	165	265	96	147	243	96	143	239	98	128	226	68	92	160	107	117	224	88	130	218					
		VOJ ALBINA																										79	119	198	
		Total	97	166	263	100	165	265	96	147	243	96	143	239	105	184	289	81	153	234	107	117	224	103	180	283	84	149	233		
	MOENGO	AVOND MULO 5 MOENGO																											30	86	116
		AVOND MULO MOENGO	5	64	69	3	49	52	2	62	64	2	96	98	8	73	81	12	98	110	11	131	142	14	118	132					
		Barron	230	226	456	272	259	531	294	242	536	291	236	527	343	276	619	412	290	702	388	303	691	385	259	644	394	252	646		
		Hubertus Waaldijk	105	198	303	138	222	360	190	358	548	209	336	545	194	313	507	173	292	465	264	445	709	225	370	595	232	337	569		
		Total	340	488	828	413	530	943	486	662	1148	502	668	1170	545	662	1207	597	680	1277	663	879	1542	624	747	1371	656	675	1331		
<b>Total</b>			<b>437</b>	<b>654</b>	<b>1091</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>1208</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>809</b>	<b>1391</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>811</b>	<b>1409</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>846</b>	<b>1496</b>	<b>678</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>1511</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>996</b>	<b>1766</b>	<b>727</b>	<b>927</b>	<b>1654</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>824</b>	<b>1564</b>		
SIPALIWINI	BOVEN-SURINAME	KANKANTRIE																													
		VOJ ATJONI										46	76	122	68	99	167	66	101	167	85	86	171	115	114	229	126	159	285		
		Total										46	76	122	68	99	167	66	101	167	86	86	172	115	114	229	126	159	285		
	KABALEBO	VOJ APOERA	64	59	123	73	61	134	72	67	139	93	65	158	82	56	138	62	58	120	78	73	151	67	69	136	75	75	150		
		Total	64	59	123	73	61	134	72	67	139	93	65	158	82	56	138	62	58	120	78	73	151	67	69	136	75	75	150		
	TAPANAHONY	VOJ STOELMANSEILAND							21	21	42	54	50	104	76	62	138	80	71	151	91	107	198	89	89	178	69	64	133		
<b>Total</b>			<b>64</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>521</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>568</b>		
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>681</b>	<b>956</b>	<b>1637</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>###</b>	<b>1850</b>	<b>907</b>	<b>###</b>	<b>2206</b>	<b>###</b>	<b>###</b>	<b>2510</b>	<b>###</b>	<b>###</b>	<b>2727</b>	<b>###</b>	<b>###</b>	<b>2802</b>	<b>###</b>	<b>###</b>	<b>3159</b>	<b>###</b>	<b>###</b>	<b>3077</b>	<b>###</b>	<b>###</b>	<b>3097</b>		

The table below represents the various levels of education in the districts Brokopondo, Marowijne, and Sipaliwini over the period 2010 up to 2017, provided by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture

Year	Level	Sex	Brokopondo				Marowijne				Sipaliwini			
			Limited Certification	Certification	Not Certification	Total	Limited Certification	Certification	Not Certification	Total	Limited Certification	Certification	Not Certification	Total
2010	Primary Education	M	11	9		20	4	5		9	36	25		61
	(GLO)	V	70	76	1	147	21	144		165	100	146		246
	<b>Total</b>		<b>81</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>149</b>		<b>174</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>171</b>		<b>307</b>
2011	Primary Education	M	9	5		14	4	5		9	38	26		64
	(GLO)	V	65	104		169	28	174		202	119	167		286
	Secondary Education	M	1	8	1	10	7	14	4	25		5	1	6
	(VOJ)	V		18	1	19	2	53	13	68		13	3	16
<b>Total</b>		<b>75</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>372</b>	
2012	Primary Education	M	6	6		12	3	7		10	38	23		61
	(GLO)	V	57	115		172	24	168		192	116	159		275
	Secondary Education	M	1	8	2	11	7	13	3	23	1	11	1	13
	(VOJ)	V		20	1	21	2	50	11	63		20	5	25
<b>Total</b>		<b>64</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>374</b>	
2013	Primary Education	M	4	7		11	4	6		10	40	21		61
	(GLO)	V	51	117		168	26	176		202	109	162	1	272
	Secondary Education	M	3	18	3	24	10	11	2	23	1	10	2	13
	(VOJ)	V	2	33	6	41	1	57	12	70		26	4	30
<b>Total</b>		<b>60</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>376</b>	

Year	Level	Sex	Brokopondo				Marowijne				Sipaliwini			
2014	Primary Education (GLO)	M	6	8	14	3	7	10	39	24	63			
		V	48	151	199	25	226	251	120	218	1	339		
	Secondary Education (VOJ)	M	3	17	3	23	10	15	3	28	1	11	2	14
		V	2	30	6	38	1	62	14	77		26	4	30
	<b>Total</b>			<b>59</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>7</b>
2015	Primary Education (GLO)	M	7	7	14	3	7	10	32	20	52			
		V	45	161	206	20	238	258	95	266	2	363		
	Secondary Education (VOJ)	M	5	19	4	28	9	14	6	29	1	12	1	14
		V	3	38	8	49	3	72	16	91		25	3	28
	<b>Total</b>			<b>60</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>6</b>
2016	Primary Education (GLO)	M	6	7	13	2	9	11	31	17	48			
		V	41	161	1	203	14	227	241	74	282	2	358	
	Secondary Education (VOJ)	M	5	18	4	27	8	8	5	21	10	1	11	
		V	3	35	6	44	3	65	14	82		25	5	30
	<b>Total</b>			<b>55</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>8</b>
2017	Primary Education (GLO)	M	6	8	14	2	8	10	31	17	48			
		V	38	168	206	14	226	240	72	288		360		
	Secondary Education (VOJ)	M	4	16	3	23	7	9	7	23	6	1	7	
		V	2	32	3	37	5	69	13	87		17	2	19
	<b>Total</b>			<b>50</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>3</b>

*Notes:*

Primary education (from kindergarten (grade 1 and 2), grade 1 until 6 (grade 4 until grade 8), Adult education and the Special Education.

Secondary Education for Juniors, Primary Vocational Education and Advanced Special Education.

These statistics do not include the data on adult education, special education and vocational education.

*Source:* Ministry of Education, Science and Culture.

**Access to justice and right to remedies**

76. See paragraphs 45 to 51 above. As explained in paragraph 51, the State Party together with relevant stakeholders are working towards a sustainable solution.

**Ratification of other treaties**

77. Ratification of the Conventions and Optional Protocols as mentioned in paragraph 38 of the 2015 Concluding Observations, requires further national consultations and amendment of national legislation and policies to comply with the obligations contained in these instruments.

**Consultation with civil society**

78. This report was drafted with the participation of a number of Civil Society Organizations.

**Dissemination**

79. The State will also disseminate this report through its official website.

**Amendment to article 8 of the Convention**

80. The Government is discussing the ratification of the amendment of article 8 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. The Government is in agreement with the amendment and will start the ratification procedures to amend article 8 of the Convention shortly.

**III. Information on articles 1 to 7 of the Convention****Article 1: General provisions**

81. Suriname is bound by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Charters of Regional Organizations. Suriname's policy is based on non-discrimination and combating racial discrimination.

82. The Constitution provides the framework for its policy of combating racial discrimination. Laws have been enacted and amended to give effect to the promotion of the principle of non-discrimination and equality for anyone who is under Surinamese jurisdiction.

83. The Republic of Suriname is a sovereign and democratic State founded on human dignity and the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedom.

84. The definition of racial discrimination as expressed in the Convention is reflected in the Constitution and the Penal Code of Suriname, which states in article 8 of the Constitution that "no one shall be discriminated against on grounds of birth, sex, race, language, religion, education, political opinion or any other status".

85. The definition of discrimination enshrined in article 126 sub a of the Penal Code applies to everyone, taking the principle of equality into consideration. In the articles 175 and 176 defamation of persons because of their sexual preference has been criminalized. Article 500 sub a of the Penal Code criminalizes occupational discrimination, including discrimination based on sexual orientation. Although the legislation is not fully aligned with article 4 of the Convention, article 175 sub a of the Penal Code also prohibits organizations to promote and incite racial discrimination. In this article instigation to hate, discrimination or violence has been criminalized.

86. Suriname has made a distinction between citizens and non-citizens, as stipulated in the Election Act. The Nationality and Citizens Act gives objective standards for individuals to obtain Surinamese nationality.

87. The Constitution, as amended in 1992, was inspired by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and contains the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the individual.

88. According to the 2012 Census, the population of Suriname consists of various ethnic groups who are speaking their own languages and freely enjoy their own cultures.

**The table below represents the ethnic groups in Suriname in numbers and percentages originating from the last Census held in 2012**

<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Hindustani	148 443	27.4%
Creoles	84 933	15.7%
Javanese	73 975	13.7%
Maroons	117 567	21.7%
Chinese	7 885	1.5%
Indigenous peoples	20 344	3.8%
Afro – Surinamese	3 923	0.7%
Mixed Race	72 340	13.4%
Caucasians	1 667	0.3%
Other	7 166	1.3%
No Race	1 805	0.3%
No answer	1 590	0.3%

*Source:* General Bureau of Statistics.

**Article 2: Prohibition of racist practices and promotion of effective measures to integrate racial groups or persons belonging to such groups**

89. In Suriname there are no racist practices and/or policies to integrate racial groups or persons belonging to such groups. Interracial marriages occur and are on voluntary basis. There are no Government policies to integrate racial groups. However, the Government deems it necessary to enact laws to prohibit racial practices. It is to be noted that organizations which have the objectives to promote and incite racial discrimination cannot be established under Surinamese law, according to article 175 sub a of the Penal Code.

**Article 3: Combating apartheid and racial discrimination**

90. Article 7 of the Constitution states among others: “The Republic of Suriname promotes the solidarity and collaboration with other peoples in the combat against colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, genocide and in the combat for national liberation, peace and social progress”.

**Article 4: Punishing incitement and commission of racist acts and racist propaganda**

91. Article 175 sub a of the Penal Code prohibits organizations to promote and incite racial discrimination. In this article, instigation to hate, discrimination or violence has been criminalized.

**Article 5: Prohibit and eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms and guarantee the right to everyone as to their political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights**

92. Chapter V and VI of the Constitution cover the basic rights, individual rights and freedoms and the social, cultural and economic rights and obligations; from equal claim to protection of person and property to the duty of the State to guarantee the right to work as much as possible by:

- (a) Following a planned policy, aimed at full employment.
- (b) Forbidding the dismissal of employees without sufficient cause or for political or ideological reasons.
- (c) Guaranteeing equal opportunity in the choice of profession and type of work and forbidding that access to any function or profession be prevented or limited on grounds of sex.
- (d) Promoting professional training for employees.

**Article 6: Right to remedies and reparation through the courts.**

93. Article 10 of the Constitution guarantees that: “Everyone shall have, in case of infringement of one’s rights and freedoms, a claim to an honest and public treatment of his complaint within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial judge”.

**Article 7: Measures to promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among peoples**

94. One of the measures to promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among citizens is commemoration of the Immigration of Ethnic groups and the Abolishment of Slavery.

**IV. Conclusions**

95. The Government of the Republic of Suriname notes that this document is not exhaustive and will most likely not comprise all aspects of the Covenant. A number of initiatives have been undertaken with the aim of eliminating all forms of discrimination against especially the Indigenous and Maroon Peoples. The State has included disaggregated data on several issues.

96. Some of the initiatives are the reduction and in the end elimination of the use of mercury and the legal acknowledgement of the collective land rights applying the FPIC principle. With regard to education, the Government has, with the assistance of NGOs, distributed textbooks in the native languages of the Tribal Communities.

97. Some other positive developments that can be identified since the last report, are the amendment to the Penal Code in criminalizing discrimination against sexual orientation and gender identity and against groups of populations. Additionally, trafficking of people has been criminalized. Similarly, the Act on the amendment of article 4 of the Decree on Principles on Land Policy in Suriname, aimed at preventing the Government from granting any concession (license) in or in the surrounding of the Indigenous and Tribal communities, is worth mentioning.

98. The Government has tried to implement all the concluding observations.

99. Contrarily, the legislative acknowledgment of the collective land rights of the Indigenous and Maroon Peoples can be considered a major challenge because of Suriname’s unique and complex circumstances. Equally, providing healthcare services and granting nationality to children born to foreign nationals are challenging.

## V. Closing Remarks

100. Suriname has still a long way to go in the protection of the collective land rights of the Indigenous Peoples and Maroons, but steps are being taken to guarantee these rights. Everyone on Surinamese territory enjoys their individual rights. Some of the measures taken to better protect the collective land rights of the Indigenous Peoples and the Maroons is the drafting of laws to acknowledge these rights. The accession to the Minamata Convention with the aim to gradually minimize and subsequently eliminate the use of mercury is also one of the positive measures.

101. The keen awareness of the principles of equality and non-discrimination among the many ethnic groups has taught Suriname to peacefully co-exist by expressing tolerance, practicing respect for each faith and cultural background and the enjoyment of religious freedom.

102. Suriname cherishes its harmonious and interwoven multitude of cultures and religions as its greatest wealth. Suriname is a beacon of respect for and tolerance of diversity, and is therefore honored to share its way of peace with the world.

103. The Government of the Republic of Suriname, committed to the basic human rights of every individual and group and in condemning racial discrimination, is committed to comply with its obligations as stated in article 9 of the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination by submitting this report.

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