



TÉLÉCOPIE • FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

DATE: 15 July 2019

A/TO: His Excellency
Mr. Kitty Sweeb
Permanent representative
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Suriname to the United Nations

FAX: (212) 980-7029

EMAIL: suriname@un.int

DE/FROM: Natacha Foucard
Officer-in-charge
Special Procedures Branch
OHCHR

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Natacha Foucard', written over the typed name and title.

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REF: OL SUR 1/2019

PAGES: 8 (Y COMPRIS CETTE PAGE/INCLUDING THIS PAGE)

OBJET/SUBJECT: **JOINT COMMUNICATION FROM SPECIAL PROCEDURES**

Please find attached a joint communication sent by the the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent; the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises; the Special Rapporteur on the right to development; the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities; the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment; the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression; the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; the Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes; the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons; the Independent Expert on the

promotion of a democratic and equitable international order; the Independent Expert on human rights and international solidarity; the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons; the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance; the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation; and the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice.

I would be grateful if this letter could be transmitted at your earliest convenience to Her Excellency Ms. Yldiz Pollack-Beigle, Minister for Foreign Affairs.



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Mandates of the the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent; the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises; the Special Rapporteur on the right to development; the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities; the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment; the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression; the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; the Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes; the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons; the Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order; the Independent Expert on human rights and international solidarity; the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons; the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance; the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation; and the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice

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15 July 2019

Excellency,

We have the honour to address you in our capacities as Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent; Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises; Special Rapporteur on the right to development; Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities; Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment; Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression; Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes; Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons; Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order; Independent Expert on human rights and

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Her Excellency
Ms. Yldiz Pollack-Beigle
Minister for Foreign Affairs

international solidarity; Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons; Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance; Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation; and Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 36/23, 35/7, 33/14, 35/6, 37/8, 34/18, 32/32, 36/15, 33/9, 34/5, 32/11, 36/4, 35/3, 33/5, 34/35, 33/10 and 32/4.

We are writing to express our concerns that the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement) has not entered into force because it has not acquired the minimum number of 11 ratifications. We reiterate our call urging your Excellency's Government to ratify the Escazú Agreement as a matter of priority.¹

The Escazú Agreement, negotiated under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), was adopted on 4 March 2018 in Costa Rica, and was opened for signature on 27 September 2018.

This landmark regional treaty not only guarantees good environmental governance and human rights including the rights to access information, to participate in decision-making processes as well as to seek remedies, and is also a catalyst for environmental protection and sustainable development. It places a strong emphasis on the fundamental objective of protecting the right to live in a healthy environment.

In keeping with international human rights obligations, the Escazú Agreement sets important standards that will be fundamental in addressing some of the world's most pressing challenges such as climate change, the decline of biological diversity, land degradation, pollution of air and water, natural disasters and the depletion and unsustainable use of natural resources. The Agreement aims to protect the cultural diversity of Latin America and the Caribbean and to recognize the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, and vulnerable groups. The treaty also underscores States' obligations to foster inclusive participation, combat inequality and discrimination, and guarantee the equal rights of every person to a healthy environment and to sustainable development.

This is a time when environmental human rights defenders in the region are suffering unprecedented levels of violence, intimidation, and harassment, and women human rights defenders face unique challenges which are often driven by multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination against women. The Escazú Agreement is the first of its kind in the world to include specific, binding provisions for the protection and promotion of people, groups and organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters.

By promptly ratifying this ground-breaking treaty, your country will reinforce its strong commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights and the environment.

¹ See, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23557&LangID=E>

To date, sixteen of the thirty-three countries of Latin America and the Caribbean region have signed the treaty and one, Guyana, has ratified it. We urge Suriname to ratify the Escazú Agreement as early as possible before 27 September 2019, which marks one year since the Agreement was opened for signature. This will enable the Agreement to come into force so that the vital process of implementation can commence.

With regard to the above, we hope to seek clarification on the process. We would be grateful for your observations on the following matters:

1. Please provide the steps and measures that your Excellency's Government has taken to ratify the Escazú Agreement.
2. Please provide information in detail including a timeline on how and when your Excellency's Government plans to ratify the Escazú Agreement before 27 September 2019.
3. Please provide information on what measures your Excellency's Government intends to put in place in order to implement the agreement once it is ratified.

This communication, as a comment on pending or recently adopted legislation, regulations or policies, and any response received from your Excellency's Government will be made public via the communications reporting [website](#) within 48 hours. They will also subsequently be made available in the usual report to be presented to the Human Rights Council.

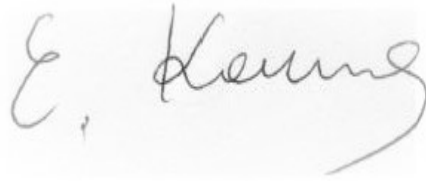
Please note that a communication on this matter has been sent to all Member States of ECLAC and a copy has been transmitted to Ms. Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of ECLAC.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ahmed Reid', with a stylized flourish at the end.

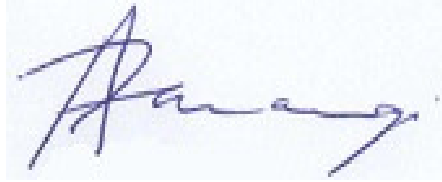
Ahmed Reid

Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent



Elżbieta Karska

Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises



Saad ALFARARGI

Special Rapporteur on the right to development



Catalina Devandas-Aguilar

Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities



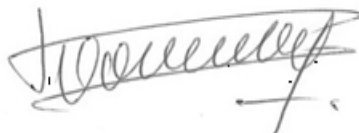
David R. Boyd

Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment



David Kaye

Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression



Clement Nyaletsossi Voule

Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association



Baskut Tuncak

Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes



Dainius Puras

Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health



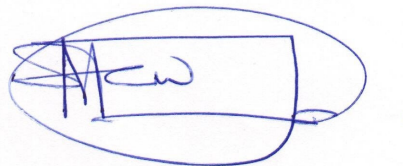
Michel Forst

Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders



Cecilia Jimenez-Damary

Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons



Livingstone Sewanyana

Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order

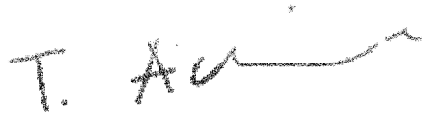


Obiora C. Okafor

Independent Expert on human rights and international solidarity



Rosa Kornfeld-Matte
Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons



E. Tendayi Achiume
Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia
and related intolerance



Léo Heller
Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation



Meskerem Techane
Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in
law and in practice