

**COP 28
NATIONAL STATEMENT
REPUBLIC OF SURINAME**

**by
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Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Heads of Government, Secretary General of the United Nations, Esteemed Heads of Delegation, Representatives of the UN-FCCC, Ladies and gentlemen, good day. As we convene at COP28, we must recognize the urgency of our actions to combat the impacts of global warming and climate change and our responsibility to make the world more climate-friendly and resilient for future generations. We are deeply concerned about the state of the climate crisis, referring to the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report, which states: "*The science is clear: we are on a path to exceed 1.5 degrees Celsius of warming, which would have catastrophic consequences for people and planet*". In fact, this very report notes that global temperatures have risen at an unprecedented rate, with the last decade (2011-2020) likely being the warmest in over 125,000 years. However, the report also indicates that there is still time, but only if we take immediate and drastic measures to limit warming to 1.5 °C.

My country, Suriname, is one of the only three carbon-negative countries in the world. We are committed to keeping it that way! Our country is also highly forested and is currently reported to have 93% forest coverage. With that comes a high-quality biodiversity, which we must protect at all costs. Our reported deforestation rate is less than half a tenth of a percent. As one of the eight Amazonian countries united in the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) we are committed to fight deforestation by 2030 with the purpose of stopping the Amazon region from reaching the point of no return.

Together with our partner Amazonian countries we urge developed countries to meet their obligations to provide and mobilize predictable and adequate support to developing countries, including development financing, climate financing and biodiversity conservation, with necessary and commensurate scope, scale and speed, as well as access to technology and its markets, and capacity building and development, as fundamental measures of international cooperation, aiming at implementing national policies and programs for the sustainable development of the Amazon region.

Ladies and gentlemen, we – the People and Government of Suriname - are determined to maintain this status because it is good for all of us and the world. However, as climate is a

global good, the adverse impacts are felt by all: by the most significant pollution contributors and idyllic places, such as Suriname in the Caribbean. We, too, like our partners of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), are noticing the effects of climate change. We too experience losses and damages. Even though we house a carbon sink for the absorption of emissions produced elsewhere - at no cost to the polluters – our people are forced to adapt to extreme dry and wet weather events characterized mainly by droughts and floods. So, we need to adapt and we need to mitigate proactively.

Suriname has experienced a drought this year that was unknown to us before. The working and living conditions in our country have been altered, with our farmers and Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ITPs) being two of the most vulnerable groups affected due to extreme heat and water scarcity. Currently, rivers are dry or have very low water levels, making it difficult to transport goods, food, and water to the communities living far in the interior. Adaptation, especially Adaptation Finance, will therefore always be a main priority for Suriname. At the same time, we, a small developing nation in South America with a low-lying coastal area, must also respond to the legitimate demands of our population for economic development. We must provide sound social care systems, stimulate sustainable economic development, and project a future with opportunities. Therefore, we leaders must balance these aspirations through developing resilient economies, keeping in mind responsible and sustainable management of our ecosystems and environment.

Suriname is well aware that our recently announced offshore oil amongst other required economic developments may raise questions about increases in our carbon footprint. We are committed and confident that even with these new developments, we will remain carbon-negative! We owe it to our nation to make the best use of all our natural resources -our forests, the biodiversity, and the resources deep down in the earth- equally to benefit our people and future generations!

Suriname focuses on developing a Low-Carbon Emissions and Resilient Economy Strategy, taking into account a precautionary approach to phasing down fossil fuels. Such a balanced approach is critical to Suriname, given our mandate and commitment to fulfill SDG 7.1 (Access to Energy) and the common understanding that we will not leave anyone behind. In this regard, we urge international support in technology transfer and financial support for a just transition to sustainable green energy and transportation options, especially for rural communities. We are on track to transforming our economy to a low-carbon-generation-based production and consumption system. Nearly fifty percent of our energy generation is currently from renewable resources. And, as we advance, we strive to do even better in phasing down fossil energy resources through the reform of our energy supply systems.

And finally, ladies and gentlemen, we must discuss and put into effect climate finance systems that **actually work**. New financial pacts must be developed, and pledged financial commitments must be kept! Global climate funds must become accessible through simplified procedures to carry out our projects to improve living conditions and not be spent on consultancies, studies, and nearly impossible-to-attain administrative procedures.

We must continue our efforts to put the Article 6 Rule Book into practice, further the practical implementation of mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage, capacity building, and "just transition" finance. We, especially HFLD nations, need incentives to conserve our standing forests and biodiversity. It can never be the case that reforestation or silviculture is more highly valued than preserving our standing forests. Financing removals is thus not only of utmost importance to nations like mine but also in the interest of all of us. The payment for standing forest should or, better said, must have a much higher value than newly established silviculture or reforestation. Recalling Articles 5 and 6 of the Paris Agreement, REDD+ reductions and removals deserve the financial support that was promised, but still needs to be delivered. With regard to removals, Suriname underscores the IPCC confirmation that Carbon Removals are essential to quickly reduce global emissions. Therefore, as an HFLD developing country, Suriname highly supports finalizing the Article 6 negotiations on removals.

Ladies and gentlemen, addressing climate issues requires political will, commitment, in particular from government and business leaders, and inclusivity of everyone. It requires a change in mindset. It requires a new and better way of organizing our personal lives and consumption patterns. COP 28 must be a turning point in the fight against climate change. We must work together to deliver on our commitments based on our Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-CR) and to raise our ambition even further.

In closing, let us not forget that there is only one planet, and that planet we inherited will remain and can continue without us! But we, humans, cannot do without Planet Earth!

I thank you and may God bless you all!