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FINAL REPORT OF THE OAS ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION
FOR THE GENERAL ELECTIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF SURINAME ON MAY 25, 2010

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ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

**FINAL REPORT OF THE OAS ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION
FOR THE GENERAL ELECTIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF SURINAME ON MAY 25, 2010**

Secretariat for Political Affairs

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On January 8, 2010 the Government of the Republic of Suriname requested that the Organization of American States send an Electoral Observation Mission to the General Elections to be held on May 25, 2010. At stake were 51 seats in parliament and 868 seats in the local and district assemblies. This was the fifth time that the OAS had observed elections in Suriname.

Ms. Irene Klinger, Director of the OAS Department of International Affairs, served as Chief of Mission and Mr. Steven Griner, Chief of the OAS Electoral Observation Missions Section, was Deputy Chief of Mission. Mr. Jean Francois Ruel, a specialist at the OAS Department for Electoral Cooperation and Observation served as General Coordinator. Shortly before the elections, the OAS Mission signed an Agreement of Privileges and Immunities with the Government of Suriname and an Agreement of Electoral Guarantees with the Independent Electoral Council (Onafhankelijk Kies Bureau, OKB), and the Ministry of Home Affairs (Ministerie Van Binnenlandse Zaken).

The OAS Observer Mission consisted of 26 observers from 16 different countries. Observers participated in a day of training, familiarizing themselves with their duties and with the electoral districts where they would be deployed. For the General Elections on May 25, the Mission observed voting throughout the Republic, visiting 522 of the 580 polling stations in the country. They visited all ten electoral districts and observed voting and interviewed presiding officers, poll clerks, party agents, police officers, and members of the public regarding preparations for, and the conduct of the elections. Observers remained for the close of the polls and the counting of ballots.

Most polls opened promptly at 7 a.m. and, by 7:09 a.m., all were fully functional. Presiding officers, poll clerks and party agents were present at their assigned sites and followed procedures diligently in accordance with election laws. These dedicated officials worked harmoniously throughout a long day and impartially instructed electors on the process for voting. The secrecy of the ballot was maintained. Sufficient electoral materials were available in all polling stations and the necessary information was generally visible. Police were present at all polling sites, effectively maintaining security.

The poll closed at 7 p.m. and anyone who arrived after this time was properly excluded from voting. All those in line at 7 p.m. were able to vote. Procedures for the close of the poll and counting of ballots were correctly followed. Ballots and electoral materials were transported to the main polling stations, and results of the polling stations were available late on the evening of Election Day, while others were known in the early hours of the following day.

A total of 20 political parties registered to contest the May 25 General Elections in Suriname. The 2010 elections had nine political parties/alliances competing for seats in the National Assembly, Ressorts and Districts. More specifically, four parties: the Democratie en Ontwikkeling in Eenheid (DOE), Democratische Unie Suriname (DUS), Nationale Unie (NU), and the Permanente Voorspoed Republiek Suriname (PVRs); and five alliances/coalitions including the Volksalliantie, the Nieuw Front (NF), the Mega Combinatie (MC), the BVD/PVF Combinatie, and the A- Combinatie (AC). A total of 5,812 candidates contested the May 25 elections.

The total number of registered voters in Suriname was 324,369, of which 237,499 cast valid votes and 7,024 (2.9 percent) were invalid. Despite the rain, voter turnout was 75.4 percent, the highest voter turnout since 1987.¹

While the conduct of the election was without incident, the Mission identified some aspects where the election process could have been improved and these are outlined in the conclusions and recommendations of the report below.

Finally, the OAS Electoral Observation Mission would like to express its gratitude to the Governments of Brazil, Canada, South Korea and the United States of America for providing crucial financial support for this Mission.

¹ Data provided by the Central Polling Authority (Centraal Hoofd Stembureau). Voter turnout in subsequent elections was 88.2 (1987), 69.6 (1991), 66.8 (1996), 72.0 (2000) and 72.9 (2005).

CHAPTER I. BACKGROUND AND NATURE OF THE MISSION

In an exchange of correspondence beginning in January 2010, the Government of the Republic of Suriname invited the Organization of American States to field an Electoral Observation Mission to observe the General Elections due to take place on May 25, 2010. The OAS responded positively to this request and set in motion preparations for an Electoral Observation Mission to witness the final days of campaigning, the conduct of the poll for the General Elections, the counting of ballots, and the immediate post-election process. This was the fifth OAS Electoral Observation Mission in Suriname.

Ms. Irene Klinger, Director of the OAS Department of International Affairs, served as Chief of Mission and Mr. Steven Griner and Mr. Jean Francois Ruel, specialists of the DECO, served as Assistant Chief of Mission and General Coordinator, respectively. During a Preliminary Mission from April 30 to May 4, Ms. Klinger met with the Minister of Home Affairs, Mr. Maurits S. Hassankhan, the Chairperson of the Independent Electoral Council, Ms. Jennifer van Dijk-Silos, the Chief of Police, Mr. Hendrik Setrosentono, and with political stakeholders, including party leaders and civil society to discuss preparations for the upcoming elections.

In early May, the Chief of Mission conducted a preliminary visit and met with the Minister of Home Affairs, the Foreign Minister, the Independent Electoral Commission, a number of governmental and electoral officials, political party candidates and members of the international community and civil society. At that time, the registration of one political party, A-Combination, had been disallowed in three districts, including Paramaribo, Para and Wanica due to the fact that the documentation was not turned into the district offices before the 3 p.m. deadline on the final day of candidate registration. This party competed in the remaining districts and ultimately would win seven seats in parliament.

Shortly before the General Elections, the OAS Mission signed an Agreement of Privileges and Immunities with the Government of Suriname and an Agreement of Electoral Guarantees with the Independent Electoral Council and the Ministry of Home Affairs. Observers arrived in the days preceding the Election and were able to observe some campaign events, broadcasts and print materials and to familiarize themselves with the electoral districts and polling sites where they would be working. On Election Day, the Observer Mission consisted of 26 observers from 16 different countries. Members of the Mission, who received training in election observation methodology and on the electoral system of Suriname, observed voting throughout the Republic, visiting all of the 10 electoral districts and visited 522 polling stations, many of them multiple times during the day, witnessing voting firsthand and interviewing presiding officers, poll clerks, party agents, police officers, and members of the public regarding preparations for, and the conduct of the elections. Observers remained for the close of the polls and the counting of ballots. Observers recorded their general impressions of polling and the answers to specific questions for each polling station, such as “were all the necessary election materials present?” on forms, samples of which are appended to this report. Observers communicated their observations both verbally, in a Mission meeting the day following Election Day, and in written form. The report that follows describes their findings and outlines the Mission’s conclusions and recommendations.

The report begins with an overview of the political history of the Republic of Suriname, the main political parties and other stakeholders, the voting procedure, and the legislative situation with regard to political financing. Chapter III then describes the Mission’s observations before, during and after the Elections. Chapter IV presents the Mission’s conclusions and recommendations. Appendixes contain documents relevant to the Mission’s activities in Suriname.

CHAPTER II. POLITICAL SYSTEM AND ELECTORAL ORGANIZATION

A. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Suriname became an autonomous part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands on December 15, 1954, and gained independence, with Dutch consent, on November 25, 1975. Suriname is one of the most ethnically diverse countries in the Americas. Most of its people are descended from African slaves and Indian and Indonesian indentured servants brought over by the Dutch to work as agricultural laborers. In 2009, Suriname's population was estimated to be 481,267. It is made up of several distinct ethnic groups, including the Hindustani 37%, (descendants from northern India), Creole 31% (mixed white and black), Javanese 15% (descendants of Indonesians), Maroons 10% (descendants of West African slaves), Amerindian 2%, Chinese 2%, White 1%, and others 2%.

Most of Suriname's political parties took shape during the autonomy period and were based on ethnicity. The National Party of Suriname (Nationale Partij Suriname - NPS) found its support among the Creoles, the Progressive Reform Party (Vooruitstrevende Hervormingspartij – VHP) from the Hindustani population, and the Pertjajah Luhur (PL) was Indonesian/Javanese. Other smaller parties found support by appealing to voters on an ideological or pro-independence platform; the Nationalist Republican Party (Partij Nationalistische Republiek - PNR) was among the most important. Its members pressed most strongly for independence and for the introduction of leftist political and economic measures. Many former PNR members would go on to play a key role following the coup of February 1980.

After its independence, Suriname was under a parliamentary democracy regime. Henk Arron became the first Prime Minister and was re-elected in 1977. On February 25, 1980, 16 noncommissioned officers overthrew the elected government, which many accused of inefficiency and mismanagement. The military-dominated government then suspended the constitution, dissolved the legislature, and formed a regime that ruled by decree.

Throughout 1982, pressure grew for a return to civilian rule. In early December 1982, military authorities cracked down, arresting and killing 15 prominent opposition leaders, including journalists, lawyers, and trade union leaders. Following the murders, the United States and the Netherlands suspended economic and military cooperation. The economy declined rapidly after the suspension of economic aid from the Netherlands. Continuing economic decline brought pressure for change. The military eventually agreed to free elections in 1987, a new constitution, and a civilian government.

On December 24, 1990, military officers forced the resignations of the civilian President and Vice President elected in 1987. Military-selected replacements were approved by the National Assembly on December 29 and the government held new elections on May 25, 1991. The New Front (NF) Coalition, comprised of the NPS, the VHP, the Javanese-based Indonesian Peasant's Party (KTPI), and the labor-oriented Surinamese Workers Party (SPA) won a majority in the National Assembly. On September 6, 1991, NPS candidate Ronald Venetiaan was elected President, and the VHP's Jules Ajodhia became Vice President.

The Venetiaan government was able to effect a settlement to Suriname's domestic insurgency through the August 1992 Peace Accord with Bush Negro and Amerindian rebels. In April 1993, Desi Bouterse left his position as commander of the armed forces. Economic reforms instituted by the Venetiaan government eventually helped curb inflation, unify the official and unofficial exchange rates, and improve the government's economic situation by re-establishing relations with the Dutch, thereby opening the way for a major influx of Dutch financial assistance. Despite these successes, the governing coalition failed to retain control of the government in the

subsequent round of national elections.

The National Democratic Party (NDP), founded in the early 1990s by Mr. Bouterse, benefited from the NF government's loss of popularity. The NDP won 16 of 51 seats at the National Assembly and Jules Wijdenbosch was elected president in 1996. The KTPI, dissenters from the VHP, and several smaller parties were part of an NDP-led coalition government.

In May 1999, after public demonstrations protesting poor economic conditions, the government called early elections. The elections in May 2000 returned Ronald Venetiaan and his NF coalition to the presidency. The NF based its campaign on a platform to fix the economy.

In the national election held on May 25, 2005, the ruling NF coalition won just 23 of the 51 seats, falling short of a majority in the National Assembly, and immediately entered into negotiations with the Maroon-based A-Combination and the A-1 Coalition to form a working majority. The NDP gained 5 additional seats, reducing the gap between the NF and the NDP, for a total of 15 seats.

B. POLITICAL SYSTEM AND ACTORS

The Republic of Suriname is a constitutional democracy based on the 1987 Constitution. The legislative branch of government consists of a 51-member unicameral National Assembly, simultaneously and popularly elected for a five-year term. Key decisions, such as amendments to the constitution, the calling of a plebiscite and the election of the president and vice-president, must be approved by at least two-thirds of the National Assembly.

The president, who is elected for a five-year term by a two-thirds majority of the National Assembly or, failing that, by a majority of the People's Assembly, heads the executive branch. As head of government, the president appoints a 16-minister cabinet; different from other Caribbean countries, government ministers are not members of the National Assembly. A vice president is elected at the same time as the president for a 5-year term. The vice president is both the leader of the cabinet and the prime minister. There is no constitutional provision for removal or replacement of the president unless he resigns. The National Assembly and the president, together hold legislative power.

The Raad van State (Council of State) is a supervisory body comprising the president and representatives from the major political forces, including the unions, business, the legislature and the military. It has the power to veto legislation that it deems to be in violation of the constitution, but is generally inactive. The final power of veto rests with the president, who has one month in which to rule for or against the council's judgment.

The judiciary is headed by the Court of Justice (Supreme Court). This court supervises the magistrate courts. Members are appointed for life by the president in consultation with the National Assembly, the State Advisory Council and the National Order of Private Attorneys. In April 2005, the regional Caribbean Court of Justice, based in Trinidad, was inaugurated. As the final court of appeal, it was intended to replace the London-based Privy Council.

The country is divided into 10 administrative districts, each headed by a district commissioner appointed by the president.

1. Political Parties

Suriname's electoral organization and its multi-party system favor big party combinations, which leads to the formation of pre-election alliances in order to increase the chances of winning. Individual parties and coalitions are referred to as combinations.

The elections of 2010 had more alliances than in 2005. A total of 20 political parties registered to contest the May 25 general elections in Suriname. The 2010 elections had nine political parties/alliances competing for seats in the National Assembly, Ressorts and Districts. More specifically, four parties: the Democratie en Ontwikkeling in Eenheid (DOE), Democratische Unie Suriname (DUS), Nationale Unie (NU), and the Permanente Voorspoed Republiek Suriname (PVRS); and five alliances/coalitions including the Volksalliantie, the Nieuw Front (NF), the Mega Combinatie (MC), the BVD/PVF Combinatie, and the A- Combinatie (AC).

There were several changes in the 2010 coalitions. For instance, the seven parties of the governing NF Plus coalition, divided into three alliances: the Volksalliantie lead by the PL and comprised of four parties; the NF led by VHP and with the support of four parties; and the A-Combinatie with three parties.

The government parties

In the run up to the elections, the governing coalition was the Nieuw Front (NF), originally an alliance of four parties, the Nationale Partij Suriname (NPS), the Vooruitstrevende Hervormings Partij (VHP), the Pertjajah Luhur (PL), and the Surinaamse Partij van de Arbeid (SPA), which at the time of the election, which controlled 29 of the 51 seats in parliament.

After the 2005 election, the alliance was enlarged to include the A-Combinatie (A-Com), which itself consisted of three parties supported by the Maroon population. The relatively small Democratisch Alternatief '91 (DA-91) also joined "Nieuw Front Plus" led by President Ronald Venetiaan, who remains the longest serving Head of State of Suriname. The other leaders of the governing coalition included the Speaker of the Parliament and Vice President Ram Sardjoe (VHP); former Speaker of the House, Paul Salam Somohardjo (PL); former Guerilla Commander Ronald Brunswijk (A-Combinatie) and Winston Jessurun (DA-91).

The opposition parties

The Nationale Democratische Partij (NDP), led by Desi Delano Bouterse, was the principle opposition party in parliament before the 2010 elections.

Launched in July 2008, the Nationaal Democratisch Platform (NDP-2008) brought together the main opposition parties and advocated national independence, efficiency and reform. NDP-2008 included the Volksalliantie Voor Vooruitgang (VJV), led by former president Jules Wijdenbosch (1996-2000), with five seats in the National Assembly. The other, smaller parties of the coalition included the Kerukanan Tulodo Pratanan Ingi (KTPI), the Basispartij voor Vernieuwing en Democratie (BVD) and the Progressieve Arbeiders en Landbouwers Unie (PALU).

Another opposition coalition, Alternatief 1, held two seats in parliament.

2010 Parties and Alliances

The elections of 2010 had more alliances than in 2005. Some 17 political parties formed five alliances and four other political parties fielded their own candidates. A total of 5,812 candidates contested the May 25 elections.

Political Parties and Alliances for 2010 General Elections

| No. | ALIANCE | PARTY | SHORT |
|-----|--|--|---------|
| 1 | Democratie en Ontwikkeling in Eenheid | | DOE |
| 2 | Volksalliantie | Pertjajah Luhur | PL |
| | | Unie van Progressive Surinamers | UPS |
| | | Progressive Surinaamse Volkspartij | PSV |
| | | Trefpunt 2000 | TP 2000 |
| 3 | Democratische Unie Suriname (DUS) | | DUS |
| 4 | Nieuw Front (NF) / New Front | Vooruitstrevende Hervormings Partij | VHP |
| | | National Partij Suriname | NPS |
| | | Surinaamse Partij van de Arbeid | SPA |
| | | Democratisch Alternatief 91 | DA 91 |
| 5 | Mega Combinatie (MC) | Nationale Democratische Partij | NPD |
| | | Kerukunan Toludo Pranatan Ingil | KTPI |
| | | Progressieve Arbeiders en Landbouwers Unie | PALU |
| | | Nieuw Suriname | NS |
| 6 | BVD/PVF Combinatie | Basispartij voor Vernieuwing en Democratie | BVD |
| | | Politieke Vleugel | PVF |
| 7 | A-Combinatie (AC) | Algemene Bevrijding en Ontwikkeling Partij | ABOP |
| | | Vereniging Broederschap en Eenheid in Politiek | BEP |
| | | SEEKS SEEKA | SEEKA |
| 8 | Nationale Unie | | UN |
| 9 | Permanente Voorspoed Republiek Suriname | | PVRS |

2. Civil Society

The Republic of Suriname has a vibrant civil society, consisting of nongovernmental organizations, chamber of commerce, unions and other church and secular organizations. Since the electoral code identifies the Independent Electoral Council (Onafhankelijk Kies Bureau, OKB) as the observer of the electoral process, however, civil society did not organize a national observation effort. The OAS Mission did meet with the Interreligious Council and indigenous groups whose representatives described their efforts in conducted education programs related to civic education and democratic norms. Likewise, the Chief of Mission met with members of the Chamber of Commerce and separately with leaders of several trade unions who shared their views on the electoral campaign.

3. International Community

In addition to the OAS Electoral Observation Mission, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) mounted an 11 person observer mission, under the leadership of Mr. Michael Flood, Member of Commissioner of the Electoral Commission of Saint Lucia. Due to its size, this mission was unable to achieve full coverage of the electoral districts in Suriname, but they drew conclusions congruent with those of the OAS Mission and the OAS liaised with them before and during Election Day.

C. THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Suriname has a decentralized system for organizing and administering elections. The country is divided into 10 electoral districts, which correspond to its administrative districts. The district commissioner, appointed by the president, is the highest government official in each district and also is responsible for election administration in the district.

The National Assembly (DNA) is the highest political body in Suriname. Each district elects a specified number of members of the DNA, which is established in the constitution and not allocated based on the population of the district.

Assembly members are elected on the basis of the proportional representation, as well as preferential voting. The seats are allocated as follows:

| ELECTORAL DISTRICT | No. SEATS |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Paramaribo | 17 |
| Wanica | 7 |
| Nickerie | 5 |
| Commewijne | 4 |
| Sipaliwini | 4 |
| Marowijne | 3 |
| Para | 3 |
| Brokopondo | 3 |
| Saramacca | 3 |
| Coronie | 2 |

Suriname does not have a separate system for voter registration. Instead, the government extracts the names of eligible voters from the general population registry, which is maintained by the civil registry (*Centraal Bureau voor Burgerzaken* (CBB)).

Each of Suriname's electoral districts is divided into local constituencies (*ressort*). Local council members (*ressortraad*) are elected in the general elections, with winners being determined by the number of votes that they receive on a "first-past-the-post" or plurality basis. Members of district councils are selected indirectly on the basis of the results for local councils. Seats in both councils are allocated according to the population of the constituency.

The Central Polling Authority (*Centraal Hoofd Stembureau*, CHS), collects and publishes the results of the general elections and allocates seats won by each political party in the three elected bodies. It forwards the official statement of poll (*proces-verbaal*) to the Independent Electoral Council (OKB) and the president of Suriname. The OKB, an elections auditing body, examines the results, investigates any matters of dispute if necessary, and proclaims the final results.

D. VOTING PROCEDURE

1. Voters' List

The Minister of Home Affairs is responsible for preparing the list of eligible voters. The CBB, a subsidiary division of the Ministry, extracts the names of persons who would be 18 by Election Day.

2. Voter Identification Card

Suriname does not issue separate voter identification cards. A person's national registration card, issued by the CBB, is one of the documents that potential electors must present to vote. In 2005, a decision was taken to allow the presentation of a driver's license in the absence of a national identification card. Persons must also present a polling card to be able to vote.

3. Polling Card

The CBB sends the polling or voter card to the district commissioners, who deliver the card to the person eligible to vote. It informs potential voters of the polling station where their name should appear on the voter list.

4. Claims-and-Objections Period

The law provides a period of time for voters to check whether their names are on the preliminary list of voters and seek to amend incorrect information.

5. Opening and Voting

Polling stations have a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, three members, and five alternates. According to the constitution, the polling stations open at 7 a.m. Sufficient ballots, prescribed documents and supplies, as well as the lists of eligible voters, are delivered to each district commissioner who distributed them to each polling station.

Voters enter the polling station one by one. They must show their polling/voter card and national ID card or driver's license to the chairperson. The name and number of the voter should be read aloud, and a member of the polling station checks the name against the voter list. The little finger of the voter's left hand is dipped into indelible ink. Each voter receives two paper ballots: blue for the National Assembly and white for the local council. The voter enters a booth and fills in circles on the blue or white ballots with a red pencil that is provided. The voter then folds the ballots before leaving the voting booth and puts them into the ballot box after an official has checked whether the ballots have the proper stamp and signature on the back. Both types of ballots are usually placed into the same ballot box.

6. Party Agents

Party agents from various political organizations may be present during the voting process. Many wear T-shirts, carry party flags and other paraphernalia, and usually have sample ballots to indicate how to vote for their candidate. Suriname permits political proselytizing near the polling stations, so party agents may approach persons outside the polling station. The party representatives may also assist incapacitated voters to mark their ballots, if permitted by the chair of the polling station.

7. Proxy Voting

There is no absentee voting in Suriname. However, two categories of people are allowed to designate persons to vote for them by proxy: (1) members of polling stations assigned for duty at stations outside their district and (2) police agents on official duty outside of their electoral district. The person who has a power of attorney to vote shows this declaration at the polling station and casts the proxy vote. The proxy voter also casts his or her own vote.

8. Assistance to Voters

The law permits the chair of the polling station to allow a voter to be assisted if he or she is incapacitated and unable to vote independently.

9. Closing and Counting

Voters who are in line at 7 p.m. may still vote. Immediately after the last person has voted, the members of the polling stations complete the closing procedures and draft and sign official reports regarding the use of allocated supplies and the number of voters who have sought to vote. The members of the polling station may then take a break of up to one hour before beginning to count the ballots. After the break, the chairperson opens the ballot box and the two different ballots, white and blue, are separated.

Counting starts with the National Assembly ballots. The name of the candidate and party voted for are read out loud, and each ballot is shown to the poll watchers and observers. Members of the polling stations tally the votes. In case of a discrepancy, a recount may be ordered. Votes for the local councils are counted the same way. After the counting is completed, an official statement of poll (*proces-verbaal*) is written and signed by the members of the polling station. Complaints during the counting procedure must be mentioned in that document. The ballots are wrapped and sealed, as are the forms for those who voted by proxy. The chairperson, accompanied by a police agent, takes the sealed packages and the empty ballot box to the district's main polling station (the district commissioner's office). Each main polling station has a public meeting once all statements of poll have been received. The district main polling station determines the votes for each political party for the National Assembly and the local council and the total number of votes cast per district. The official statement of poll from the district main polling station, as well those from each individual polling station, are then forwarded to the Central Polling Authority (CHS) in Paramaribo.

E. POLITICAL FINANCING

The present political party and campaign financing regime in Suriname is private and characterized by an absence of any regulations or restrictions on the amount parties can raise or spend for electoral purposes. There is no government funding, direct or indirect, and political parties and candidates are expected to raise their own campaign funds, which they do both locally and internationally from groups, individuals, and the private sector. The Surinamese Diaspora provides some resources, but the absence of disclosure rules or restrictions on foreign donations makes it difficult to know the amounts, groups, or individuals involved.

The issue of creating more transparency, accountability, and regulation in campaign financing in Suriname, establishing caps on campaign spending, and the possibility of limited public financing for all parties and limited public airtime, to "level the playing field" among contestants has not been a priority in political debate. So far, however, no party has acted to create and implement legislation, or even a voluntary Code of Conduct, regarding political funding.

CHAPTER III. MISSION ACTIVITIES AND OBSERVATIONS

A. PRE-ELECTION:

Campaign and Rallies

The Chief of Mission and her staff had the opportunity to visit a number of campaign rallies during the days prior to Election Day. In press conferences and interviews, she noted the festive atmosphere in which these rallies took place. Supporters dressed in party colors and interacted peacefully with their friends and neighbors. Illustrative of the coalition nature of Surinamese politics, multiple parties participated in the rallies attended by the OAS observers. Each party was afforded an opportunity to enter the rallies and parade with its supporters throughout the grounds. In addition to the political speeches from its leaders, supporters and citizens enjoyed music and food that celebrated the ethnic diversity of the country. At no time at all did the OAS delegation observe confrontations or even tension among those attended, although police were in attendance to maintain order.

Registration of Political Parties

Political parties had until 3 p.m. on April 9, 2010 to register their candidates in one of the 10 Commissioners in the district offices (Hoofdstembureau). In Paramaribo and Wanica, the A-Combination registered its candidates after the deadline and the OKB, serving as an observer, noted the discrepancy. Eventually, the issue was presented before the courts where the candidacies of the A-Combination in these two districts were disallowed. The NU (in the district of Para) and PVRS (in the district of Marowijne) also registered their candidates late and were subsequently disqualified.

B. ELECTION DAY

All 26 observers completed a day of training to familiarize themselves with the electoral system of Suriname, the rules and norms governing Electoral Observation, and the districts that they would be monitoring. Each observer was assigned to cover part or all of the polling stations in one district. On Election Day, May 25, 2010 the Mission visited 522 of the 580 polling stations in the country.

On the morning of Election Day, each observer arrived at a selected polling station between 6:00 and 6:30 a.m. to observe the inspection and sealing of the ballot box, swearing in of election officials, and other opening procedures. Throughout the day, observers circulated to different polling stations in their electoral district. The teams then returned to the polling station where they had witnessed the opening, to observe the closing of the poll and the counting of votes.

On special forms (see Appendix), the observers collected information about the opening and closing of the polls and the conduct of the voting. They obtained this information through firsthand observation and through interviews with the election officials, policemen, and voters at the polling stations. Observers delivered their completed forms, a short written report, and gave a verbal account of their impressions to the Mission the day after the Election. From this testimony a consistent picture emerged of the conduct of polling across Suriname.

POST-ELECTION PROCESS

On June 7, 2010, Central Polling Authority (*Centraal Hoofd Stembureau*) issued the final results of the general election of May 25, 2010 and the OKB validated those results on June 18. Five political party coalitions won representation in the National Assembly with the Mega Combinatie obtaining a plurality 23 of the 51 seats. The breakdown of parliamentary seats is as follows.

| Political alliance | Seats |
|---|--------------|
| Mega Combinatie (MC) | 23 |
| Nieuw Front (NF) | 14 |
| A-Combinatie (AC) | 7 |
| Volksalliantie | 6 |
| Democratie en Ontwikkeling in Eenheid (DOE) | 1 |

On June 30, 50 elected members cast votes for the Speaker of the Parliament. Ms. Jennifer Geerlings – Simons of Megacombinatie obtained 26 votes and Mr. Salamat “Paul” Somohardjo received got 24 votes. Ms. Ruth Wijdenbosch of the Nieuw Front won the position of Deputy Speaker. During that election, parliamentarians alleged that the chair of the parliamentary electoral commission marked a number of ballots in such a way that he was able to ascertain how certain Parliamentarians voted. Shortly thereafter, Parliament passed a proposal to exclude this member from Parliamentary election or voting commissions for the rest of its term. A motion tabled by A-Combination (AC) also requested that measures be taken to prevent similar actions from occurring again.

On July 19, 2010, the National Assembly voted for the President and Vice president of the Republic of Suriname for the period 2010-2015. As previously stated, a two thirds majority (34 of the 51 seats) was required to be elected. The Mega Combinatie presented Desi Bouterse as candidate for President and Robert Amaralli, Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, for Vice President. The Nieuw Front put forward Chandrikapersad Santokhi (former Minister of Justice and Police) for President and Gregory Rusland (former Minister of Natural resources) for Vice President. After the first round, Mr. Bouterse received 36 votes to Mr. Santokhi’s 13 with one blank ballot. For Vice President, Mr. Amaralli defeated Mr. Rusland by the same margin.

Mr. Desi Bouterse was inaugurated president on August 3, 2010.

CHAPTER IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. CONCLUSIONS

On Election Day, the observers deployed before opening of the polling stations and visited nearly 90 percent of the 580 polling sites in the 10 districts, witnessing voting firsthand and interviewing the polling station chairpersons and members, party agents, police officers and members of the public regarding preparations and the conduct of the elections. Polling station chairpersons and members were present at their assigned sites at the required time and followed procedures in accordance with election laws. The necessary electoral materials were available and the required information for voters was made visible at the polling sites. The polls observed by the members of the OAS Mission in the morning opened on time at 7:00 a.m. Polling chairpersons and members were well trained and impartially instructed electors on the procedures for voting. The secrecy of the vote was maintained.

Different from other countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, political parties are permitted to campaign in the polling centers on Election Day. Supporters of the many candidate options wore shirts and other outfits in their party colors. They set up tents in the polling stations, urging people to vote for their parties and offering support to voters as they entered the polling stations. At no time did the OAS observers see these party representatives disrupt the process. Indeed, they added to the environment of congeniality and celebration.

Police were present in all of the polling sites as required by law, effectively and unobtrusively maintaining security. The environment in which citizens exercised their franchise was peaceful and without incident. There were no reported instances of intimidation of voters or any other serious irregularities.

The Chief of the EOM in Suriname, Irene Klinger, reported her preliminary findings in a press conference at 12 noon on Election Day. She subsequently held an additional press conference on May 26 and reported her findings to the OAS Permanent Council on July 7, 2010.

The OAS Mission congratulated those involved in the General Elections of 2010 in the Republic of Suriname, including the commissioners and staff of the Main Polling Stations in the districts and the Central Polling Authority in Paramaribo, the staff and leadership of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the representatives of the Independent Electoral Council. It recognized the commitment and professionalism of the police, government officials, political party leaders and candidates, polling station chairpersons and members and, of course, the citizens of the Republic of Suriname.

The Mission received financial contributions from the Governments of Brazil, Canada, South Korea and the United States of America.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recognizing the many positive attributes of the Surinamese electoral system and in the spirit of constructive engagement, the OAS Electoral Observation Mission in Suriname presented the following recommendations, which could serve to improve on this already strong electoral process.

1. The OAS observers noted some discrepancies from one polling station to another in the procedure to assist elderly or physically challenged citizens. In some cases, a family member or a friend, or even a party representative, was allowed to accompany them into

the poll, sometimes requiring a letter from a medical doctor, while on other occasions vote without it. It was also unclear for poll workers how they should treat mentally challenged people. The electoral authorities should draft a uniform procedure for assisting those who require additional help.

2. The Ministry of Home Affairs was able to distribute all but 30,000 polling cards before Election Day, which represents a significant improvement from 2005 when some 68,000 cards were not collected. (The OAS observers visited the district offices the day before the elections and witnessed countless more citizens collecting their cards.) The electoral authorities explained that those cards that remained probably were from people who changed their addresses, emigrated or died. While it is important to not strike these names from the list to ensure their possible franchise in case they are located, the electoral authorities may wish to consider identifying these 30,000 names on the electoral registry as “inactive”. Such a designation could contribute to a more accurate voters list and a more precise voter turnout rate. They should of course be kept in the civil registry list.
3. Electoral officials, party leaders and citizens alike expressed concern that heavy rains could have affected voter turnout. Indeed, rains impeded the delivery of some materials to the rural district of Sipaliwini. Although the materials were eventually delivered on time, sustained and heavy rains, not uncommon in Suriname during the month of May, could have had more dramatic consequences in this and other districts. The political authorities might wish to re-consider the electoral calendar to accommodate elections before the onset of the rainy season. In fact, in the Surinamese electoral law, elections can take place any time (or two months) before the 25th of May.
4. Throughout the country, the OAS observers noticed that a majority of those working the polls were women. However, only five of the 51 newly elected parliamentarians are women. Every effort should be made to encourage women to become more active in political parties and run for office, and to urge party leaders, who are primarily men, to provide women with more favorable positions on the party list.
5. According to those with whom the OAS Mission met, there is very little legislation regulating campaign contributions or expenditures. Campaign financing represents an important priority of the Organization of American States. It has embarked on a number of initiatives on this issue and offers its good offices to assist in this important endeavor.
6. The electoral structure in Suriname consists of three principal authorities. The Ministry of Home Affairs (Ministerie Van Binnenlandse Zaken) is in charge of the voter registry as well as the all of the logistical preparations up to the day before the elections. On Election Day, responsibility and authority pass to the Commissioners in the 10 districts (Hoofdstembureau). An Independent Electoral Council (Onafhankelijk Kies Bureau) served as an observer during the entire process and also certified the results. While all three entities fulfilled their obligations with efficiency and transparency, more responsibility could be passed to the Independent Electoral Council to avoid the perception of a potential conflict of interest in which the Government organizes an election in which the ruling political party competes.
7. There are significant disparities among the districts in Suriname. Some 153,848 registered voters in Paramaribo elect 17 members of parliament while only 1,886 choose two representatives in Coronie. In other words, a seat in Paramaribo represents approximately 9,000 votes while in Coronie it represents a little more than a tenth of that,

about 950. An Electoral Boundary Commission could be constituted to explore remedies to these disparities in representation.

8. Suriname should also be commended for holding local and national elections together. This practice is an efficient one and should be maintained. The OAS Mission recommended that to facilitate ballot counting, separate ballot boxes (stembuzen) should be used for each.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I. LETTER OF INVITATION

*Permanent Mission of the
Republic of Suriname to the
Organization of American States*



*Misión Permanente de la
República de Suriname ante la
Organización de los Estados Americanos*

*Permanente Missie van de Republiek Suriname bij de Organisatie van Amerikaanse Staten
4301 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 460
Washington, D. C. 20008*

*Telephone: 202-244-7488 Fax: 202-244-5878 E-mail address: esuriname@oas.org
Website: www.surinameembassy.org*

Washington D.C., January 08, 2010
No. Wash/06/10/JK/mr

The Secretary General of the Organization
of American States
H.E. Mr. José Miguel Insulza
17th Street and Constitution Avenue
Washington D.C.

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

I have the honor to address Your Excellency regarding the General Elections which will be held in the Republic of Suriname on May 25, 2010. On that day citizens of Suriname will cast their vote to elect a new Parliament and representatives of Regional Bodies. Full preparations for these elections have already started well in advance and are progressing very well.

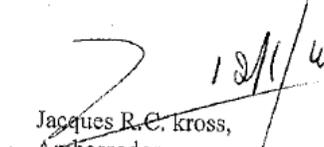
The Government of Suriname is, as has always been the case, committed to hold elections which are not only free and democratic, but also fully transparent to the Surinamese people as well as to the international community. It is in that context that the Government of the Republic of Suriname has invited Observers to send missions to Suriname in order to observe the elections.

Therefore, I extend the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Suriname to the Organization of American States to send an Electoral Observation Mission to Suriname to observe the Elections which will be held on May 25, 2010.

I wish to reiterate the fact that Suriname highly values the excellent position and reputation the OAS has built in this field over the past decades.

I look forward to your response in order to inform the authorities in Suriname accordingly.

Please accept, Mr. Secretary General, the assurances of my highest consideration.


Jacques R.C. Kross,
Ambassador,
Permanent Representative of Suriname to the
Organization of American States

APPENDIX II. LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE



17th St. & Constitution Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
United States of America

Organization of American States

P. 202.458.3000
www.oas.org

Antigua and Barbuda
Argentina
The Bahamas
Barbados
Belize
Bolivia
Brazil
Canada
Chile
Colombia
Costa Rica
Cuba
Dominica
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
El Salvador
Grenada
Guatemala
Guyana
Haiti
Honduras
Jamaica
Mexico
Nicaragua
Panama
Paraguay
Peru
Saint Kitts and Nevis
Saint Lucia
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Suriname
Trinidad and Tobago
United States of America
Uruguay
Venezuela

January 1, 2010

His Excellency
Jacques R.C. Kross
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Suriname
to the Organization of American States
Washington, D.C.

Excellency:

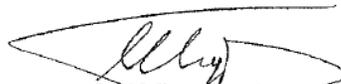
I have the pleasure to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated January 8th, 2010 in which the Government of Suriname requests the Organization of American States (OAS) to observe the General Elections on May 25th, 2010. I take note that on that day voters in Suriname will elect a new Parliament and representatives of Regional Bodies.

Through its observation and technical assistance efforts, the OAS remains committed to strengthening the electoral processes in the Americas and I am pleased to respond positively to this request.

I have instructed the Department for Electoral Cooperation and Observation of the OAS Secretariat of Political Affairs to prepare a proposal and budget that contemplates the observation of the different facets of this important exercise and maximizes coverage of the polling stations on the date of the elections. As is customary, the size and scope of this mission will ultimately depend on the voluntary contributions received from the OAS Member and Observer States.

Should you have any questions regarding the preparation of this mission, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Steven Griner, Chief of the Electoral Observation Section of the DECO, who has been tasked with the preparation of this mission.

Sincerely,


José Miguel Insulza
Secretary General

APPENDIX III. AGREEMENT ON PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES

AGREEMENT BETWEEN
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SURINAME
AND THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
ON THE PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES OF THE
ELECTION PROCESS IN SURINAME

**AGREEMENT BETWEEN
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SURINAME
AND THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
ON THE PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES OF THE
ELECTION PROCESS IN SURINAME**

The Parties to this Agreement, the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (hereinafter referred to as the “GS/OAS”) and the Government of Suriname (hereinafter referred to as the “Government”),

WHEREAS:

On January 8, 2010, the Government of Suriname invited the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (hereinafter referred to as the “OAS” or the “Organization”) to observe the General Elections to be held on May 25, 2010, in Suriname;

The Secretary General of the OAS, informed the Government that he accepted the invitation to establish an Observer Mission (hereinafter referred to as the “OAS Observer Mission”) for the General Elections, subject to obtaining the necessary resources to finance the establishment of the OAS Observer Mission in Suriname (hereinafter sometimes referred to as the “Mission” or the “OAS Mission”);

The OAS Observer Mission will be comprised of officials of the GS/OAS and other persons contracted at GS/OAS headquarters, as well as other international observers specifically under contract to the GS/OAS for the OAS Observer Mission (hereinafter sometimes referred to as the “Members of the OAS Observer Mission” or the “Members”); and

The basic privileges and immunities enjoyed by the OAS, the GS/OAS, and its staff in Suriname are set out in the Charter of the Organization and in the Agreement between the Government and the GS/OAS in Suriname and the Recognition of its Privileges and Immunities signed by the parties on the 19th day of February, 1998,

NOW, THEREFORE THE PARTIES HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

ARTICLE I

The privileges and immunities of the OAS Observer Mission shall be those accorded to the OAS, to its organs, and to its Staff.

ARTICLE II

2.1. The property and effects of the OAS Observer Mission, located in any part of the territory of Suriname and in possession of any person, shall enjoy immunity against any type of judicial proceeding; save in those specific cases for which said immunity is expressly waived in writing by the Secretary General of the OAS.

2.2 However, it is understood that said waiver of immunity by the Secretary General of the OAS shall not have the effect of subjecting any such property and effects to any type of measure of execution.

ARTICLE III

3.1 The premises occupied by the OAS Observer Mission shall be inviolable.

3.2 Moreover, the property and effects of the OAS Observer Mission, in any part of the territory of Suriname and in possession of any person or entity, shall enjoy immunity against search and seizure, confiscation, expropriation and against any form of intervention, be it executive, administrative, judicial or legislative.

ARTICLE IV

The files of the OAS Observer Mission and all of the documents pertaining thereto or in the possession of any person or entity shall be inviolable wherever they are located.

ARTICLE V

5.1 The OAS Observer Mission shall be:

a) exempt from any internal taxation, it being understood, however, that they may not claim any type of tax exemption that is in fact remuneration for public services;

b) exempt from any type of customs duty, prohibition and restriction in respect of articles and publications that they may import or export for their official use. It is understood, however, that the articles they import duty-free may be sold within Suriname only in accordance with conditions expressly agreed upon by the Parties; and

c) exempt from ordinances, regulations or moratoria of any kind. Moreover, they may have currency of any type, carry their accounts in any foreign currency and transfer their funds in foreign currency.

ARTICLE VI

The OAS Observer Mission may establish and operate in the territory of Suriname an independent radio communication system to provide an on-going communications link between the Members and the vehicles used by the Members with Mission offices and regional headquarters, such as the central office in Paramaribo and between the latter and the headquarters of the GS/OAS in Washington, D.C., United States of America. In case of difficulties, the government shall provide the necessary technical and administrative support.

CHAPTER II
MEMBERS OF THE OAS OBSERVER MISSION

ARTICLE VII

The Members of the OAS Observer Mission shall be those persons who have been designated by the GS/OAS and accredited with the authorities of Suriname.

ARTICLE VIII

8.1 For the period during which the Members of the OAS Observer Mission exercise their functions and during their trips to and from Suriname, they shall enjoy the following privileges and immunities:

- a) Immunity from personal detention or arrest as well as immunity from any type of legal proceeding in respect of their actions and statements be they oral or written, done in the performance of their functions;
- b) The inviolability of all papers and documents;
- c) The right to communicate with the GS/OAS via radio, telephone, telegraph, email, satellite or other means, and to receive documents and correspondence through messengers or in sealed pouches, enjoying for that purpose the same privileges and immunities accorded to diplomatic mail, messages, and pouches;
- d) The right to utilize for their movements throughout the national territory, any means of transportation, be it by air, by water or over land;
- e) Exemption in respect of their persons and that of their spouses and children, from any type of immigration restriction and registration of aliens and any type of national service in Suriname;
- f) The same privileges accorded to the representatives of foreign governments on official mission in respect to foreign-currency restrictions;
- g) The same immunities and privileges in respect of their personal baggage as are accorded to diplomatic envoys; and
- h) Such other privileges, immunities and facilities as are compatible with the foregoing, and enjoyed by diplomatic envoys, with the exception that they shall

not enjoy any exemption from customs duties on imported merchandise (that is not part of their personal effects) or sales taxes or consumer taxes.

ARTICLE IX

The provisions contained in the preceding Article do not apply to nationals of Suriname working as local contract staff in the OAS Observer Mission, except in respect of official acts performed or statements issued in the exercise of their functions.

CHAPTER III

COOPERATION WITH THE AUTHORITIES

ARTICLE X

The OAS Observer Mission shall cooperate with the relevant authorities of Suriname to prevent any occurrence of abuse in respect of the specified privileges and immunities. Similarly, the relevant authorities shall do whatever is possible to provide the cooperation requested of them by the OAS Observer Mission.

ARTICLE XI

Without prejudice to the immunities and privileges accorded, the Members of the OAS Observer Mission shall respect the laws and regulations existing in Suriname.

ARTICLE XII

12.1 The Parties shall take any measures necessary to procure an amicable arrangement in the proper settlement of:

- a) Any disputes that may arise in contracts or other questions of private law; and
- b) Any disputes to which the OAS Observer Mission and/or any of its Members may be parties with respect to matters in which they enjoy immunity.

CHAPTER IV
NATURE OF PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES

ARTICLE XIII

13.1 The privileges and immunities are granted to the Members of the OAS Observer Mission in order to safeguard their independence in the exercise of their functions of observing the General Elections of Suriname, and not for personal gain or to perform activities of a political nature within the territory of Suriname.

13.2 The Secretary General of the OAS may waive the privileges and immunities of any of the Members of the OAS Observer Mission in the event that he determines, in his sole discretion, that the exercise of those privileges and immunities may obstruct the course of justice and so long as the Secretary General determines that such waiver does not prejudice the interests of the OAS or of the GS/OAS.

CHAPTER V
GENERAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE XIV

14.1 The Government recognizes the "Official Travel Document" issued by the GS/OAS as a valid and sufficient document for purposes of travel by the Members of the OAS Observer Mission who possess this document.

14.2 The Government shall issue to each Member of the OAS Observer Mission a visa to enter the country and to remain therein until the end of the OAS Observer Mission.

ARTICLE XV

The Government agrees to extend the privileges and immunities of the present Agreement to Members of the OAS Observer Mission designated by the GS/OAS, who have been accredited by the authorities of Suriname.

ARTICLE XVI

This Agreement may be amended by mutual consent in writing by the duly authorized representatives of the Parties.

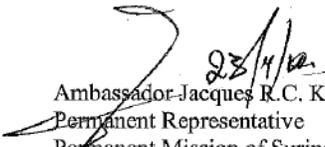
ARTICLE XVII

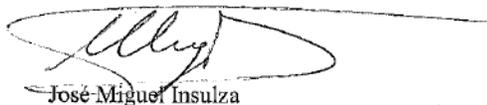
This Agreement shall enter into force on the date of its signature and shall cease to have effect once the Members of the OAS Observer Mission have completed their mission, in accordance with the terms of the request made by the Government.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, duly authorized, do hereby sign this Agreement, in duplicate, on the date and locations indicated below.

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF SURINAME

FOR THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT
OF THE ORGANIZATION
OF AMERICAN STATES


23/4/10
Ambassador Jacques R.C. Kross
Permanent Representative
Permanent Mission of Suriname
to the Organization of American States
Washington, D.C., U.S.A.
Date: April 23, 2010


José Miguel Insulza
Secretary General
Organization of American States
Washington, D.C., U.S.A.
Date: April 23, 2010

APPENDIX IV. AGREEMENT ON ELECTORAL GUARANTEES

**AGREEMENT BETWEEN
THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS AND THE
INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
SURINAME
AND THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES ON THE ELECTORAL
OBSERVATION PROCESS**

The Parties, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission of the Republic of Suriname and the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States ("GS/OAS");

CONSIDERING:

THAT on the 8th day of January 2010, the Government of the Republic of Suriname (hereinafter referred to as the "Government") through its Permanent Mission to the OAS invited the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (hereinafter referred to as the "General Secretariat") to send an Electoral Observation Mission of the OAS (hereinafter referred to as the "Mission") with the purpose of witnessing the elections to be held on May 25, 2010;

THAT in Resolution AG/RES. 991 (XIX-O/89), the General Assembly of the OAS recommended to the Secretary General that "when a member state so requests in the exercise of its sovereignty, missions should be organized and sent to said state to monitor the development, if possible at all stages, of each of its electoral processes;"

THAT Article 24 of the Inter-American Democratic Charter states in pertinent part as follows:

The electoral observation missions shall be carried out at the request of the member state concerned. To that end, the government of that state and the Secretary General shall enter into an agreement establishing the scope and coverage of the electoral observation mission in question. The member state shall guarantee conditions of security, free access to information, and full cooperation with the electoral observation mission.

Electoral observation missions shall be carried out in accordance with the principles and norms of the OAS. The Organization shall ensure that these missions are effective and independent and shall provide them with the necessary resources for that purpose. They shall be conducted in an objective, impartial, and transparent manner and with the appropriate technical expertise; and

THAT the Secretary General welcomed the Government's request, and arranged to send a Mission to Suriname with the objective of observing the elections on May 25, 2010;

WHEREFORE, THE PARTIES AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

First: Guarantees

a.) The Ministry of Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission guarantees the Mission access to all facilities for the adequate fulfillment of the observation of the elections on May 25, 2010 in Suriname, in conformity with the relevant laws and standards of Suriname and the terms of this Agreement;

b.) The Ministry of Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission, on and after the day of the elections and shall guarantee the Mission access to all polling stations and other locations and facilities related to the election until the official count is tabulated nationally;

c.) The Ministry of Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission shall guarantee the Mission complete access to the locations in which the process of casting and tabulating votes will take place.

Second: Information

a.) The Ministry of Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission will furnish the Mission all information referring to the organization, direction and supervision of the electoral process. The Mission will be able to request of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission such additional information as is necessary for the exercise of its functions;

b.) The Mission has the ability to inform the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission about any irregularities and/or interference, which it might observe or of which it might learn. Similarly, the Mission will be able to solicit

R
[Signature]

[Signature]

from the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission any information regarding the measures, which the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission will take in relation to such irregularities;

c.) The Ministry of Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission will provide the Mission with information related to the electoral list and other computerized electoral data referring to the same. Similarly, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission will provide all other information relative to the computer systems used on election day, and will offer demonstrations of the systems' operation to the Mission;

d.) The Ministry of Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission will guarantee the Mission access to all electoral bodies responsible for vote counting and tabulation. Similarly, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission will permit the Mission to conduct any evaluations deemed necessary of the voting system and of the communication utilized to transmit electoral results. At the same time, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission will guarantee complete access to the complaints process and quality controls that occur before and after the process and are of interest to the Mission.

e.) The Ministry of Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission further guarantee the Mission access to all polling stations and other bodies throughout the national territory of the Republic of Suriname.

Third: General Provisions

a.) The Secretary General designates Irene Klinger as Chief of Mission, who will represent the Mission and its members before the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission and before the Government;

b.) The GS/OAS will communicate to the leadership of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission the names of the persons who will comprise the group of observers, who will be duly identified;

c.) The Mission will act impartially, objectively and independently in the fulfillment of its mandate;

d.) The General Secretariat will send to the leadership of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission a copy of the final report of the Electoral Observation Mission, following the selection of the President and Vice President;

e.) The Ministry of Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission will make known and disseminate the contents of this Agreement among all electoral bodies and among all personnel involved in the electoral process.

Fourth: Privileges and Immunities

Nothing expressly stated or implied in this Agreement shall be construed as a waiver of the privileges and immunities of the OAS or any of its organs, their staff, and their assets may enjoy under the Charter of the Organization, the Agreement between the GS/OAS and the Government in relation to the privileges and immunities of each of the members of the group of observers of the election process in Suriname signed by the parties on the 23rd day of April, 2010, or under international law.

Fifth: Resolutions of controversies

The Parties shall attempt to resolve through direct negotiations any disputes arising in relation to the interpretation and/or implementation of this Agreement. If the negotiations do not result in the resolution of the dispute, the matter shall be submitted to arbitration in accordance with the procedure agreed to by the parties.

Sixth: Amendments

Amendments to this Agreement shall be made in writing and signed by the duly authorized representatives of the Parties and attached hereto.

Seventh: Entry into Force and Termination

This Agreement shall enter into force on the date and upon the signature of the Parties. This Agreement shall remain in force until the Mission has concluded all of its observation mission duties of the May 25, 2010 General Elections.



This Agreement may be terminated by either Party with or without cause. Termination must be effected by means of no less than five days' written notice to the other Party.

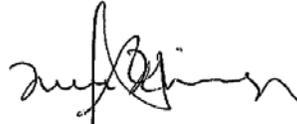
IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, being duly authorized, have signed this Agreement in duplicate on the date and locations indicated below.

**FOR THE MINISTRY OF
HOME AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC
OF SURINAME**



A. Moensi
Director of the Ministry
of Home Affairs
Paramaribo, Suriname
Date:

**FOR THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT
OF THE ORGANIZATION
OF AMERICAN STATES**



I. Klinger
Chief of Mission

General Secretariat
Paramaribo, Suriname
Date:

**FOR THE INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL
COMMISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SURINAME**



J. Van Dijk- Silos
Paramaribo, Suriname
Date:

APPENDIX V. LIST OF OBSERVERS



ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION

GENERAL ELECTIONS IN SURINAME

May 25, 2010

| LIST OF OBSERVERS | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| | Name | Country | G. | Position |
| 1 | Irene Klinger | Chile | F | Chief of Mission |
| 2 | Steven Griner | USA | M | Deputy Chief of Mission |
| 3 | Jean-Francois Ruel | Canada | M | General Coordinator |
| 4 | Katalina Montaña | Colombia | F | Political Analysis |
| 5 | Pedro Verges | Colombia | M | Financial Officer |
| 6 | Ruben Rudolph | USA | M | Legal Advisor |
| 7 | Neil Duncan | Jamaica | M | IT Specialist |
| 8 | Gina Ochoa | Colombia | F | Press Officer |
| 9 | Chet Neymour | The Bahamas | M | Procurement Officer |
| 1 | | | | |
| 0 | Nick Vikander | Canada | M | Coordinator |
| 1 | | | | |
| 1 | Joel Teurtrie | Canada | M | Coordinator |
| 1 | | | | |
| 2 | Jaime Perales | Mexico | M | Coordinator |
| 1 | | | | |
| 3 | Paul Spencer | Antigua and Barbuda | M | Observer |
| 1 | | | | |
| 4 | Sharan Singh | Trinidad and Tobago | M | Observer |
| 1 | | | | |
| 5 | Jose Vargas Niello | Chile | M | Observer |
| 1 | Andrea Groehn- | | | |
| 6 | Kick | Brazil | F | Observer |
| 1 | Emilie Ph. | | | |
| 7 | Fokkelman | Netherlands | F | Observer |
| 1 | | Saint Kitts and Nevis | | |
| 8 | Helena Hull | | F | Observer |
| 1 | | | | |
| 9 | Michelet Mascary | Haiti | M | Observer |
| 2 | | | | |
| 0 | Mark Kirton | Guyana | M | Observer |
| 2 | | | | |
| 1 | Merina Williams | Dominica | F | Observer |
| 2 | | | | |
| 2 | Orrette Fischer | Jamaica | M | Observer |
| 2 | | | | |
| 3 | Isaiah Willacey | Belize | M | Observer |
| 2 | | | | |
| 4 | Roland Bullen | USA | M | Observer |
| 2 | Bertha Santoscoy | Mexico | F | Observer |

5

2

6 Carol-Anne Persaud Guyana

F Observer

APPENDIX VI. FORMS COMPLETED BY OBSERVERS

FORM 1: OPENING OF THE POLLING STATION

NAME OF OBSERVER: _____

ELECTORAL DISTRICT: _____ CONSTITUENCY
 (“RESSORT”): _____

POLLING CENTER NAME: _____ POLLING STATION
 NUMBER: _____

Arrived _____ Departed _____ Total time of observation _____

Number of voters on the voter list _____

OPENING

1. Did the Chairman ensure that all required signs and notices were placed outside the Polling Station prior to the Opening of the Poll? Yes _____ No _____

2. Did the Polling Station open at 7: 00 a.m.? Yes _____ No _____

If not, at what time did it open? _____

3. Were all electoral officials present? Yes _____ No _____

If not, who was absent? Chairman _____ Members _____

4. Indicate political party agents that were present:

BVD/PVF Combinatie _____ Mega Combinatie _____ Nieuw Front _____

Volksalliantie _____ DOE _____

5. Were procedures generally followed in the opening of the polling station?

Yes _____ No _____

FORM 2: OBSERVATION OF VOTING (ONE PER POLLING STATION)

NAME OF OBSERVER: _____

ELECTORAL DISTRICT: _____ CONSTITUENCY ("RESSORT"):
_____POLLING CENTER NAME: _____ POLLING STATION
NUMBER: _____

Arrived _____ Departed _____ Total time of observation _____

1. Were all the electoral materials available? Yes _____ No _____

If not what materials were missing?

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| a. Ballot papers _____ | d. Ballot box _____ |
| b. Copies of the voters' list _____ | e. Other _____ |
| c. Ink _____ | |

2. Were the Chairman and two members of the polling station present?

Yes _____ No _____

If not, state who was absent and why? (use reverse side of form)

3. Was a police officer present at the polling station?

Yes _____ No _____

4. Were party agents present at polling station? Yes _____ No _____

If not, which party was not present?

BVD/PVF Combinatie _____ Mega Combinatie _____ Nieuw Front _____

Volksalliantie _____ DOE _____

5. Was the secrecy of the vote maintained? Yes _____ No _____ If not, explain
-
- on reverse side.

6. Did the Chairman and members of the polling station follow the proper voting
-
- procedures? Yes _____ No _____

7. Was the identity of the voters properly checked? Yes _____ No _____

8. Did the Chairman and members of the polling station provide impartial instructions to the
-
- voter? Yes _____ No _____ If not, explain
-
- on reverse side of form.

9. Did the observer notice or receive any information about incidents and/or irregularities
-
- in or near the polling station? Yes _____ No _____ If so, explain on
-
- reverse side.

10. Did the observer notice or receive any information about intimidation of voters?

Yes___ No___

11. Were other observers present (International/National [OKB])? Yes ___ No___ Please specify___

12. Was proper assistance given to physically challenged Voters? Yes ___ No___ Not observed___

13. What is your overall assessment of the voting process?

- _____ Good – No significant problems.
- _____ Minor problems – Not sufficient to affect outcome.
- _____ Major problems – May affect results.

FORM 3: CLOSING OF POLLING STATION**(SAME POLLING STATION OBSERVED DURING OPENING)**

NAME OF OBSERVER: _____

ELECTORAL DISTRICT: _____ CONSTITUENCY ("RESSORT"):
_____POLLING CENTER NAME: _____ POLLING STATION
NUMBER: _____

Arrived _____ Departed _____ Total time of observation _____

Number of voters on the voter list _____ Number of ballots cast _____

1. Did the polling station close on time at 7:00 p.m.? Yes _____ No _____
2. Were there voters in line at 7:00 p.m.? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, were they allowed to vote? Yes _____ No _____
3. Were closing procedures followed? Yes _____ No _____
If not, explain on reverse side of form.
4. Were police officers present at the closure of the poll? Yes _____ No _____
5. Were political party agents present in the polling station at the closing of the poll? Yes _____
No _____

Please add comments (including any incidents at the closure of the poll) on the reverse side of this form.

APPENDIX VII. OFFICIAL RESULTS

Elected National Assembly Members 2010

| | Elected | Comb. | Party | Number of votes |
|----|---------------------------------|-------|----------|-----------------|
| | Paramaribo: (district 1) | | | |
| 1 | Desire Bouterse | MC | NDP | 18335 |
| 2 | Andre Misickaba | MC | NDP | 6724 |
| 3 | Harish Monorath | MC | Nw. Sur. | 760 |
| 4 | Noreen Cheung | MC | NDP | 198 |
| 5 | Melvin Bouva | MC | NDP | 1799 |
| 6 | Jennifer Simons | MC | NDP | 11132 |
| 7 | Rabindre Parmessar | MC | NDP | 5005 |
| 8 | Oesman Wangsabesari | MC | KTPI | 469 |
| 9 | Ronald Venitiaan | NF | NPS | 12441 |
| 10 | Ganeshkoemar Kandhai | NF | VHP | 9393 |
| 11 | Ruth Wijdenbosch | NF | NPS | 1956 |
| 12 | Guno Castelen | NF | SPA | 440 |
| 13 | Winston Jessurun | NF | DA 91 | 416 |
| 14 | Arthur Tjin-A-Tsoi | NF | NPS | 904 |
| 15 | Mahinderpersad Rathipal | NF | VHP | 823 |
| 16 | Paul Somohardjo | VA | PL | 5060 |
| 17 | Carl Breeveld | - | DOE | 7661 |
| | Wanica: (district 2) | | | |
| 1 | Theodorus Vishnudath | MC | NDP | 2498 |
| 2 | Mohamed Abdoel | MC | NDP | 794 |
| 3 | Charles Pahlad | MC | NDP | 8197 |
| 4 | Radjkoemar Randjietsingh | NF | VHP | 1465 |
| 5 | Asiskumar Gajadien | NF | VHP | 780 |
| 6 | Chandrikapersad Santokhi | NF | VHP | 14416 |
| 7 | Raymond Sapoen | VA | PL | 5227 |
| | Nickerie: (district 3) | | | |
| 1 | Lekhram Soerdjan | NF | VHP | 2745 |
| 2 | Soetimin Marsidih | VA | PL | 1592 |
| 3 | Mohamed Doekhie | MC | NDP | 1966 |
| 4 | Premdew Lachman | MC | Nw. Sur. | 2235 |
| 5 | Refano Wongsoredjo | MC | KTPI | 910 |
| | Coronie: (district 4) | | | |
| 1 | Anton Paal | MC | PALU | 806 |
| 2 | Remie Tarnadie | MC | NDP | 205 |

Elected National Assembly Members 2010

| | | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|----|------|------|
| | Saramacca: (district 5) | | | |
| 1 | Mahinderkoemar Jogi | NF | VHP | 1751 |
| 2 | Diepakkoemar Chitan | VA | PL | 1311 |
| 3 | Nasiebhoesein Moesafirhoesein | MC | NDP | 1908 |
| | | | | |
| | Commewijne: (district 6) | | | |
| 1 | Sheilindra Girjasing | NF | VHP | 2199 |
| 2 | Ronny Tamsiran | VA | PL | 645 |
| 3 | Hendrik Sakimin | VA | PL | 3293 |
| 4 | Jenny Warsodikromo | MC | NDP | 1787 |
| | | | | |
| | Marowijne: (district 7) | | | |
| 1 | Ronnie Brunswijk | AC | ABOP | 3450 |
| 2 | Marinus Bee | AC | ABOP | 176 |
| 3 | Ramses Kajoeramari | MC | NDP | 1051 |
| | | | | |
| | Para: (district 8) | | | |
| 1 | Lesley Artist | MC | NDP | 3720 |
| 2 | Ricardo Panka | MC | NDP | 1163 |
| 3 | Patrick Kensenhuis | NF | NPS | 1431 |
| | | | | |
| | Brokopondo: (district 9) | | | |
| 1 | Ronny Asabina | AC | BEP | 932 |
| 2 | Diana Pokie | AC | BEP | 576 |
| 3 | Frederik Finisje | MC | NDP | 789 |
| | | | | |
| | Sipaliwini: (district 10) | | | |
| 1 | Walter Bonjaski | AC | ABOP | 694 |
| 2 | Waldie Ajaiso | AC | BEP | 1238 |
| 3 | Rudolf Zeeman | AC | BEP | 1868 |
| 4 | Stuart Jabini | MC | NDP | 1295 |
| | | | | |

APPENDIX VIII. PRESS RELEASES**OAS Signs Electoral Observation Process Agreement with Suriname**

May 3, 2010

The Chief of the OAS Electoral Observation Mission in Suriname, Irene Klinger, met today with the Minister of Home Affairs, Maurits S. Hassankhan; the Director, Adjaykoemar Moensi; and the Chair of the Independent Electoral Commission, Jennifer V. van Dijk to sign the Agreement on the Electoral Observation Process, which guarantees access to electoral information and facilities for the Mission to conduct its evaluation.

Following on the Inter-American Democratic Charter, the OAS has been lending its services to Member States to strengthen their electoral processes and systems. The OAS will deploy 30 observers to the 10 districts in Suriname to observe pre-election activities, the election itself and the counting of the ballots.

During this preparatory visit, Klinger met with the various political parties and coalitions competing in these elections, as well as with electoral authorities, civil society representatives and government officials, including the Minister of Home Affairs and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lygia Kraag-Keteldijk, who both welcomed the Mission and offered full assistance so that it can fulfill its mandate.

Once the EOM has concluded its work, Klinger will report on the process to the OAS Permanent Council. The OAS Mission was comprised by Steve Griner and Jean-Francois Ruel in addition to Klinger.

OAS Mission Begins Deployment of Electoral Observers in Suriname May 24, 2010

The Electoral Observation Mission (EOM) of the Organization of American States (OAS) for the general elections to be held tomorrow in Suriname began this weekend with the deployment of observers and the conducting of numerous activities in the Caribbean country.

The Chief of the EOM/OAS, Irene Klinger, arrived last night in Paramaribo and held a series of meetings and briefings, first with the EOM team and later with various analysts and electoral and governmental authorities as well as labor union representatives.

Klinger asserted that "the OAS presence in Suriname is a demonstration of the democratic commitment of the OAS Member States and its Secretary General," adding that she is fully confident that "the electoral process will be held in accordance with the procedures established by the Constitution and the electoral laws of the Republic of Suriname."

The head of the EOM/OAS also met with the President of the Electoral Independent Committee, Jennifer V. van Dijk, and the representative of the Confederation of Civil Servants Organizations, Mr. Michael Miskin, and visited the various rallies organized by the political parties before the elections.

In the May 25 elections, Surinamese voters will elect 51 members of the National Assembly and representatives for the local and district councils. This will be the fifth electoral process observed by the OAS in this Caribbean country.

The Mission is made up of 26 observers who have already started deploying to the 10 districts of Suriname to observe the pre-electoral activities, the political campaign, the election itself, and the vote counting for the purpose of following the development of the electoral process, mainly its organization and the administrative progress of the elections.

OAS Electoral Observation Missions seek to contribute to the strengthening of democracy in the Americas through fair, free, participatory and transparent elections.

Normalcy Prevails on Election Day in Suriname
May 25, 2010

The Electoral Observation Mission of the Organization of American States (EOM/OAS) that today observes the general and local elections in Suriname deployed 26 observers in the 10 electoral districts of the country who reported normalcy on Election Day.

In previous days, the observers traveled to the most remote areas by road, water or air. The members of the EOM/OAS were present at the various voting places before 7:00 in the morning, which was opening time for the voting polls.

The initial report of the OAS observers, who have visited almost 80% of voting places, reflects the conditions of the opening of the observed voting tables and the beginning of the electoral process. After receiving this first information, Chief of Mission Irene Klinger reported that:

- The observed tables opened at 07:01 hours, on average.
- One hundred percent of observed tables had a minimum of three representatives at the time of opening and normally up to ten of them were present
- Representatives of various political parties were present at the voting tables observed
- Security forces were present in high percentages at the voting places observed and their surroundings

The EOM/OAS also highlighted that the beginning of Election Day was marked by peaceful participation, and representatives of the various political parties were present in an environment of harmony and exercised their right to vote in generalized calm.

The Chief of Mission urged Surinamese citizens to continue to actively participate in the ballots until the end of voting, set for 19:00. Representatives of the EOM/OAS will also be present at voting centers during the counting of the votes and at each district's corresponding polling stations, where the final counting will take place.

Furthermore, Klinger recalled that the Mission she heads is evidence of the democratic commitment of all OAS countries, and announced that a final report with the results and recommendations of the observation mission will be presented to the OAS Permanent Council in the following weeks.

OAS: Elections in Suriname Marked by Civility, Respect and Professionalism

May 26, 2010

The Electoral Observation Mission (EOM) of the Organization of American States (OAS) that accompanied the general and local elections in the Republic of Suriname today highlighted the civility, professionalism and democratic commitment that characterized Tuesday's Electoral Day in the Caribbean country.

The Chief of the EOM in Suriname, Irene Klinger, reported that 26 OAS observers were present in close to 90 percent of the voting places in the ten districts of the country, and they reported on the development of the elections from the beginning of voting at 7:00 hours to the final counting in various voting places after closing at 19:00 hours.

"We are very pleased with the overall development of the elections, mostly the high volume of citizen participation, the calm environment that characterized the elections and the harmony and respect we were able to witness among representatives of the various political parties," said Klinger, who also added that "this was a true celebration of democracy."

In a preliminary report on the work of observation, Klinger highlighted the effective role of those in charge of polling stations, the vast knowledge of voters with the electoral process and their responsibility as citizens. "It is also important to highlight the role of women working as chairs and members of the polling stations, although that representation is still not reflected in the political parties' lists of candidates," Klinger said.

Other issues such as the expediting of the vote counting, the procedures for the participation and assisting of voters with disabilities and the best way to conduct elections taking into account weather conditions will be included in the recommendations of the report to be presented soon to the representatives of OAS Member States.

Since 1991 the OAS has been observing electoral processes in Suriname. OAS Electoral Observation Missions seek to contribute to the strengthening of democracy in the Americas through free, fair, participatory and transparent elections.