

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SURINAME,
HIS EXCELLENCY RUNALDO RONALD VENETIAAN,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS BY
THE AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF ITALY,
HIS EXCELLENCY LUIGI MACCOTTA,
7 NOVEMBER 2008**

MR. AMBASSADOR,

IT IS MY PLEASURE TO RECEIVE YOUR LETTERS OF CREDENCE AS AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF ITALY TO SURINAME AND I EXTEND A WARM WELCOME TO YOU ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SURINAME.

SURINAME AND ITALY HAVE MAINTAINED CORDIAL RELATIONS OVER THE PAST THIRTY YEARS. THESE RELATIONS HAVE BEEN DEEPENED WITH THE SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENT ON FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION. BASED ON THIS COMMITMENT THE COOPERATION IN THE AREAS OF AGRICULTURE, TOURISM, AND EDUCATION HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED. WITH REGARD TO EDUCATION, THE AGREEMENT REGULATING DIRECT CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI ROMA "LA SAPIENZA" AND THE ANTON DE KOM UNIVERSITY OF SURINAME MAY BE MENTIONED.

MR. AMBASSADOR,

WE ARE AWARE THAT ITALY HAS A PROMINENT NAME IN THE AREA OF SPORT, ESPECIALLY FOOTBALL. SEVERAL FOOTBALL PLAYERS OF SURINAMESE ORIGIN HAVE BEEN ABLE TO PERFORM IN THIS FIELD IN ITALY. THIS IS PLAYING A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN BUILDING A BRIDGE BETWEEN ITALY, IN PARTICULAR THE CITY OF MILAN, AND SURINAME. SEVERAL PROJECTS ARE ALREADY BEING REALIZED IN SURINAME.

THE GOOD RELATIONS WITH ITALY AND AS MENTIONED, WITH THE CITY OF MILAN PARTICULARLY, HAVE LEAD THE GOVERNMENT OF SURINAME TO SUPPORT THE CANDIDATURE OF THE CITY OF MILAN TO ORGANIZE EXPO 2015. WE ARE CONVINCED THAT THIS CITY IS MOST DEFINITELY CAPABLE OF HOSTING THIS IMPORTANT WORLD EVENT.

MR. AMBASSADOR,

SINCE ITALY IS ALSO A MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN UNION, MANY COORDINATED ACTIONS ARE TAKING PLACE WITHIN THE COOPERATION FRAMEWORK BETWEEN THE EU AND THE ACP GROUP OF COUNTRIES AND MORE SPECIFICALLY, THE CARIFORUM/ CARIBBEAN MEMBERS OF THE ACP. WITHIN THIS BROADER FRAMEWORK THE COOPERATION HAS ENTERED A NEW PHASE WITH THE SIGNING OF THE CARIFORUM-EC ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT, THE SO CALLED EPA. WE DO HOPE THAT IT WILL PROVE TO BE AN IMPORTANT STEP TO FURTHER FOSTER THE TRADE AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS OF COUNTRIES, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME SERVING AS AN IMPORTANT TOOL FOR DEVELOPMENT AND FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY.

MR. AMBASSADOR,

THE WORLD IS FACING SEVERAL GLOBAL CHALLENGES SUCH AS A RISING COST OF FOOD AND ENERGY, THE PRESERVATION OF, WORLDS BIODIVERSITY, CLIMATE CHANGE, AND CURRENTLY THE FINANCIAL CRISIS WHICH HAS A TREMENDOUS IMPACT ON THE ECONOMIES OF THE WORLD AND THE WELL-BEING OF PEOPLE. THIS FINANCIAL CRISIS IS TAKING MANKIND TO A NEW STATE OF REDEFINING THEIR RELATIONSHIPS. AT THIS STAGE ITS DURATION AND DETERIORATION EFFECT IS UNKNOWN. WE ARE, HOWEVER, CONVINCED THAT ONLY THE EFFORTS WHICH TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE INTEREST OF ALL MANKIND WILL PROVE TO BE SUSTAINABLE.

WE NEED TO ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES AND IN THIS RESPECT WE WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS OUR APPRECIATION FOR ITALY'S ASSISTANCE IN REDUCING THE VULNERABILITY IN THE CARIBBEAN. IN LIGHT THEREOF THE APPROVAL OF THE PROJECT OF 5 MILLION EUROS ON THE "ENHANCED RESILIENCE TO REDUCE VULNERABILITY IN THE CARIBBEAN" THROUGH THE RELEVANT CARIBBEAN INSTITUTIONS AND THE UNDP DESERVES TO BE MENTIONED.

MR. AMBASSADOR,

YOUR DESIGNATION AS AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF ITALY TO SURINAME IS INDEED A NEW OPPORTUNITY TO FURTHER ENHANCE THE BILATERAL COOPERATION BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES. YOU MAY REST ASSURED OF THE SUPPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SURINAME IN THE PERFORMANCE OF YOUR DUTIES I WISH YOU EVERY SUCCESS.

PLEASE CONVEY MY KINDEST REGARDS AND GOOD WISHES TO PRESIDENT GIORGIO NAPOLITANO, AND TO THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF THE REPUBLIC OF ITALY.