

**Address by the President of the Republic of Suriname,
H.E. Runaldo Ronald Venetiaan,
on the occasion of the presentation of the Letters of Credence
by the Ambassador of the Republic of Guyana,
Her Excellency Merlin Udho,
on 7 December 2009**

Madame Ambassador,

It is my pleasure to receive the Letters of Credence appointing you as the new Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Guyana to the Republic of Suriname.

Suriname and Guyana have a history of friendly bilateral relations linked by their common adherence to the values of freedom, democracy and mutual respect. These relations were further strengthened after the establishment of diplomatic ties in November 1975 and I am pleased to say that since then we have been able to keep the bond of friendship between our two nations steady and stable.

Being neighbours and partners on the South American Continent and in the Caribbean Community (Caricom), it is our common endeavour to make the region a better, more competitive and healthier place to live.

As active members of the OAS, the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), the CARICOM, the ACTO and now also of the Rio Group, we both make clear that we understand how important unity and regional solidarity are, as cornerstones for peace and security and for our cooperation in support of the sustainable development of our nations.

The Peoples of both Suriname and Guyana live close to the sea and are, as a matter of that fact, seriously in dangered by rising sea levels caused by climate change. Close cooperation between our two countries in order to be well prepared to face the dangers linked with changing weather patterns, may therefore indeed be highly advisable. In this regard, Suriname and Guyana should combine their efforts to jointly pursue international commitment aimed at the mitigation of the adverse effect of climate change for our countries.

Madame Ambassador,

Rest assured that my Government and I will do our utmost to contribute to the strengthening of the friendly relations between our Peoples and to jointly proceed with the pursuit of our common goals and objectives.

I heartily welcome you to Suriname. I, also, assure you that my Government and I will always be ready to assist you in the performance of your duties.

Please convey warm greetings and a message of friendship and goodwill to President Bharrat Jagdeo, and the Government and People of the Republic of Guyana.

Thank You.