

**The Isseneru Village Council**  
**Middle Mazaruni, Region No. 7**  
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**Statement by the Isseneru Village Council on the recent decision by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) in the case of Isseneru v. Guyana.**

We, the Isseneru Village Council welcome the landmark decision by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), nine years after filing a petition against the Government of Guyana for violating our human rights.

As a community we are happy about the favorable decision as it vindicates the complaints we have made regarding the Government's failure to adequately recognize, respect, and protect our rights as Indigenous Peoples by failing to issue title to the full extent of our customary lands and by allowing mining activity to take place on our ancestral lands, even our titled lands, with no prior consultations or consent.

For years we have felt the negative impacts of these actions. Our waterways have been polluted, our natural environment destroyed, our livelihoods diminished, and our residents left to face a growing number of social ills. Not forgetting the physical and financial burden we faced in having to travel long distances to Georgetown to have our voices heard.

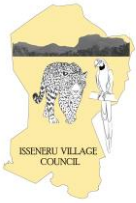
It is even more unfortunate that nine years after we filed this petition, our ancestral lands continue to be damaged by the continuing mining in concessions held by Lalta Narine, Joan Chang and others. The village again calls on the Government to stop this highly destructive mining that is now proven to violate the rights of our people.

Additionally, while the decision provides us with a sense of relief, we will not be satisfied until significant steps are taken by the government to address the blatant and now validated violations of our rights and the rights of other Indigenous peoples across Guyana who are faced with similar situations. The Inter-American Commission decision makes clear that there is a lack of legal protection for indigenous peoples' rights in our country, that our judicial remedies for rights violations are deficient, and that the government's actions have been racially discriminatory against indigenous peoples, and it called on the government to correct its course.

We have not yet had the opportunity to fully discuss these matters at the village level. We therefore plan to discuss further with our residents the implications of IACHR's decision and our next steps as a community. We can provide additional information when we have completed this internal process.

We can say now, however, that we join other Indigenous peoples in the call for the revision of the Amerindian Act and ask that the government treat it as a priority. We have repeatedly stated that the Act does not fully protect our rights as Indigenous peoples, a fact that has now been supported by the IACHR in its recent decision.

We call upon the government to fulfill its international commitments, as well as those obligations enshrined in the Constitution. We look forward to hearing how the Government intends to implement the IACHR's recommendations, and we are prepared to work with the government to remedy the numerous rights violations identified by the Commission.



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Further, we call on all Guyanese to stand with us. Stand with the people of Isseneru because a violation of one is a violation against all; and others may be next if these serious, profound, and multigenerational impacts and violations are allowed to continue, and impunity is permitted to prevail.

We would also like to take this opportunity to extend our deepest gratitude to the Amerindian Peoples Association for their continuous support and guidance over the years as we fought to correct the wrong that has been done to the people of Isseneru.

Thank you.

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