



**Item 6 – 29th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council
UPR Outcomes – Guyana
Speaker: ~~Praveen Sunaseelan~~**

Mr President, the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative congratulates Guyana for having participated in the UPR.

CHRI in its written submission to the Council had highlighted the low public confidence in the national police and recommended that the government should ensure the successful functioning of an independent and impartial police oversight mechanism in compliance with international standards. In this regard, CHRI welcomes Guyana's affirmation, earlier this year, to consider establishing a national human rights institution, and encourages it to seek support from the Commonwealth Secretariat, which has previously helped countries in the Caribbean and Americas region with the same.

A national human rights institution will also help keep a closer track of Guyana's engagement with UN human rights mechanisms and hopefully avoid delays in complying with reporting obligations. For instance, Guyana is scheduled to submit a report to the UN Committee against Torture next year and to comply with this obligation it must take measures to the tune of empowering the national institution with independent investigative authority and issue a standing invitation to the UN Special Rapporteurs.

Mr President, CHRI has previously noted the government's efforts to hold consultations on issues concerning sexual orientation and gender identity. Earlier this year the government confirmed that the designated parliamentary committee was facing challenges in reaching consensus over the issue of decriminalising same sex relations. CHRI requests the appropriate UN agencies and offices to support Guyana in order to address the intricacies and reach positive outcomes.

Mr President, CHRI echoes the OHCHR's appreciation by congratulating Guyana for having ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities last year and positively hopes that it would ratify other conventions such as the Convention against enforced disappearances, and the optional protocol to the Convention against torture before the next UPR cycle.

Thank you Mr. President.