

- PRESS RELEASE -

ANDREW KARWAFODI NEW PRESIDENT OF THE ORGANIZATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN SURINAME (O.I.S.)

November 1, 2011

During a busy General Meeting (ALV) of the Organization of Indigenous People in Suriname (OIS) on Sunday, October 30, 2011 in the Conference Hall in Paramaribo, the board led by Andrew Karwafodi was elected by acclamation. Thus the organization has complied with the urgent request of its members to fulfill its statutory obligations. The new board was elected after 19 years.

The meeting was attended by members from Paramaribo and from different villages in Suriname. Also present were Norine Bolman-Brank and Eduard Swedo, members of the Initial Board of OIS. The VIDS was represented by Lloyd Read, head of the village of Kumbasi (Pierrekondre). The presence of the police has provided a good sense of security.

This special meeting was chaired by the Chairman of the Electoral Commission, Carlo Burke. From the ALV an electoral commission was composed, which was led by Romeo Dougle.

After Romeo Dougle made the announcement about the board being elected by acclamation, preparations were made for transfer by the former president Noldus Jubithana to the newly elected president Andrew Karwafodi.

In his farewell speech, Noldus Jubithana indicated that he was very pleased to be able to transfer to a board in which he has faith that they will work hard on important issues concerning the Indigenous people. He emphasized that the Indigenous people are having a special mystical way of life. They give respect to everyone and may also expect this back.

During a traditional ceremony led by Mr. Cyrill van der Bosch, the newly elected president and his administration were dressed in a shoulder cloth as a sign of the transfer. The former president Noldus Jubithana has given Andrew Karwafodi a headdress and provided him with bow and arrows. By doing this the traditional part was closed.

In the speech of the newly minted chairman he thanked the members for their support. He urged the Indigenous community to take a stand and begin to work together on their development. He indicated that the new direction of OIS means that the Indigenous community will be provided with information about how they can pick up the development process themselves and above all not to give up, but to continue to fight for the recognition of their rights.

Finally, he introduced the board to the members that were present. The elected board of OIS consists of: Andrew Karwafodi (president), Stanley Liauw Angie (1st vice-president), Suzanne Muller (2nd vice-president), Roy Kewal (secretary), Peter Daniel (treasurer), Margo Bundel-Biswane (2nd secretary), Ricky Chan Jet Soe (2nd treasurer) and the commissioners Oriana Trameh, Lawrence Daniel, Just Orassie and Germain May.

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