Excellency,

The Committee wishes to inform you that, at its 71st session, held from 30 July to 17 August 2007, it gave further consideration to the situation of the Maya people in Belize and their land claims.

The Committee wishes to thank the Government of Belize for its letter of 14 August 2007. It expresses its appreciation for the confirmation of the States party's seriousness when addressing the situation of the Maya community and the indication that the Supreme Court is currently hearing a case involving Maya land claims. The Committee regrets, however, that it has not received as requested replies to the four questions asked in its letter dated 9 March 2007.

Furthermore, the Committee has received new information according to which the State party reportedly continues to deny customary land rights to the Maya community, despite the recommendation of the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights to delimit, demarcate, and title the traditional territory of the Maya people.

In this context, the Committee, acting in accordance with article 9 (1) of the Convention and article 65 of its rules of procedure, requires the State party to provide answers to questions raised in its letter dated 9 March 2007. It also requests the State party to provide detailed information on the law suit filed in the Supreme Court of Belize and its outcome.

H.E. Mr. Stewart Warren Leslie
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
Permanent Mission of Belize to the United Nations
675 Third Avenue, Suite 1911,
New York, NY 10017, USA
Fax: 001 212 593 0932
The Committee, while noting the assurance of your Excellency’s government to provide further clarification as soon as possible, wishes to receive a detailed response to these issues as a matter of urgency, and no later than 31 December 2007.

The Committee welcomes the information according to which the State party is preparing its overdue reports. Nevertheless, the Committee wishes to reiterate that in case of non-receipt of the overdue reports, to be submitted in a single document, by 31 December 2007, the Committee will proceed with the full review of the implementation of the Convention in Belize and adopt concluding observations in the absence of a report and in light of information received from other sources, including non-governmental organizations, at its 73rd session, to be held from 28 July to 15 August 2008.

Rest assured, Excellency, that the Committee looks forward to engaging in a constructive dialogue with the Government of Belize, with a view to providing it with assistance in its efforts to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Régis de GOUTTES
Chairman of the Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination