



# **AMERINDIAN PEOPLES ASSOCIATION**

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## *APA Press Statement*

### **Amerindian Peoples Association (APA) Concerned About the Safety of its President**

The Executive Committee of the Amerindian Peoples Association (APA) is profoundly concerned about what appears to be threats to the life of Mr. Tony James, President of the APA by unknown persons.

Information received by the APA indicates that a female acquaintance of Mr. James who lives in Georgetown was approached in mid-November by a strange woman who reportedly questioned her about Mr. James' whereabouts, finding out about where he usually stays when he is in Georgetown and then telling her "they want his head; they want him dead."

More recently, within the last few days, this same female acquaintance was this time at home when a strange man came to the house and asked if Mr. Tony James lived there, at the same time seeking confirmation of the address of the place. He also questioned if the female was Mr. James' wife. The man left after she closed the door on him. She was able to see that there were two other men in the grey car that took the strange man to her home.

The APA is deeply concerned that these apparent threats and strange visit have occurred at a time when the APA has been advocating strenuously for the full respect and protection of the rights of the Indigenous Peoples of Guyana in national policy and programmes including the Low Carbon Development Strategy and REDD plus. At various times in the past, Mr. James has been cautioned by persons to "watch his back" because of what they would have heard at various times concerning his safety but never took this to mean anything. The organization however feels at this time that the threats should no longer be disregarded. The organization also strongly asserts that persons should feel free to exercise their constitutional rights without fear of danger to life.

The APA is calling on the Government and State of Guyana to do all in its power to ensure the security of its citizens as they go about their work and in exercising their constitutional rights.

The APA is also calling on its partner organizations and supporters both at home and abroad to take note of these recent incidents and to continue to provide their support in this difficult period for the APA.

*APA Executive Committee*

*December 10, 2010*