



**SALTWATTA
ROOTS**

Sirs:

President Carlos Alvarado
President Iván Duque
President Laurentino Cortizos
President Orlando Hernández
Prime Minister Andrew Holness
President Daniel Ortega

The organizations, agencies and individuals that are signatories of this Urgent Open Letter, as part of the Creole people of the Caribbean, make an urgent call for the coordination of efforts in the southwest of the Caribbean to agree on a common framework for environmental conservation and management of our ecosystems to avoid ecological collapse in the region. Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua and Panama share one of the areas with the greatest biodiversity in the world and their joint work is urgent to care for and restore the ecosystems of this part of the Caribbean.

Creoles are part of the rosary of cultures and identities that run through the Caribbean. Over the centuries, our identity was forged in tune with the biodiversity of our coasts and seas. Like the Creole peoples, we have learned to care for and coexist with ecosystems because the survival of our identity depends on them.

The Creoles of **Salwatta Roots** are brothers from the same town. We share stories, languages, beliefs, and relationships. For centuries that brotherhood has also depended on the ecosystems that we share, because without corals and all the nature that surrounds us, brotherhood and the development of our peoples is unviable.

The signals that the planet has sent recently are unequivocal: only in harmony between peoples and in harmony with nature is a future of well-being possible for all human beings. For us, as sons and daughters of the Caribbean, it is important that our countries and governments respond affirmatively to the sense of brotherhood that as peoples we have forged over centuries. Let no decision overlook the cultures, identities and biodiversity that we share.

Today the Caribbean is one of the critical points of global environmental degradation. Overfishing, climate change and the tourism model are drowning the ecosystem that sustains our identity, our history and our culture. And faced with common challenges, no country can pretend to act alone and by itself. The biological diversity of this region is unique in the world. However, the ecological connection between the insular and coastal areas of this region is in serious danger of disappearing. Corals, mangroves, forests and rivers are being fragmented by human activities and the absence of cooperation between countries.

To speak of **Salwatta Roots** is to speak of the third largest coral system in the world, the economic and cultural well-being of millions of people depends on the complexes of ecosystems that have formed around it. Therefore, a great environmental pact that can protect our region is not only an ecological and cultural safeguard measure, but a clear economic and social precautionary measure for the Caribbean.



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You can count on the Creole peoples of the southwestern Caribbean, with our experience and our enthusiasm, to draw a shared horizon among the six countries that will ensure the peace of our Caribbean as a cultural and biological treasure of humanity.

Sign:

Ana Teresa Williams - President of the Cahuita Fishermen Association (Costa Rica)

Walt Hayes - Raizal Council, San Andrés y Providencia (Colombia)

Alex Ávila (Garifuna People) - Roatán Island (Honduras)

Kent Francis - First Governor of San Andrés y Providencia (Colombia)

Corinne Duffis - AMEN-SD Leader - San Andrés y Providencia (Colombia)

Romeo Stephenson – (Jamaica)

Endis Livingston - Raizal Council, San Andrés y Providencia (Colombia)

Ofelia Livingston - Raizal Council, San Andrés y Providencia (Colombia)