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To the Jamaican Constitutional Reform Commission:

Subject: Inclusion of the Yamaye Taino People in the Jamaican Constitution

We, the Yamaye Guani Council, representing the Yamaye Taino community in Jamaica, submit the following for your consideration regarding our inclusion in the Jamaican Constitution.

The Yamaye Taino people are the Indigenous inhabitants of Jamaica, with a rich history and culture that predates European arrival. Our presence on this island for millennia is undeniable, and our contributions continue to shape the Jamaican identity.

Limited Consultation and Resource Constraints

We acknowledge our limitations due to limited resources. While consultations haven't been exhaustive, the voices of a significant portion of our community have been presented. We believe the existing body of research on the First Peoples of Jamaica, cultural knowledge, and historical evidence demonstrates the legitimacy of our claim for inclusion and recognition.

Moving Forward

We urge the Commission to consider the following calls to action:

- **Acknowledge the Yamaye Taino people in the Constitution:** This recognition would mark a significant step towards reconciliation and respect for our history and ongoing presence in Jamaica considering the recommendations of CERD (see appendix).
- **Facilitate continued dialogue:** We are committed to working with the Commission to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive consultation process. While resource limitations may exist, we believe flexible solutions can be found to gather additional input if necessary.
- **Outline a Path for Future Collaboration:** The Constitution can serve as a foundation for establishing a framework for collaboration between the Jamaican government and the Yamaye Taino community on matters of cultural preservation, land rights, and social inclusion.

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Conclusion

The inclusion of the Yamaye Taino people in the Jamaican Constitution is a critical step towards a more just and representative Jamaica. We believe that despite limitations in consultations, the existing evidence and our ongoing presence necessitate recognition which is in alignment with the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination "CERD" see *appendix attached*. We are confident that by working together, we can achieve a solution that honors our heritage and strengthens Jamaica's future.

We thank the Commission for its time and consideration.

On Behalf of the Yamaye Taino Community

A suggested inclusion could be in the preamble for example :

WE, THE JAMAICAN PEOPLE,

1.

Commit to honoring our First Peoples the Yamaye Taino represented by their descendants today, for their profound relationship with their ancestral lands, rivers, mountains, seas connected to Atabey the Taino Earth Mother, sacred spaces which held their sacred Cemino Boinyael and Marohu (the spirit of Rain and of clear skies) and their enduring living cultures, which strengthens the life and sustainability of our shared country.

Given our Historical ties to the Maroons we recommend the following as well:

- 2.** Commit to our freedom fighters the Maroon communities that identified themselves as Yenkunkun Pikibo (children of the free) empowered by the spirit of Onyankinpong Asase (Creator of Heaven and the Earth), descendants of Yamaye Taino and enslaved Africans that united in the pursuit of justice and peace. To respect their self-determination, self-governance , resilience and hard fought freedom which is embodied in our national Heroine Nanny, Colonel Cudjoe and Captain Quao.

YAMAYE GUANI COUNCIL

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