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ACM CONDEMNS SURINAME MEDIA RULING

Dec 24, 2005 - The Association of Caribbean MediaWorkers (ACM) is concerned that the recent court judgment against De West newspaper of Suriname ontravenes conventional judicial parameters with respect to court-ordered retractions of erroneous publications.

In our view, the requirement that De West rectify inaccurate remarks about the Suriname Currency Board in media other than the original publication exceeds typical international remedies in matters of this kind. Such an injunction not only imposes excessive punishment on the part of De West but has implications for the right of other media, De Ware Tijd in the first instance, to exercise its freedom to publish content of its own free choice.

We have alerted our international partners to the grave dangers this judgment presents and fully support our Surinamese colleagues in their expressions of displeasure and outrage.

We also hope the circumstances surrounding journalistic investigation of a matter of great public interest do not hinder or jeopardize further attempts by the mass media in Suriname to pursue related stories.

We are aware of the resistance presented by De Ware Tijd and members of the journalistic community and would view any acts of retaliation a direct attack on the free press and a breach of hemispheric and international undertakings by Suriname to support free expression as a legal norm.