

Extended 44th Session of the World Heritage Committee

Oral statement on 7B.199 Canaima National Park

Thank you Mr. Chair.

On behalf of SOS Orinoco and ourselves: The current existence of gold mining within Canaima National Park is an irrefutable fact, despite the efforts made to make people believe that what is seen today is the trace of past activity. It is an ongoing activity that has been increasing since 2016, verifiable by simply analyzing satellite images available for free.

This illegal mining activity significantly affects the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. The Reactive Monitoring Mission should pay particular attention to the non-existent management and performance of the Park administrator and custodian, the National Parks Institute (INPARQUES), which does not have a structure nor budget in place that would allow it to effectively guard an area the size of Belgium or Albania. SOS Orinoco would be happy to provide additional evidence to the Reactive Monitoring Mission.

Thank you Mr. Chair.