

**WE DEMAND THE IMMEDIATE CESSATION OF STATE VIOLENCE
AGAINST THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE AMAZON AND THE
RESPECT OF THEIR RIGHTS**

With a balance of dozens of dead and wounded, particularly among the members of the *Awajun* indigenous group, the removal from the positions they occupied in Bagua, in the areas of Corral Quemado and Curva del Diablo, has today been carried out. This massacre has claimed among its victims the President of the Committee for the Protection of Rights of the Indigenous Peoples of Condorcanqui, Mr Santiago Manuin Valera, who was killed as a result of a police intervention that was carried out – as reported by the residents and authorities of Bagua themselves – using “bullets of war”.

The Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon are mobilised to defend the ancestral lands that they occupy in the high and low jungles of our Amazon, which contain an extraordinary biodiversity that is native to the ecosystem of the eastern slopes of our jungle, and which they have preserved for centuries.

This land has already been affected and reduced as a result of the growing and irrational exploitation of resources such as gold, timber, oil and gas, which has been carried out without respecting the areas that have been protected by these communities through a model of conservation whose aim is to ensure the stability of lands and forests, as well as maintaining the quality and quantity of water, the ecological balance and an appropriate environment for its development. Much of this exploitation takes place in areas that have been conceded by the Peruvian government to transnational corporations, who take over these lands, ignoring the rights of the indigenous communities who are in charge of their management; a process that is carried out without evaluating the compatibility of these corporations with the protected lands or the ways in which their conservation will be affected.

As stated by the Bishops of the Amazon region on the 5th of May, *“in the name of a biased concept of development, the State permits the deforestation of large extensions of primary forests in favour of national and international corporations for investment in plantations of palm oil trees, sugar cane and others. [And] we are all aware of the contamination of rivers with lead and other heavy metals and toxic substances as a result of mining activity (formal and informal) and the extraction of oil, in an irresponsible manner. We are witnesses, furthermore, to the indiscriminate felling of timber without any type of control.”*

By means of the legislative decrees dictated by the government, taking advantage in an abusive and unconstitutional manner of the powers conferred to it in order to implement the North American Free Trade Agreement, the Peruvian State intends to allow the large transnational companies to do as they wish with the communal reserves and protected areas, ignoring the fact that the rights defended by the Indigenous Peoples are not only recognised in Pacts, Conventions and Covenants that are binding and enforceable – and which Peru, having ratified them, has committed to honouring – but also establish the responsibility of the Peruvian State towards the international community.

These legislative measures dictated by the government, and which Congress continually refuses to review and repeal, constitute a denial of the recognition of the equal value and dignity that the Indigenous Peoples of Peru possess, as do all of the other peoples that conform this Nation, as part of the multiethnic and plurinational nature of a country in which all of its inhabitants should be considered equals. They also deny the rights of the Indigenous Peoples to exercise their identity (understood as the use of their language, names, toponymy, culture and religion), as well as their own forms of development, growth and transformation.

We, the undersigned, condemn these actions and call on the government to immediately suspend the state of siege against our brothers in the Amazon and cease the violence that has been perpetrated against them, with the tragic balance of victims that we now mourn. We also appeal to the government to cease the aggressions that have been systematically directed against the

AIDSESEP indigenous organisation and its leaders in these weeks and open a space for respectful and genuine dialogue to consider the legitimate interests that the organisation represents.

As expressed by the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues – an advisory body to the UN Economic and Social Council – through its president, Victoria Tauli Corpuz, we would like to remind the Government of Peru of its obligation to consult and respect the rights of the indigenous peoples, as established in the commitments assumed under Covenant 169 of the ILO, and ensure full respect of the rights of these communities with regards to traditional lands, territories and resources, as well as ensuring their free, prior and informed consent.

Finally, we would like to call on the national and international community to mobilize to prevent a genocide from taking place in the Amazon region and to safeguard the right of our Indigenous Peoples to self-determination.

It is through dialogue – not the taking of lives – that conflicts can be resolved.

Lima, 5th June 2009

Jubileo Perú, Plataforma Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, Democracia y Desarrollo (PIDHDD), Asociación Nacional de Centros (ANC), Conferencia Nacional sobre Desarrollo Social (CONADES), Red Latinoamericana de Deuda, Derechos y Desarrollo (Latindadd), Llamado Mundial de Lucha Contra la Pobreza Capítulo Perú, Grupo Red de Economía Solidaria del Perú (GRESPE), Género y Economía, Movimiento Ciudadano frente al Cambio Climático (MOCICC), Forum Solidaridad Perú, Centro de Asesoría Laboral del Perú (Cedal), Grupo Propuesta Ciudadana Jubileo Sur, Capítulo Boliviano de Derechos Humanos, Observatorio Internacional de la Deuda, Red Brasil, Centro de Derechos, Económicos y Sociales del Ecuador, Jubileo Guayaquil, Alternativa Infostelle Perú, Instituto Bartolomé de las Casas, CEPES, DESCO, Red Globalización y Equidad, Colectivo Ciudadano para que no se repita, SER, IPEDEHP, IDL, COINCIDE, Instituto Alameda, Asociación de Profesores de Políticas Latinoamericana de la Universidad de Oklahoma, CGTP, CCP, SIDESP, Red DESC Ica, Movimiento Comunitario Alfa y Omega, FENTAP, CEPDUR, CENAPRODEP, FENPUP, APCIJEP, Foro Mype, Coordinadora Política Social del Cono Sur, FNTTP, Fedecall La Libertad, Fentrep, Femocpaalm, Secretaría Regional Lésbica, Red Mitimaes, Comité peruano por el derecho a una Vivienda Digna ...