September 2nd, 2019

2nd Communiqué in support of the indigenous communities of the Amazon, Mato Grosso and the social movements that work for the preservation of these regions.

The undersigned associations, movements, networks and research teams wish for peace for our Latin American region and assert that there is no peace without justice, there is no justice without truth and there is no truth without the right to accurate information. We continue to support the demonstrations unpublicized in the Brazilian mass media, we again denounce their complicity in the concealment of information, and we join in the struggle of indigenous communities to protect the Amazon and Mato Grosso.}

Forty-five percent of South America's forested area is located in the Amazon and this same region comprises more than half of the rainforests of the planet,[1] providing ecological health that affects the life of Latin America and the world. Its trees contain approximately 90–140 billion tons of carbon,[2] equivalent to approximately 9–14 decades of annual emissions from human activities.[3] The Amazon is a reservoir of biodiversity including endemic and endangered species, being home to one in five species of mammals, fish, birds and trees in the world.[4] In addition, hydrological connections with the atmosphere and terrestrial ecosystems give it a fundamental role in the global balance of energy and water. It is a reservoir of 20% of the surface water of the planet,[5] comprising the largest river in the world. Eight trillion tons of water evaporate from Amazonian forests every year, with important influences on global atmospheric circulation.[6] In addition, among the ecosystem features provided by the Amazon, there is flood regulation, filtering and water purification. These processes are essential in the face of loss of water quality, due to modification and contamination of water systems.[7]

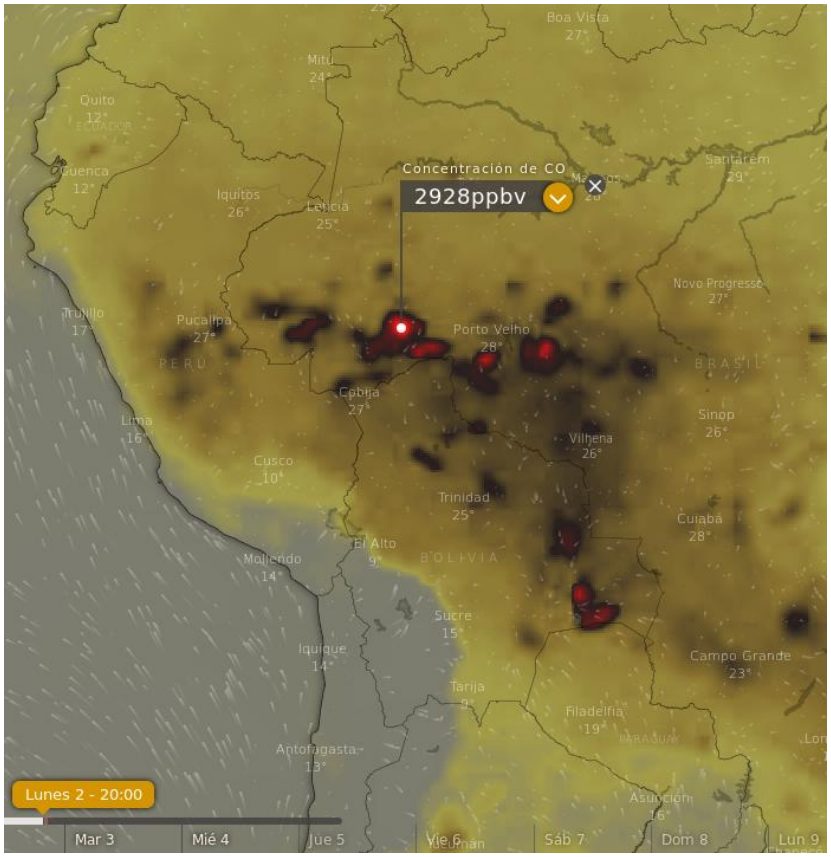
During the administrations of Brazil's previous (and not democratically elected) president Michel Temer, two constitutional amendments PEC 240 and PEC65 were approved. PEC240 froze funds for the Ministry of Environment for a period of 20 years, limiting the protection that national institutions could perform. PEC65 relaxed the requirements for construction works to only a previous environmental impact study, eliminating the requirement to present an environmental license.[8] Then, the current Jair Bolsonaro government suspended the Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Deforestation in the Amazon (PPCDAm) launched in 2004.

This systematic dismantling of environmental protections added to the anti-indigenous statements of current president Jair Bolsonaro, coinciding with the Brazilian regime's decision not to intervene in the fires of the Amazon and the Mato Grosso for more than 15 days. Letting the Amazon and the Mato Grosso burn is a crime against life and it is definitely unconstitutional given that it is "**the Public Power and the collective duty**

[1] Taubert *et al.* 2018
[2] Soares-Filho *et al.* 2006
[3] Canadell *et al.* 2007
[4] Nepstad D. C *et al*.2008; Dirzo and Raven 2003
[5] Macedo and Castello, 2015
[6] Informe IPCC 2007, Nepstad Daniel C *et al*. 2008
[7] Macedo and Castello, 2015
[8] De Area, *et al.*, 2019; Tófoli *et al.* 2017

to defend and preserve it for present and future generations." (Art. 225, Chapter VI- of the Environment Constitution of Brazil). To evade his responsibility, Jair Bolsonaro accuses the organizations that fight to preserve these regions of having started the fires, and he attacks without evidence the National Institute of Space Research (INPE), violating the work of its scientists and technicians, which is particularly indispensable at this time.

The 20th of August of the current year, we received images of Sao Paulo covered by the smoke of the Amazon's fires, which is toxic and contains carbon monoxide (CO).[9]



Today (September 2nd) at 8 PM there were fire sources indicated in red and very high levels of CO in the air, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Image obtained on Monday, September 2, 2019 at 8:00 p.m., thanks to the real-time service provided by Windy.com

We denounce that the Brazilian Ministry of Health has not provided action protocols to date, nor does it express concern in this regard, just as no Ministry has reported the number of victims, injuries and deaths. We demand that this information be communicated urgently and officially.

We reaffirm that the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples do not depend on the government of the day or racist media campaigns, since they have been recognized internationally both in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and in ILO Convention 169 that have constitutional standing in Brazil.

"... When the current government authorizes the use of arms in indigenous territory,
He [President Bolsonaro] is authorizing our bodies to be killed.
Moreover, we, the indigenous peoples, do not die only when they kill our leaders.
We, the indigenous peoples, die collectively when they take away our land. "
(Celia Xecriabá, of the Xecriabá indigenous people.)

The National Constitution of the Federal Republic of Brazil, approved in 1988, dedicates a complete chapter to environmental rights as well as to the rights of indigenous peoples, chapters VI and VIII respectively

[9] "*Health guidelines for vegetation fire events"*, O.M.S. 1999

among other articles. We emphasize that “The lands traditionally occupied by the Indigenous peoples are destined to be their permanent possession, belonging to them the exclusive use of the wealth of the soil, of the rivers and of the existing lakes in them” (Art. 231, subsection 2). The only way in which the state can exploit the natural resources that exist in lands that are owned by the indigenous communities of Brazil is with the approval of the National Congress and with the necessary consent of the indigenous communities, ensuring their participation in the results of said exploitation (Art. 231, subsection 3).

President Jair Bolsonaro, says that "There will not be a single square centimeter demarcated as an indigenous reserve." We denounce him--and the complicit corporate media--in this crime, given that it is an obligation that the state has regarding indigenous lands to "demarcate, protect and make all their property be respected ” (Art 231). That is to say, to demarcate the indigenous lands and protect them is not an option or a favor that the government can decide to do or not, for their sake. It is not an “ideological” question, as Jair Bolsonaro intends to misinform us. “The lands referred to in this article are inalienable and unavailable and the rights on them inviolable.” (Art. 231, paragraph 4). It is a constitutional mandate and not complying with it is completely ILLEGAL.

“This land is my life, my soul. If you separate me from this land, yout take away my life.”
(Marcos Veron, from the Guaraní indigenous community).

We support the complaint made on August 26th by the Pan American Committee (of Judges for Social Rights) before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights requesting that “as a matter of urgency, to adopt precautionary measures (art. 25 of the Regulations of the Commission) to properly safeguard the environment affected by fires in the Amazon, Federal Republic of Brazil. "We do this to remind all federal judges that are responsible for prosecuting and judging conflicts over indigenous rights” (Art. 109. subsection 11).

We applaud and highlight the importance of the work done by the INPE scientists in Brazil and the struggle of the movements that work for the preservation of the Amazon and Mato Grosso and the struggle of the 34 million Latin American brothers and sisters belonging to the indigenous peoples of the Amazon.[10]

The work for the preservation of tropical forests requires international agreements but we cannot leave the care of the Amazon, one of the great regional treasures, in the hands of countries of the Northern Hemisphere, whose irresponsible development is clearly related to the environmental crisis of the planet: global overheating[11], rising temperature and acidity of the oceans[12], melting glaciers and rising sea levels[13]. **The coordination of environmental and ethnic protection is, and should be, in the hands of the 420 different indigenous peoples that inhabit and protect the Amazon region, with the indispensable support of the 8 member countries of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO): Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela with indispensable participation of referents of the 420 different indigenous peoples that inhabit and protect the Amazon region.[14]**

[10] http://www.otca-oficial.info
[11] Singh & Bhargawa, 2019; Mardani *et al.* 2018; Hegglin 2018; Montzka *et al*. 2018
[12] Scott C. Doney et al. 2009
[13] Robert J. Nicholls &, Anny Cazenave, 2010; https://climate.nasa.gov
[14] http://www.otca-oficial.info/amazon/our_amazon

Please spread this statement for the good of our common world
and especially for our dear Latin America.

Signed:

APDH (Asamblea Permanente por los Derechos Humanos) (Permanent Assembly for Human Rights)
Asamblea Mercedina por la Agroecología (AMA)
Asociación Civil Rastrilladas del Oeste Bolivar
ASOCIANA (Acompañamiento Social de la Iglesia Anglicana del Norte Argentino)
CREAS
FIPCA (Fundación Interactiva para Promover la Cultura del Agua)
Frente de Lucha por la Soberanía Alimentaria
Grupo Chaco-Exactas (FCEN, UBA)
Grupo de Extensión Universitaria Impenetrable Chaqueño (FCEN-UBA)
Grupo de Investigación Geoquímica del Agua (INGEIS-FCEN-UBA)
JUM (Federación Junta Unida de Misiones)
Laboratorio de Ecología Funcional (IEGEBA-UBA-CONICET)
Madres de Plaza de Mayo Línea Fundadora
MEDH (Movimiento Ecuménico por los Derechos Humanos)
Movimiento Agroecológico La Plata
Movimiento de Mujeres Indígenas por el buen vivir
Movimiento de Vecinos Autoconvocados de Pehuajó (MoVeA-Pehuajo),
REDAF (Red Agroforestal Chaco Argentina)
Somos Monte (Chaco)
Taller de Aguas (FCEyN-UBA)
Investigadoras/es y Becarias/os: Dra. María Bush Investigadora Independiente (Directora del Laboratorio de Ecología de Poblaciones IEGE-FCEN-UBA), Dra. Patricia Carina Fernández (Investigadora Adjunta CONICET - INTA EEA Delta del Paraná), Dra Alejandra Scannapieco (Investigadora Adjunta CONICET), Dra. Vanina Andrea León (Investigadora Asistente IEGE- FCEN-UBA), Dra. M. Alejandra Petino Zappala (FCEN-UBA), Lic.Carolina Minutolo (Docente EGE -FCEN-UBA), Lic. María Carolina Gonzalez (Becaria Doctoral FCEN-UBA), Lic. Julieta Salgueiro (Becaria Doctoral CONICET), Lic. Samanta Thais Efron (Becaria Doctoral CONICET), Lic. Sofía Luz Calla (Becaria Doctoral MACN -CONICET), Lic. Magdalena Miranda (Becaria Post-Doctoral CONICET), Lic. Christian Federico Francese (Becario Doctoral FFyL- UBA), Matías Jesús Almeida (Guardaparque Nacional), Malena Maroli (Becaria posdoctoral CICYTTP-CONICET-UADER), Lic. María Florencia Gonzalez Fleitas (Becaria doctoral CONICET).