

URGENT ACTION

INDIGENOUS GROUP IN VOLUNTARY ISOLATION AT RISK Land that the Ayoreo Totobiegosode Indigenous people claim as their traditional territory has been invaded again in the department of Alto Paraguay, northern Paraguay. This threatens the survival of the Indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation in this area.

According to the Indigenous organization People, Environment and Territory (Gente, Ambiente y Territorio, GAT), a part of the **Ayoreo Totobiegosode Indigenous people's** traditional territory (registration number 54RR03) is being rapidly deforested by a cattle ranching company in the department of Puerto Casado, Alto Paraguay, Chaco. This is despite the fact that the company's licence, given by the Ministry of Environment (Secretaría del Ambiente, SEAM), is currently suspended. According to GAT, in just 16 days over last month, 1,500 hectares have been affected.

This puts the Jonoine–urasade, a group of the Ayoreo Totobiegosode who live in voluntary isolation, in particular danger given the risk of unwanted contact, further deforestation and irreversible degradation of their natural territory, which puts their livelihoods and cultural and physical survival at risk. On 2 July legal representatives of the Ayoreo Totobiegosode presented a formal complaint demanding that the deforestation stop immediately.

A previous formal complaint was made on 9 March when another cattle ranching company invaded land registered to the name of the Ayoreo Totobiegosode and built a fence around it. Four formal complaints had already been presented to the Public Prosecutor in 2014 and 2013 denouncing similar situations. The authorities have so far failed to take satisfactory action, putting the Indigenous people at further risk.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language urging the Paraguayan authorities to:

- Protect the territories legally owned by the Ayoreo Totobiegosode and take the necessary steps to give legal recognition and protection to the rest of their ancestral lands, territories and natural resources;
- Take immediate measures to prevent the entry of any person or group in the territory where Indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation live, prevent any changes to their natural resources, and investigate and take legal action against any person or group that made such changes to their territory;
- Refrain from granting licenses for activities related to the extraction of natural resources, including deforestation, ranching, and agro-industrial undertakings, in areas with a presence of Indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation;
- In the event that there are current licenses or authorizations for engaging in such activities, suspend or cancel them, and review their terms to determine what modifications are needed to ensure full respect for the rights of Indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation and initial contact affected, and implement those modifications promptly.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 19 AUGUST 2015 TO:

Attorney General
Dr. Javier Díaz Verón
Fiscal General del Estado
Sede Central-Chile c/ Ygatimí
Asunción, Paraguay
Fax: +595 21 415 6152 (ask "tono de fax, por favor")
Email:
comunicaciones@ministeriopublico.gov.py
**Salutation: Dear Attorney General/
Estimado Señor Fiscal**

President of the Paraguayan Institute of
Indigenous Peoples (INDI)
Lic. Jorge Servín
Presidente de INDI
Don Bosco 745 entre Haedo y Humaitá,
Asunción, Paraguay
presidencia@indi.gov.py
Fax: +595 21 425 280 (ask "tono de fax,
por favor")
**Salutation: Dear President/ Estimado
Señor Presidente**

And copies to:
GAT, Gente, Ambiente y Territorio
Tte. Delgado N° 790 c/ Siria
Asunción, Paraguay
Fax: +595 21 223 026

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 285/14. Further information:

www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr45/010/2014/en/

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Following a formal complaint presented on 21 October 2014 by legal representatives of the Ayoreo Totobiegosode reporting the invasion of property number RO3 236, a delegation of government representatives and the Ayoreo Totobiegosode travelled to the area in dispute on 23 April 2015. The subsequent government report confirms the construction of the fence in the property whose GPS coordinates correspond with property number RO3 236, which was registered to the name of the Ayoreo Totobiegosode in 1997.

During the 23 April inspection, representatives of the Ayoreo Totobiegosode Indigenous people discovered that the owner of the neighbouring estate, a cattle ranching company, was building another fence on part of the Indigenous peoples' traditional territory (property number RO3 391). Both pieces of land are in the department of Puerto Casado, Alto Paraguay, Chaco. They were registered in 1997 to the name of the Ayoreo Totobiegosode and are part of their traditional territory.

According to the Indigenous organization People, Environment and Territory (Gente, Ambiente y Territorio, GAT), in 2012 a licence was given by the Ministry of Environment (Secretaría del Ambiente, SEAM) allowing the neighbouring firm to exploit an extension of land that included part of the Ayoreo property number RO3 391 and number RO3 236, which is larger than the land legally owned by the firm.

Ensuring the human rights of the Indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation is particularly important given their unique situation of vulnerability and the fact that they cannot advocate for their own rights. Under International law, States must guarantee their right to land, territories and natural resources, as well as their right to remain in isolation, which are fundamental for their physical and cultural survival.

Name: Ayoreo Totobiegosode Indigenous people
Gender m/f: both

Further information on UA: 285/14 Index: AMR 45/2041/2015 Issue Date: 8 July 2015