

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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## **Paraguay: Amnesty International urges respect for the human rights of Indigenous Peoples**

***On 9 June 2011 Amnesty International delivered the following oral statement prior to the adoption of the Universal Periodic Review outcome on Paraguay by the UN Human Rights Council***

Amnesty International welcomes Paraguay's support of the majority of the recommendations made to it during the Universal Periodic Review, in particular the recommendations regarding the protection of the human rights of Indigenous Peoples.<sup>1</sup> Of particular importance is Paraguay's commitment to comply fully with the three judgements by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights on the land rights of the Yakyé Axa, Sawhoyamaxa and Xakmok Kasek Indigenous communities.<sup>2</sup>

Amnesty International is concerned that the deadlines for complying with the Court's orders on the restitution of the ancestral lands of Yakyé Axa and Sawhoyamaxa communities expired in 2008 and 2009, respectively, and that Paraguay has failed so far to fully comply with these rulings. Both of the affected communities have for decades lived in temporary homes alongside a highway, unable to sustain their traditional activities - hunting, fishing and gathering honey - and forced to rely on aid from state agencies and food from private institutions.

Amnesty International urges Paraguay to present a clear plan of action to achieve a definitive solution for these Indigenous communities and to fully comply with the Inter-American Court's latest ruling, including the return to the Xakmok Kasek community of their traditional land within the three year deadline specified by the Court.

Amnesty also welcomes Paraguay's support, as indicated in the Addendum, of two recommendations, previously under consideration, to address the socio-economic disparities which disproportionately affect Indigenous populations and encourages the government to set out the actions it intends to take towards their full and prompt implementation.<sup>3</sup>

Amnesty International welcomes Paraguay's commitment to regularly brief this Council on the follow up of the UPR recommendations.<sup>4</sup>

### **Background**

The Universal Periodic Review is a mechanism of the Human Rights Council under which it reviews, on a regular basis, the fulfilment of the human rights obligations and commitments of all 192 UN Member States. It is an inter-state review process aimed at the improvement of the human rights situation on the ground. The UN Human Rights Council adopted the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Paraguay on 9 June 2011 its 17<sup>th</sup> session. Amnesty International also contributed to the information basis of the review through its submission on

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<sup>1</sup> A/HRC/17/18, paragraphs 84.16, 84.20, 84.42, 84.44-46, 85.61-72, and 86.2, 86.5.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, paragraphs 85.68-70.

<sup>3</sup> A/HRC/17/18, Add.1, paragraphs 3-5 and 15-20.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, paragraph 2.

Paraguay: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AMR45/003/2010/en/f72f306d-a9a3-4af5-972d-272845748ed6/amr450032010en.pdf>

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International Secretariat, Amnesty International, 1 Easton St., London WC1X 0DW, UK

[www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)

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