

# URGENT ACTION

## EXILED INDIGENOUS LEADER DETAINED AT AIRPORT

**On 26 May, Segundo Alberto Pizango Chota was detained at Lima airport, Peru, returning from exile in Nicaragua. He may be brought before a judge later today (27 May). Unfounded charges against him must be dropped and in the absence of any wrong doing he should be released.**

**Alberto Pizango**, leader of AIDSESEP (Asociación Interétnica de Desarrollo de la Selva Peruana) has been in exile in Nicaragua since mid-June 2009. He landed at Lima airport on a flight from Nicaragua yesterday afternoon (26 May) at 3:30 pm. He was accompanied by several people including Daysi Zapata, acting president of AIDSESEP. Upon his arrival he was immediately detained by police and is currently in detention. He will expected to be brought before a judge later today.

Alberto Pizango faces charges for "rebellion, sedition and conspiracy against the state and the constitutional order", as well as with "apology of crimes against public order". Amnesty International believes that the charges against Alberto Pizango appear to be politically motivated and must be dropped immediately. In the absence of any wrong doing Alberto Pizango should be released.

### PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Spanish or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to ensure that Alberto Pizango is not ill-treated during his detention;
- Insisting that the unsubstantiated charges against him be dropped, and in the absence of any wrong doing he should be released;
- Reminding the authorities that Indigenous Peoples in Peru have faced decades of ill-treatment and discrimination at the hands of the State and that they have a right to chose their own elected representatives and claim their rights as laid out in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 8 JULY 2010 TO:

#### President

Sr. Alan García Perez  
 Presidente de la República del Perú  
 Palacio de Gobierno  
 Plaza Mayor  
 Lima 1, PERÚ  
**Fax: : + 511 311 3940**  
**Email: via website:**  
[http://www.presidencia.gob.pe/cartas\\_presidente.asp](http://www.presidencia.gob.pe/cartas_presidente.asp)  
**Salutation: Sr. Presidente**

#### Attorney General

Dra. Gladys Margot Echaíz Ramos  
 Fiscal de la Nación / Ministerio Público  
 Av. Abancay cdra. 5 s/n  
 Lima 1, PERÚ  
**Fax: +511 426 2800**  
**Salutation: Sra. Fiscal**

#### **And copies to:**

#### Indigenous organization

AIDSESEP  
 Av. San Eugenio 981 – Urb. Santa Catalina  
 La Victoria / Lima 13  
 PERÚ  
**Fax: +511 472 4605**  
**Email: aidesep@aidesep.net.pe**

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.** Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 123/10. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR46/007/2010/en>

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Alberto Pizango, leader of AIDSESEP (Asociación Interétnica de Desarrollo de la Selva Peruana) was in exile in Nicaragua from mid-June 2009. He was granted asylum by the Nicaraguan authorities after he sought refuge in the Nicaraguan embassy in Peru's capital, Lima, after the Peruvian authorities accused him of being responsible for violence which led to the deaths of 33 people in Amazonas department, northern Peru, on 5 June 2009. One year on from those events, Alberto Pizango is returning to Peru and to his position as leader of AIDSESEP.

Alberto Pizango was charged with "rebellion, sedition and conspiracy against the state and the constitutional order", as well as with "apology of crimes against public order". However, at the time of the violence on 5 June 2009, Alberto Pizango was in Lima, hundreds of kilometres away. The evidence for the charges appears to rest solely on a press conference given by Alberto Pizango on 15 May 2009 where he called for an "Indigenous insurgency" against the government. At the press conference he apparently clarified that the call for insurgency was a call to the government to annul a series of laws which were being passed without the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous people, as a first step to initiating a dialogue as equals. He publicly retracted this call the following day in the presence of the Human Rights Ombudsperson and this retraction was posted on AIDSESEP's website as well as being reported in the press.

On 5 June 2009, 33 people were killed and at least 200 injured after police officers dispersed a road blockade organised by Awajún and Wampís Indigenous people in a stretch of the Fernando Belaúnde Terry highway, known as the Curva del Diablo (Devil's Bend) leading to Bagua, in Bagua province and Bagua Grande, in Utcubamba province. Among the 33 people who were killed, 23 were police officers and 10 were civilians, including five Indigenous people. Eleven of the police officers were killed while they were held hostage by Indigenous protestors at the Petroperú Pumping Station No. 6. 80km from Bagua near the town of Imacita, Bagua province; 12 were killed during the police operation at the road blockade and the whereabouts of one police officer remains unknown.

Amnesty International considers that these tragic events were the predictable and preventable result of the continued disregard by the Peruvian authorities of their duty to respect, promote and protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples in the Amazon region. International human rights standards, including the International Labour Organization's Convention 169 and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which protect Indigenous Peoples against losing their land and resources in the name of development have been adopted precisely to avoid loss of life and livelihood and to ensure that communities enjoy all their human rights, indispensable for their dignity, without discrimination.

Indigenous Peoples have the right to be consulted in good faith before the adoption and implementation of legislative or administrative measures that may affect them. However, in 2008, the authorities passed a series of decree laws over the use of land and resources in regions of the country rich in natural resources including the Amazon region and did not consult them. When Indigenous peoples protested against these decree laws demanding their human rights, not only were they not listened to, but on 5 June 2009 they suffered ill-treatment and torture, they were arbitrarily detained, and some were killed.

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