

for Immediate Release

. 25 August 1988

Contact:

Claudia Andujar, CCPY
(Commission for the Creation of the
Yanomami Park)
(011) 288-4008 or
(011) 289-1200 (between 2-6 p.m.)

BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENT FRAGMENTS AND REDUCES BY 70% YANOMAMI TERRITORY

On 19 August, Romero Jucá Filho, the President of FUNAI, announced that the Interministerial Group, responsible for making decisions on indigenous land questions in Brazil, has decided to demarcate the Yanomami land area. This area will cover approximately 8 million hectares in the State of Amazonas and the Federal Territory of Roraima.

After analyzing the proposal made public by FUNAI's President, the Commission for the Creation of the Yanomami Park (CCPY) has come to the following conclusions which it wishes to make known to the public:

1. The proposal land area to be effectively demarcated as Yanomami lands amounts to only 2,435,215 hectares, which represents less than 30% of the territory traditionally occupied by the Yanomami people;
2. This solution fragments the Yanomami territory into 19 distinct and discontinuous land areas, thus undermining the integrity of the Indian lands, jeopardizing their historical occupation, and threatening their social reproduction.
3. The announced measures set aside more than 70% of the territory for the creation of two different types of forest areas which have as their justification the protection of the environment but which will be regulated by laws that do not consider Indian land rights. One type is a national park, the other national forests (of which there will be two) which will be open to economic development. The proposed measures also allow for a situation of multiple administrations with conflicting interests;
4. Furthermore, according to the press declarations made by FUNAI's President, parts of Yanomami territory will be set aside for gold prospecting, which in effect gives legal recognition to the invasion of Yanomami territory;
5. Worse still, the approximately 8 million hectares set aside by the Interministerial Group in a misleading manner for the Yanomami have been called "Indigenous Yanomami Lands", a concept that has no basis in existing laws;

We therefore wish to call the attention of the national and international public to the fact that the above-mentioned measures announced by FUNAI's President as being an historical landmark in Brazil's Indian policy, in reality represent a major deception, a deliberate manipulation of the facts, to mislead public opinion which for many years has urged the Brazilian government authorities to create the Yanomami Indian Park in a continuous land area and including all of the territory traditionally occupied by the Yanomami people.

Furthermore, the above-mentioned measures represent a grave disrespect for the

Constitutional Project B to be promulgated, which in Paragraph 1 of Article 234 guarantees the integrity of Indians rights to their traditional lands.

Faced by these facts, the CCPY is alerting Brazilian government authorities to the grave consequences that the Yanomami will suffer from the loss of most of their land, appealing to the President of the Republic and to the Minister of the Interior, Agrarian Reform, and the Secretary General of the National Security Council not to ratify the above mentioned measures, urging them to restudy these measures in light of Paragraph 1 of Article 234 of Project B of the Brazilian Constitution, and appealing to them to take the necessary measures to remove the thousands of gold prospectors illegally working in Yanomami territory.

CLAUDIA ANDUJAR

Coordinator

Comissão pela Criação do Parque Yanomami - CCPY

Rua Manoel da Nóbrega, 111, 3º., cj. 32

04001 - São Paulo - SP - Brasil

BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENT REDUCES BY 70% AND DISMEMBERS YANOMAMI TERRITORY

On 19 August, Romero Juca Filho, the president of FUNAI, announced the decision made by the Interministerial Group responsible for the decisions taken concerning the indigenous land questions in Brazil, to demarcate the Yanomami land-area, in an extension of aprox. 8 million hectares in the State of Amazonas and the Federal Territory of Roraima.

After analysing the proposal made public by FUNAI's president, the Commission for the Creation of the Yanomami Park (CCPY) came to the conclusion and wishes to make known the followings:

1. The proposed extension of land to be effectively demarcated as Yanomami lands would come to only 2,435,215 ha., that corresponds to less than 30% of the traditional territory occupied by the Yanomami people.
2. The solution given, dismembers the Yanomami territory into 19 different and discontinued land areas, thus fractioning the unity of the lands and jeopardizing the historical occupation as well as threatening the social reproduction of the people.
3. The announced measures consecrate more than 70% of the territory for the establishment of two different types of natural reserves administered by legislatures that do not consider Indian land rights. One being a national park, the other national forests, the later open to economic development. The proposed measures also give room to a situation of multiple administrations with conflicting interests among themselves.
4. Furthermore, the press, according to the declarations of FUNAI's president, sets aside land-areas within the traditional Yanomami lands for gold panning, thus giving way to the legal recognition of a permanent invasion of the Yanomami territory.
5. Worse yet, the aprox. 8 million ha. set aside by the interministerial group in a misleading manner for the Yanomami, go by the name of "Indigenous Yanomami Lands", a concept without legal basis.

We, therefore, wish to call the attention of the national and international public to the fact that the above mentioned measures announced by FUNAI's president as being a historical achievement of Brazil's Indian Policy, in reality is a fraud, a deliberate manipulation of facts, to mislead public opinion which for many years urged the Brazilian authorities to create the Yanomami Indian Park, corresponding to a continuous land-area covering the whole of the territory traditionally occupied by the Yanomami people. Furthermore, FUNAI's measure represents a notorious disrespect of the new Constitution to be promulgated, in which Article 269 foresees the guarantee of the integrity of Indian rights to their traditional lands.

CCPY, confronted by these facts, is alerting the Brazilian government authorities of the grave consequences that the Yanomami will suffer, by loosing most of their traditional lands, appealing to the President of the Republic and to the Ministers of the Interior, Agrarian Reform and the Secretary General of the National Security Council, to urge them not to ratify the genocidal measures announced by the President of FUNAI last 19 August and appealing to take the necessary steps to remove the thousands of gold panners that are illegally working inside the Yanomami territory.

We are in front of an emergency situation and urge the international agencies and personalities who have followed over the years the Yanomami question to send as soon as they can Telex messages or cables to the followings:

Presidente José Sarney
Presidência da República
Gabinete Civil
Telex nº 61 31 17 PRDF
Palácio do Planalto
70150 Brasília DF Brasil

General Bayma Denys
Secretário Geral do Conselho de Segurança Nacional
Telex nº 612455 SSGF
Praça dos Três Poderes
Palácio do Planalto
70150 Brasília DF Brasil

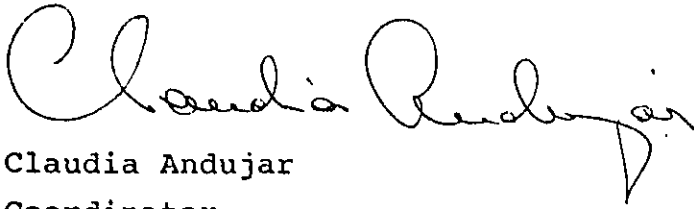
Comissão pela criação do Parque Yanomami

Ministro João Alves
Ministério do Interior
Telex nº 611015 or 611186
Esplanada dos Ministérios
70040 Brasília DF Brasil

Ministro Leopoldo Bessoni
Ministério da Reforma e do Desenvolvimento Agrário (MIRAD)
Telex nº 611063 MNRD
Setor Bancário Norte
Palácio do Desenvolvimento
20º andar
70057 Brasília DF Brasil

These authorities integrate the interministerial group. Please urge them not to ratify the measures announced by FUNAI's President Juca Filho and to take the immediate necessary steps to remove the gold panners from the traditional Yanomami lands. We would appreciate receiving copies of the messages for our control.

Thank you very much.



Claudia Andujar
Coordinator

Comissão pela Criação do Parque Yanomami - CCPY
Rua Manoel da Nóbrega 111, 3º, cj. 32
04001 São Paulo SP Brasil

August 23, 1988