

**The International Alliance of Inhabitants
alerts international public opinion
to the humanitarian crisis in the Peruvian Amazon**

On Friday 5th June 2009, a contingent of armed military police, accompanied by Armed Forces special personnel, opened fire on around 1,000 indigenous settlers who were protesting in Bagua, northeast Peru. The protestors were demanding the repeal of a series of laws passed by the executive to dispossess them of their land, in favour of multinational companies who are seeking to appropriate the Amazon rainforest.

The death toll so far includes at least 25 protestors, two journalists, and 11 police officers. Currently some other 1,000 indigenous people are occupying the Petroperú plant in the same zone, surrounded by a strong police cordon. They are threatening to blow up the plant if the police enter by force. Finally, the local population have demonstrated their intense anger by taking 23 police officers hostage in the jungle. In the midst of the confusion, public buildings have been set alight and a curfew has been established. Under the cover of darkness, the bodies of dead protestors have been thrown into the river from helicopters which have been firing shots from the air throughout the day.

We call on the international human rights organizations; social movements and anti-globalization networks; the media; and local and progressive governments, to demand that the government of Peru respect the rights of the population, and hold central government authorities to account for the lamentable events which occurred on Friday 5th June, as well as those which may follow in the coming days.

- a) Because the attack on the defenceless population, as well as clumsy, constitutes a crime and has further inflamed the mood of the population, causing the situation to spiral out of control.
- b) Because this situation had been anticipated: the Amazonian people have been fighting oppression for the last four months, and they have tried all possible means to open a dialogue with the authorities, receiving in response racist, arrogant and abusive treatment.
- c) Because turning a deaf ear to reason and good sense, the government has obstinately insisted against repealing unconstitutional laws which were made in favour of powerful economic interests, even at the request of the Office of the Ombudsman and other important public and private sector bodies.

We demand: the immediate withdrawal of the repressive forces in the conflict zone; the break-up of the army's cordon around the indigenous population; the delivery of the bodies of civilians to their families; the cessation of political persecution of the Amazonian movement's leaders, especially Albert Pizango, leader of AIDSESEP; the immediate resignation of the Prime Minister, the Minister of the Interior, and the Minister of Defence; the opening of an independent investigation allowing the reconstruction of events; the reopening of dialogue; and the immediate repeal of the laws which threaten the property and rights of the people of the Peruvian Amazon.

We call out to people of good will, social organizations, civil society institutions, and local and regional democratic governments, to join forces and undertake an international campaign of solidarity against the genocide of the Peruvian Amazonian population. To these ends, the International Alliance of Inhabitants supports the constitution of an international solidarity committee, which will be in direct and permanent contact with the affected peoples.

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