



## Sentinel Project Primary Correspondent Monthly Report

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**Reporting period: 1 November – 15 December, 2008**

**Area-of-responsibility: South America**

### **By country**

#### **1) BRAZIL**

**Area-of-responsibility:** Brazil

**Region-of-interest:** Brazilian States of Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul, Roraima, Rondônia and Amazonas.

**Situation-of-concern:** Indigenous' people survival and living conditions

### **Report Summary**

On November, the Federation of Indigenous Organizations from Rio Negro (FOIRN) accused seven soldiers from the Brazilian Army of torturing and illegally arresting 12 indigenous from the Kuripakos group, that live in São Joaquim and Warirambã communities in the Brazilian state of Amazonas, near the Colombian border.

According to the victims, on October 20<sup>th</sup> 2008, armed soldiers without judicial mandates have taken the indigenous forcedly out of their homes and imprisoned them naked inside animal cages. After that, they were taken to the military base where they were beaten with arms pointed to their heads. Witnesses said that the soldiers were looking for young indigenous who supposedly would have brought cocaine from Colombia into the indigenous lands. The Amazon Military Command denied all the accusations.

On November 20<sup>th</sup>, Survival International (S.I.) published an article that affirms that an official from Brazil's Indian Affairs Department (FUNAI) warned that there is a **risk of genocide** threatening the Piripkura people, an uncontacted tribe, leaving in the Amazon region of state of Mato Grosso. The official said that illegal logging and ranching activities put in risk the lives of the last known survivors of the group. S.I. has launched a campaign asking the Brazilian government to protect the Piripkura's land.

S.I. has also warned about the risk of genocide of another isolated indigenous people, the Akuntsu. The Akuntsu group lives in the state of Rondônia and has only six members. The other members of the group have been massacred or died from diseases because of the occupation of their lands by ranchers, loggers and land speculators. According to the organization, the territories of the Akuntsu are legally demarcated and FUNAI is present in the area to assist their members and to try to expel the ranchers. In spite of that, the group is “surrounded by hostile ranchers”. The Akuntsu are also extremely vulnerable to diseases transmitted by outsiders, since they are a very isolated group.

S.I. also highlighted the dangers that the Enawene Nawe and the Guarani people face. The Enawene Nawe live in the rainforest of the state of Mato Grosso and their land has been constantly invaded by rubber tappers, diamond prospectors, cattle ranchers and soya planters. The Guarani people, living in seven Brazilian states, face starvation, assassinations and threats of diseases brought by other Guaranis who work in plantations owned by big farmers. Their land is constantly invaded by loggers and the group faces high rates of suicide and alcoholism.

On November 27<sup>th</sup>, there was another violent Federal Police action in Bahia. This time, 50 Federal Police agents arrived in Serra Verde farm, where 12 Pataxó Hã-Hã-Hãe families live, throwing tear gas bombs to comply with a reintegration order and to apprehend arms.

On December 10<sup>th</sup>, the Brazilian Supreme Court started ruling about the case of Raposa Serra do Sol, Roraima, once again. The ruling was delayed last August after one judge asked for more time to analyze it. The dispute involves the indigenous groups against the rice farmers that might be expelled if the Supreme Court decides that the indigenous reservation should remain a single and unbroken territory.

Eight judges (of eleven) voted to maintain the reservation as an unbroken territory, a decision that favors the indigenous living in the reservation. But, before the end of the session, the Court once again postponed its final ruling because another judge asked for more time to analyze the case. The Supreme Court declared that the final ruling might happen on February or March, 2009. The indigenous groups are really confident, but, although 8 judges voted in their favor, the case is not over yet, since judges have the possibility of altering their votes during the next session.

**Item #1 – article, “Índios acusam militares de tortura no Amazonas”, 27 November 2008**

<http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/folha/brasil/ult96u472220.shtml>

This article from the Brazilian newspaper “Folha de São Paulo” describes the torture and the arrestment of 12 indians by Brazilian military soldiers in the state of Amazonas. It highlights with details the accusations that, according to the indians, happened more than a month earlier (October 20<sup>th</sup>).

**Item #2 – article, “Exército afirma que não torturou Índios”, 27 november 2008**

[http://www.linearclipping.com.br/funai/detalhe\\_noticia.asp?cd\\_sistema=45&codnot=564435](http://www.linearclipping.com.br/funai/detalhe_noticia.asp?cd_sistema=45&codnot=564435)

This article from “Folha de São Paulo” was taken from the website of the Brazilian Indigenous Agency (FUNAI). It highlights that the Amazon Military Command has investigated the above-mentioned accusations made by the Kuripakos group against the Brazilian Army, but found no proof of the alleged crimes.

**Item #3 – article, “‘Real risk of genocide’ for uncontacted tribe”, 20 November 2008**

<http://www.survival-international.org/news/3944>

This article from Survival International highlights the situation of the last known members of the Piripkura people and announces the campaign for their protection and the demarcation of their land. In the article there is a link where anyone can join the campaign by sending a letter in support of the group.

**Item #4- article, “The Akuntsu Need You: Tribe's last six survivors speak of genocide”**

<http://www.survival-international.org/tribes/akuntsu/>

The article describes the situation of the Akuntsu people since the first contact made by FUNAI in 1995 and highlights the dangers that constantly threaten the lives of its six known members (there were seven members but one of them died after the first contact). The article launches a campaign to prevent the disappearance of the group.

*(\*)It is important to highlight that the Survival International Website does not say exactly when the above-mentioned campaigns started and how long they are going to last. But the articles are really interesting because they give a lot of details on those people and on the threat they face and, more importantly, they recognize and treat their situation as potential or ongoing cases of genocide.*

**Item #5- article, “The Enawene Nawe Need You: New wave of dam building threatens Amazon Indians”**

<http://www.survivalinternational.org/tribes/enawenenawe>

The article describes the situation of the Enawene Nawe and launches a campaign for the protection of their lands and the inclusion of an area known as Rio Preto, that is economically and spiritually important to the group, but was left out of the demarcation. According to the organization, “the Enawene Nawe are urgently pressing for this area to be protected as it is being increasingly invaded by loggers and soya planters, who are rapidly destroying the forest and polluting the land and rivers”. Another problem faced by the group is that “the state government of Mato Grosso has announced that it will build a series of hydro-electric dams on the Upper Juruena river, upstream of the Enawene Nawe’s land”. The constructions are taking place with no “environmental or social impact assessment, or adequate consultation with the tribes affected”.

**Item #6 – article, “The Guarani Need You: Brazil's Guarani suffer at the hands of violent ranchers”**

<http://www.survival-international.org/tribes/guarani/despair>

“For the Guarani, land is the origin of all life. But violent invasions by ranchers have devastated their territory and nearly all of their land has been stolen. Guarani children starve and their leaders have been assassinated. Hundreds of Guarani men, women and children have committed suicide(...). In the last 500 years virtually all the Guarani’s land in Mato Grosso do Sul state has been taken from them(...). The destruction of the forest has meant that hunting and fishing are no longer possible, and there is barely enough land even to plant crops. Malnutrition is a serious problem and since 2005 at least 53 Guarani children have died of starvation (...).The Guarani in Mato Grosso do Sul suffer from racism and discrimination, and high levels of harassment from the police. It is estimated that there are over 200 Guarani in jail with little or no access to legal advice and interpreters, trapped in a legal system they do not understand. This has

resulted in innocent people being condemned. Many are serving disproportionately harsh sentences for minor offences”.

**Item #7- article, “Reintegração de posse na terra dos Pataxó Hã Hã Hãe revolta comunidade”, 28 November 208**

<http://www.cimi.org.br/?system=news&action=read&id=3557&eid=342>

The article from CIMI (an indigenous missionary organization) describes very superficially the Federal Police action against the Pataxó Hã-Hã-Hãe.

**Item #8 - article, “Supremo adia julgamento sobre demarcação de terra indígena Raposa/Serra do Sol” – 10 December 2008**

<http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/folha/brasil/ult96u477833.shtml>

The Article from Folha de São Paulo website, “Folha Online”, gives information about the postponement of the ruling of Raposa Serra do Sol case and highlights that specialists believe that the Supreme Court might maintain the territory as a single and unbroken territory but with some restrictions, such as the right of access by the Brazilian Army and other measures to preserve the sovereignty of the country.

**Item #9- article, “Governador de RR diz que ameaça de conflitos envolvem indígenas e isenta arrozeiros”, 11 december, 2008**

<http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/folha/brasil/ult96u478348.shtml>

In this very revealing article from Folha Online, the governor of the state of Roraima declared that the rice farmers located at Raposa Serra do Sol Reservation “do not cause any trouble” in the territory. He says that potential conflicts inside the reservation would happen only among indigenous groups that have divergent opinions about the demarcation of the lands.

**Item #10 - article, “Se defender Roraima é ser 'terrorista', então eu sou, diz liderança dos arrozeiros”, 9 December 2008**

<http://g1.globo.com/Noticias/Brasil/0,,MUL916434-5598,00->

[SE+DEFENDER+RORAIMA+E+SER+TERRORISTA+ENTAO+EU+SOU+DIZ+LIDERANCA+DOS+ARROZEI.html](http://g1.globo.com/Noticias/Brasil/0,,MUL916434-5598,00-SE+DEFENDER+RORAIMA+E+SER+TERRORISTA+ENTAO+EU+SOU+DIZ+LIDERANCA+DOS+ARROZEI.html)

In this article from the Brazilian news website “G1”, one of the most powerful rice farmers of Roraima (who is the mayor of Pacaraima City, Roraima), Paulo César Quartiero, declared that he will not stop fighting against the decision of maintaining

Raposa Serra do Sol as one single territory. In a very remarkable sentence, Quartiero declared that “If defending your personal interests, patrimony, your labour and the state of Roraima is being a terrorist, that’s what I am”. According to the article, Quartiero is accused of giving orders to his employees to shoot indians that invaded his properties last May. Quartiero declared that the Supreme Court ruling will not give any solution to the problems of the state of Roraima, but would only bring “misery, famine and despair”. Besides that Quartiero affirmed that the Federal Government decisions (such as demarcating Raposa Serra do Sol) “are transforming Roraima into Haiti”.

## **2) COLOMBIA**

**Area-of-responsibility:** Colombia

**Region-of-interest:** southeast region, Department of Cauca.

**Situation-of-concern:** clashes between the government and indigenous groups

### **Report Summary**

The president of Colombia, Mr Álvaro Uribe and indigenous groups from the southeast region of the country have failed to reach an agreement at a meeting on November 2, 2008. The meeting lasted for more than six hours and took place in the municipality of Piendamó, in the Department of Cauca. The indigenous communities in the region, who have recently clashed with the police and blocked a major highway, demand land reform, their land titles and respect for their territory and their traditions.

During the demonstrations, three indigenous people were killed and several policemen severely wounded, including one who lost both his hands due to the explosion of a homemade bomb. The indigenous community accuses the police of firing against the demonstrators and causing their death, and the police affirms that the deaths were caused by the homemade bombs, that according to the police were made by the indigenous people.

Police authorities also affirm that members of the rebel group Colombian Revolutionary Forces (FARC, in Spanish) were mixed with the demonstrators, an allegation that is denied by the indigenous movements.

The Colombian government has already agreed that any construction work conducted in indigenous territory will only begin after a consultation with the

indigenous communities. However, President Uribe insisted that he cannot withdraw the Colombian Armed Forces from their territory. According to Uribe, there can be no part of the Colombian territory in which the Armed Forces cannot be deployed.

Colombia currently has a population of 44 million people and 85 different indigenous groups, with a total indigenous population of 1 million.

The National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC, in Spanish) has alleged that since August 2002 (when Presidente Uribe came into power), 1253 indigenous people were killed and over 54, 000 were taken from their original land.

**Item # 1- article, “Presidente da Colômbia não chega a acordo com índios”, November 3, 2008**

[http://www.estadao.com.br/internacional/not\\_int271568,0.htm](http://www.estadao.com.br/internacional/not_int271568,0.htm)

This article from the Brazilian newspaper “Estadão” confirms that negotiations between the Colombian government and indigenous groups in the southeast region of the country have failed, but that both parties are still willing to keep negotiation channels opened.

**Item # 2 – article, “Uribe e indígenas colombianos no llegan a acuerdo”, November 3, 2008**

<http://blogs.periodistadigital.com/periodistalatino.php/2008/11/03/uribe-e-indigenas-colombianos-no-llegan>

This article from the Colombian news blog “Periodista Digital” reports that President Uribe asked the Colombian Public Defender, Mr. Volmar Perez to investigate allegations of human rights abuses against indigenous communities.

The article also mentions that as a gesture of good will, President Uribe agreed that part of security guard during the negotiation was composed of members of the indigenous communities (that do not carry weapons). The indigenous groups also expressed their rejection of the Free Trade Agreement between Colombia and the United States, since the groups believe the agreement will allow for the free access of multinational corporations in the country, who might threaten the indigenous lifestyle.

Uribe has emphasized that he recognizes the indigenous groups right to protest, but that they cannot block roads. According to Mrs Ainda Quilcué, from the Cauca Regional

Indigenous Council, the indigenous groups have a right to demonstrate as part of the democracy that exists in Colombia.

**Item # 3 - article “Uribe e indígenas no lograron ponerse de acuerdo; nativos decidieron no levantar la movilización”, November 3, 2008**

[http://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/occidente/uribe-e-indigenas-no-lograron-ponerse-de-acuerdo-nativos-decidieron-no-levantar-la-movilizacion\\_4640349-1](http://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/occidente/uribe-e-indigenas-no-lograron-ponerse-de-acuerdo-nativos-decidieron-no-levantar-la-movilizacion_4640349-1)

This article from the Colombia newspaper “ El Tiempo” confirms that the conservative Colombian Senator Jose Dario Salazar was blocked from attending the negotiations. Mr. Salazar was received with protests from the indigenous groups who accused him of being a racist.

The mayor of Pindamó, Mr. Wilson Rodallega affirmed that it is not only important to ensure that the indigenous lands are respected, but also that their land is productive. The leader of the Guambiano group, Elides Pechene accused the Colombian government’s policy of democratic security (seguranza democratica) of destroying the indigenous populations in the country.

### **3) CHILE**

**Area-of-responsibility:** Chile

**Region-of-interest:** Temuco (central) and Calama (northern)

**Situation-of-concern:** Human rights violations’ assessment

#### **Report Summary**

Concerned among other things about indigenous’ situation in Chile, an important international organization, Amnesty International, sent a representative to visit indigenous communities in this country. Ms. Irena Khan talked to many indigenous leaders and heard stories about human rights violations.

**Item #1 article, “Amnesty International assesses human rights in Chile”, 7 November 2008**

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/news/amnesty-international-assesses-human-rights-chile-20081107>

This article from Amnesty International's reports that Secretary General Irene Khan led a visit to Temuco and Calama, in Chile, as part of a mission to assess the country's human rights situation. Ms. Khan met Mapuche, Atacameño and Diaguita communities. Talking about her visit, she said "Indigenous peoples are severely discriminated and marginalized in Chile, and see themselves as the victims of an economic strategy that is destroying their lives and livelihoods".

**Item #2 memorandum, "Memorandum to the Chilean Government", 7 November 2008**

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR22/009/2008/en>

This memorandum contains a series of recommendations to the Chilean Government. The item IV (page 7) refers to Indigenous Peoples. It includes a brief context of indigenous situation in Chile and recommendations to this country.

#### **4) BOLIVIA**

**Area-of-responsibility:** Bolivia

**Region-of-interest:** Porvenir, Department of Pando

**Situation-of-concern:** UNASUR Commission's Final Report on violence in Bolivia directed at indigenous people on 11 September 2008.

#### **Report Summary**

News about indigenous people in Bolivia continue to be dominated by the Pando massacre conducted mainly by paramilitary groups. The massacre took place on 11 September 2008 in Porvenir, Department of Pando, and resulted in approximately 18 deaths and at least 70 disappearing persons, the majority of whom were indigenous. The investigations conducted by a delegation of the Special Commission of UNASUR were concluded and the violence against rural and indigenous people was defined as a massacre.

**Item #1 - article, "Unasur entrega informe sobre masacre en Pando", 25 November 2008**

<http://www.adital.org.br/site/noticia.asp?lang=ES&cod=36210>

**Item #2 - article, "UNASUR: "Hubo masacre en Bolivia", 3 December 2008**

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/spanish/latin\\_america/newsid\\_7763000/7763930.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/spanish/latin_america/newsid_7763000/7763930.stm)

Both articles from ADITAL and BBC highlight that on November 25<sup>th</sup>, the Special Commission of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), created to investigate the murders that took place on 11 September 2008, handed over to Evo Morales' government its final report on the events. It declared that the killings and the disappearances of rural Bolivians must be considered a massacre. The commission also reported that the Pando local authorities are legally responsible for the events and they must be identified.

## **5)PERU**

**Area-of-responsibility:** Peru

**Region-of-interest:** Murunahua Territorial Reserve

**Situation-of-concern:** Indigenous people's survival threatened by illegal loggers

### **Report Summary**

Indigenous communities that live in areas protected by the Peruvian government have been suffering with attacks from illegal loggers. Many indigenous die as a result of violent acts committed by these outsiders. Moreover, indigenous people may also disappear as a result of the struggle to survive as they have to migrate to get away from loggers.

**Item #1 - bulletin, "INDÍGENAS EN FRONTERA PERÚ-BRASIL SON VÍCTIMAS DE TALA ILEGAL", November 2008.**

<http://www.cipiaci.org/noti1.htm#1>

The Murunahua Territorial Reserve was created by the Peruvian government in 1997. It has been invaded by illegal loggers that are burning houses, murdering and kidnapping. As a result, indigenous groups are forced to migrate to other areas which increase the likelihood of different communities facing each other to death in order to get food and territory. Illegal loggers' presence in Murunahua Territorial Reserve makes indigenous groups vulnerable victims.

