

LETTER Nº 030/SE/COIAB/2011
Manaus-AM, 28 January 2011

The Honorable DILMA VANA ROUSSEFF LINHARES
President of Brazil
Brasília/DF

C/c Mr. Márcio Meira – National Foundation of Indigenous People (FUNAI)/Brasília
C/c Minister Izabella Teixeira – Minister of Environment (MMA)/Brasília

Dear Ms. President,

The Coordination of the Indigenous People Organizations from the Brazilian Amazon (COIAB) hereby reaffirms its opposition to the construction of the disastrous Belo Monte Hydroelectric Complex dam.

The Brazilian Government has assumed a careless and disrespectful position in regard to the Indigenous Peoples that not only fully violates the rights of Indigenous Peoples as guaranteed by the current constitution and by existing international law (ILO Convention 169 and the UN Declaration), which requires free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples in case of new ventures affecting their lives, but the Government has also enabled *Eletronorte* in an effort to coopt indigenous people. Basic food baskets will not satisfy our hunger for justice and our thirst for keeping the Xingu alive.

We are with the warriors of our people. Why does the Brazilian Government not want to hear our voice? Our voice is the voice of Raoni Metuktire, Davi Kopenawa, Megaron Txukarramãe, Josinei Arara, Ozimar Juruna and many other leaders and peoples crying for the historical injustices, exploitations, devastation and all misery that has happened and continues to happen to indigenous peoples. This curse was loaded in the caravel of “progress”. We do not want this progress. What “progress” is it that only destroys what should be preserved?

The partial license granted by the Brazilian Environmental Agency IBAMA on the 26th of January is an arbitrary and genocidal decision. If built, Belo Monte, which they claim to be the 3rd largest dam in the world, will affect more than 13,000 indigenous people from 24 nations, in addition to the forest dwellers, *quilombolas* (residents of a Quilombo in Brazil) and all those who live in the Xingu River and are dependent on the river to maintain their lifestyle.

This project will flood an area about 640 square kilometers, expelling more than 20,000 families from their homes, affecting existing fauna and flora biodiversity in the region. The historical mistake will repeat itself as in the case of the Balbina Hydroelectric and the recent Jirau and Santo Antonio dams in the Madeira River, in the Amazon state of Rondonia.

The rivers feed our culture. For the Xingu not to be drawn in this valley of tears; so that the Xingu families' graveyards are not turned into a construction site and for those construction sites not to become cemeteries, we ask once again for the government to listen to our voice. Our demand is the cry of the nature that cannot defend itself, but can react.

Indigenous Greetings,

MARCOS APURINÃ
COIAB General Coordinator

SONIA GUAJAJARA
COIAB Vice-Coordinator