

# Communication addressed to the United Nations on the situation of Indigenous Peoples in relation to illicit economies and organized crime in Latin America

United Nations Member States  
United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)  
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)  
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

Dear Representatives,

The undersigned Indigenous organizations and authorities from the Amazon and other territories across Latin America express our deep concern regarding the expansion of organized crime and various illicit economies in our territories, the state responses based on militarization, and the impacts these dynamics are having on the lives of our peoples, our territories, and our governance structures.

Across vast areas of the region, activities such as drug trafficking, illegal mining, illegal logging, and other illicit economies are generating dynamics of violence, environmental degradation, and territorial control that undermine the security of Indigenous Peoples and the continuity of their ways of life. These dynamics are intertwined with historical and ongoing processes of territorial dispossession, structural racism, agrarian inequality, corruption, and the imposition of extractive and infrastructure projects that weaken Indigenous systems of territorial governance.

In response to these challenges, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues has consistently raised concerns. In 2023, it urged Amazonian States and the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization to address the impacts of transboundary illegal activities in the region. More recently, in 2025, it called on States to end violence against Indigenous Peoples in contexts of mining, armed conflict, and security policies (para. 55), and emphasized that States and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime must ensure the meaningful inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in strategies to prevent and combat environmental crimes (para. 87).

Similarly, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (Resolution No. 1/26, 2026) has warned that the expansion of organized crime and illicit economies represents a growing threat to Indigenous Peoples and human rights defenders. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples (Report A/80/181, 2025) has also highlighted that these territories are increasingly exposed to violence and conflicts linked to natural resources and illicit economies, and has stressed that Indigenous Peoples must be recognized as essential partners in building sustainable responses to territorial security and environmental protection.

In light of this situation, it is essential that responses to organized crime and illicit economies do not translate into new processes of militarization, criminalization, or the subordination of Indigenous governance systems. On the contrary, they must recognize and strengthen the rights to self-determination, self-government, and territorial control of Indigenous Peoples in Latin America.

In many territories, Indigenous Peoples are already developing their own responses, grounded in territorial monitoring systems, community guards, customary justice mechanisms, community-based economies, and ancestral knowledge, all of which contribute to the protection of territories and the sustainability of life.

**We respectfully call on:**

- **United Nations Member States**, to ensure that responses to organized crime fully respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples, avoiding exclusively militarized approaches and promoting solutions based on human rights, territorial governance, and effective participation.
- **The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**, to develop a dedicated study on the expansion of organized crime and illicit economies in Indigenous territories in the Amazon and other regions of Latin America, and to address this issue as a priority theme at its 26th Session in 2027.
- **The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)**, to explicitly include the impacts on Indigenous Peoples in its research on illicit economies, and to strengthen support for Indigenous-led responses related to self-protection, territorial defense, and community governance.

- **UNODC and the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC)**, to establish a dedicated mechanism for dialogue and consultation with Indigenous Peoples to address the impacts of organized crime in their territories and the responses to it, particularly with a view to developing a Protocol against crimes that affect the environment.
- **States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC)**, to ensure the full implementation of their commitments in accordance with the rights of Indigenous Peoples (Resolution 11/9). In particular, to guarantee their full and effective participation in the prevention and fight against corruption linked to environmental crimes, as well as to integrate Indigenous perspectives into anti-corruption strategies and policies.

Respectfully,

#### Indigenous organizations and authorities

1. Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónica (COICA) – Región Amazónica
2. Articulação dos Povos Indígenas do Brasil (APIB) - Brasil
3. Asociación Interétnica de Desarrollo de la Selva Peruana (AIDSESP) – Perú
4. Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (CONAIE) – Ecuador
5. Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas de la Amazonía Ecuatoriana (CONFENIAE) – Ecuador
6. Confederación de Pueblos de la Nacionalidad Kichwa del Ecuador (Ecuarunari) - Ecuador
7. Confederación de Pueblos Indígenas de Bolivia (CIDOB) – Bolivia
8. Comissão Transfronteiriça Juruá Yurúa Alto Tamaya - Perú y Brasil
9. Organización Regional AIDSESP Ucayali (ORAU) – Perú
10. Asociación Regional de Pueblos Indígenas de la Selva Central (ARPI SC) – Perú
11. Gobierno Territorial Autónomo de la Nación Wampis (GTANW) – Perú
12. Gobierno Territorial Autónomo de la Nación Chapra (GTANCH) – Perú
13. Gobierno Territorial Autónomo de la Nación Shawi – Perú
14. Nacionalidad Sápara del Ecuador (NASE) – Ecuador
15. Federación de Organizaciones Indígenas del Napo - FOIN - Ecuador
16. Associação Indígena Pariri - Brasil
17. Asociación de Comunidades Nativas para el Desarrollo Integral de Yurúa Yono Sharakoiai (ACONADIYSH) - Perú
18. Associação Ashaninka do Rio Amônia (APIWTXA) - Brasil
19. Organização dos Povos Indígenas do Rio Juruá (OPIRJ) - Brasil
20. Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas del Municipio de Villagarzón (ACIMVIP) – Colombia
21. Federación Nativa de Comunidades Kakataibo (FENACOCA) – Perú
22. Federación de Comunidades Nativas de Puerto Inca y Afluentes (FECONAPIA) – Perú
23. Federación de comunidades Nativas del medio Napo (FECONAMN) – Perú
24. Federación Regional Indígena Shawi de San Martín (FERISHAM) – Perú
25. Pueblo Sarayaku (Tayjasaruta) – Ecuador
26. Organización Indígena Pueblo Uwottüja del Sipapo (OIPUS) – Venezuela
27. Asociación Consejo Regional del Pueblo Nasa del Putumayo (KWE'SX KSXA'W) – Colombia
28. Pueblo Kokonuko – Colombia
29. Consejo de Mujeres Awajún y Wampís (Comuwuy) – Perú
30. Resguardo Indígena Siona de Buenavista – Colombia
31. Resguardo Indígena Siona Piñuña Blanco – Colombia
32. Resguardo La Llanura – Colombia
33. Resguardo Indígena inkal Awá Katsa Ti – Colombia
34. Jerusalén San Luis Alto Picudito – Colombia
35. Federación de Mujeres de la Región Apurímac FEMURA “Micaela Bastidas”-- Perú
36. Confederación de las Nacionalidades Indígenas del Perú (CONAIP) – Perú
37. Voces Indígenas Comunicaciones (VIC) – Perú
38. FICI (Otavalo – Agato) – Ecuador
39. FOIN (Yuturi Warmi) – Ecuador
40. Unión de Afectados por Texaco (UDAPT) – Ecuador
41. Ciudadela 6 de Enero, Pueblo Shuar Achuar – Ecuador

#### Civil society organizations

##### International

42. Amazon Watch – Internacional
43. Amazon Frontlines – Internacional
44. FIAN International – Internacional
45. Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) – Internacional
46. Environmental Defender Law Center – Internacional
47. Environmental Crime and Corruption Working Group of the UNCAC Coalition – Internacional
48. Front Line Defenders – Internacional
49. CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation – Global
50. Global Initiative to End Wildlife Crime – Global
51. Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature (GARN) – Global
52. Red Descolonialidad y Autogobierno – Internacional
53. International Rivers – Regional
54. International Academy of Sciences, Health and Ecology – Global
55. Protección Internacional Mesoamérica – Regional
56. GTI PIACI (Grupo de Trabajo internacional para la protección de pueblos en aislamiento y contacto inicial) – Regional
57. Red Territorios de Vida TICCA Latinoamérica – Regional

58. Centro por la Justicia y el Derecho Internacional (CEJIL) – Regional
59. Red Latinoamericana de Mujeres Defensoras de Derechos Sociales y Ambientales – Regional
60. Pacto Ecosocial e Intercultural del Sur – Regional
61. Que Paguen los Contaminadores – Regional
62. Cosmopolíticas – Brasil / Internacional
63. REPAM – Red Eclesial Panamazónica
64. La Verità Onlus - International Diplomacy -- Global

#### National

65. APT Norte – Ecuador
66. Alianza de Organizaciones por los Derechos Humanos del Ecuador – Ecuador
67. CDES – Ecuador
68. CEDENMA – Ecuador
69. Contracorriente – Ecuador
70. Coalición Nacional contra el Abuso Sexual (COCASEN) – Ecuador
71. Observatorio de Finanzas y Clima (OFC) – Ecuador
72. DECOIN – Ecuador
73. Corporación Pluricultural del Ecuador – Ecuador
74. Centro de Documentación de Derechos Humanos “Segundo Montes Mozo” – Ecuador
75. Mujeres Sectores Populares Luna Creciente – Ecuador
76. Movimiento Mujeres Luna Creciente – Ecuador
77. Asociación de Servicios de Hospedaje de Tena – Ecuador
78. QUIPA – Ecuador
79. Comisión Ecueménica de Derechos Humanos- CEDHU-- Ecuador
80. Centro de Políticas Públicas y Derechos Humanos (EQUIDAD) – Perú
81. Estudio para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Mujer (DEMUS) – Perú
82. Derechos Humanos y Medio Ambiente (DHUMA) – Perú
83. Asociación ProPurús – Perú
84. Pachamama Alliance Perú – Perú
85. Comisión Multisectorial de Acciones Comunitarias (Ventanilla) – Perú
86. Marcahuasi – Casa del Protector – Perú
87. Fundación Oasis – Perú
88. Proética, peruvian chapter Transparency International– Perú
89. AFAVIT Trujillo – Colombia
90. REPAM Colombia – Colombia
91. Red Interuniversitaria por la Paz (REDIPAZ) – Colombia
92. Güechas Hijos de Usminia – Colombia
93. Programa Somos Defensores – Colombia
94. Fundación para la defensa, promoción de los derechos humanos y el desarrollo sostenible (FUNDESOS) – Colombia
95. Asociación Comunitaria de Víctimas de Defensa del Derechos Humano Corozal Sucre– Colombia
96. Asociación MINGA – Colombia
97. Instituto Popular de Capacitación (IPC) – Colombia
98. Coalición de Movimientos y Organizaciones Sociales (COMOSOC) – Colombia
99. Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz – Colombia
100. Corporación Viso Mutop - Colombia
101. Mesa Ecueménica por la Paz (MEP) – Colombia
102. Corporación Cultural Arlequín y los Juglares – Colombia
103. Transparencia por Colombia -- Colombia
104. Centro de Documentación e Información Bolivia (CEDIB) – Bolivia
105. Reacción Climática – Bolivia
106. Salvaginas Colectiva Ecofeminista – Bolivia
107. Centro de Estudios Superiores Universitarios (CESU-UMSS) – Bolivia
108. Plataforma Boliviana Frente al Cambio Climático – Bolivia
109. Justiça Global – Brasil
110. Iniciativa Direito à Memória e Justiça Racial – Brasil
111. Centro de Trabalho Indigenista (CTI) – Brasil
112. Red Nacional de Organismos Civiles de Derechos Humanos (Red TDT) – México
113. Observatorio Ukamau Territorio y Dignidad – México
114. Red Nacional por la Defensa de la Soberanía Alimentaria (REDSAG) – Guatemala
115. Secretaría de Ambiente AGOEC – Argentina
116. Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS) – Argentina
117. Fundación Libera contra la Trata de Personas y la Esclavitud Todas sus Formas – Chile
118. Sustentarse --Chile
119. Red Dominicana de Estudios y Empoderamiento Afrodescendiente -RedAfros -- República Dominicana
120. Colectivo Voces Ecológicas (COVEC) – Panamá
121. MAMA COCA\_MEDICINE.TAFA – Perú, Colombia y Bolivia
122. Rural Development Organization, Pakistan
123. Mexiro A.C. –México
124. HEDA Resource Centre– Nigeria
125. Earth League International (ELI) – United States of America
126. Intelligent Whistleblower Coalition – Bangladesh
127. Botswana Watch Organization (BWO) – Botswana