

CEDI - P. I. B.
DATA 18/04/99
CL YAD 400 342

Working for the Nature of Tomorrow.



NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

1400 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036-2266 (202) 797-6800

August 26, 1993

Minister Mauricio Cortes
Embassy of Brazil
3006 Massachusetts Ave. NW
Washington, D.C.

Dear Minister,

The undersigned organizations appreciate the opportunity to meet with you, as a representative of the government of Brazil, to express our concern for the situation in the Yanomami Indian Reserve.

Although the details are not clearly known at this time, it appears that one or more events of extreme violence have occurred in the Homoxi/Xidea region of the Reserve, causing the deaths and/or disappearance of over 70 Yanomami people. We support the call of indigenous people and NGOs in Brazil for justice and the rule of law to be restored in the area of the Yanomami Reserve.

To this end, we request that you arrange an opportunity for concerned North American and Brazilian NGOs to meet with President Itamar Franco, when he visits the United States in September.

We also ask the Brazilian government to:

- * Conduct a thorough and open investigation (with the participation of Yanomami representatives) of the recent events in the Reserve, and bring the perpetrators of crimes against the Yanomami to justice.

- * Remove all goldminers from the demarcated Yanomami Reserve and ensure that the Reserve will be protected in future from illegal invasions. As you know, satellite imagery can easily identify the water pollution plumes from the garimpos.

- * Destroy illegal airstrips inside the Yanomami Reserve; but more important, prohibit planes flying out of Boa Vista and surrounding airstrips from carrying drums of fuel, which the miners need for their operations.

- * Invite the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to make an on-site investigation of the Yanomami case, as has been solicited several times by the Commission, with no response so far from the government of Brazil.

* Act expeditiously to physically and legally demarcate all other indigenous lands, in accordance with the Constitution of Brazil.

We will be contacting your office next week to discuss what arrangements can be made for a meeting with the President during his visit, and to learn more about progress in the investigation. We appreciate your assistance in communicating this letter to your government.

Very truly yours,



Barbara J. Bramble
Director of International Programs

On behalf of:

Zeze Weiss
AMANAKA'A

Bruce Rich
Environmental Defense Fund

Steven M. Tullberg
Indian Law Resource Center

Fernando Allegretti
Instituto de Estudos Amazonicos

Larry Cox
Rainforest foundation

Steve Mills
Sierra Club

Nina Shea
Puebla Institute

Allen Weinstein
Martin Andersen
The Center for Democracy