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YANOMAMI: IN SUPPORT OF THE FEDERAL COURT DECISION

The members of Action for Citizenship, mindful of the support of their organizations for the cause of the survival of indigenous peoples, especially the Yanomami, bring to the attention of the public the urgent need for compliance with the court order of 20th October 1989 which restricts access to the indigenous area, demobilizes the mineral prospectors located there and allows for their removal.

We wish to stress three points that are of the utmost importance for the consolidation of a democratic regime and its basic principle: respect for human dignity.

The first point resides in the need for the Executive branch to comply immediately with the recent injunction which establishes the rights of the Yanomami to the recovery of their lands. Non-compliance would result in a serious breach of the democratic order.

The second point concerns the need to guarantee a single and continuous Yanomami territory, without which their physical and cultural survival as an indigenous group will be impossible.

The third point is a consequence of the previous two. The arrangements for the removal from the Yanomami area and in a civilized manner of the prospectors need to be urgently adopted. Such measures include preventing the arrival of new prospectors, for example by closing landing strips, and arranging for the removal of those already there.

For this to take place it is vital that solutions are found which guarantee the return of the prospectors to their place of origin, the creation of employment opportunities for them, and other measures including the allocation of the necessary financial resources.

Given the urgency of these measures, combined action on the part of several government agencies will be required.

The associations that make up Action for Citizenship are ready to play their part in the implementation of the court order and, with this in mind, have requested an audience with the President of Brazil and the government ministers directly involved in the case. In addition we call upon all people of goodwill not only to recognise the justice and the urgency of the court order, but to show their support for the establishment of the indigenous area and for guarantees of dignified treatment of the prospectors leaving the area.

Senator Severo Gomes

Ophir Cavalcante, President of the Federal Council of the Brazilian Bar Association

Rose de Freitas, Federal Deputy

José Carlos Sabóia, Federal Deputy

Moema Santiago, Federal Deputy

Plínio de Arruda Sampaio, Federal Deputy

Abel Barros Lima, Commission for the Creation of the Yanomami Park

Marcos Terena, Union of Indigenous Nations

Carlos Chagas, Brazilian Press Association

Márcio Santilli, Indigenous Law Nucleus

Carlos Alberto Ricardo, Ecumenical Documentation and Information Centre

Júlio Gaiger, Indian Missionary Council

Bishop Luciano Mendes de Almeida, National Conference of Brazilian Bishops

Bishop Afonso Felipe Gregory, National Conference of Brazilian Bishops

Father Edenio Reis, Conference of Religious Orders of Brazil