

THE KICHWA FIRST PEOPLE OF SARAYAKU

EXECUTIVE AGREEMENT CODENPE No. 024 of June 10, 2004

ADDRESS: Francisco de Orellana General Villamil

Fax: 00 593 32 883 979

Email: Tayjasaruta@sarayaku.com

P.O. Box: 16 – 01 – 785

SARAYAKU – PASTAZA – ECUADOR

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE VISIT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COURT TO SARAYAKU

From the Kichwa First People of Sarayaku to national and international public opinion:

The case that the People of Sarayaku have been pushing since 2003 before the Inter-American System of Human Rights against the State of Ecuador has arrived at a defining moment.

This case deals with denunciations of the grave human rights violations committed against Sarayaku in relation to the State of Ecuador's lack of consultation when deciding to allow petroleum operations on the so-called Block 23 located in our territory. The case also addresses the impacts of that decision over our subsistence, life, and cosmovisión (worldview) and the acts of violence carried out during the arbitrary arrival of oil workers and Ecuadorian military to Sarayaku territory in 2002 and 2003. A judgment in this case would establish an important precedent with respect to the right to consultation and to free, prior, and informed consent of indigenous peoples regarding state decisions that greatly affect our territory and self-determination.

In July of 2011, a public hearing was held before the Inter-American Court in its San José, Costa Rica headquarters. The court listened to the testimonies of the victims, witnesses, and experts, who offered positions and arguments for both sides. Within the timeframe established by the Court, both sides presented their final written statements. All this means the procedural steps prior to a sentence bring issued have been completed.

However, the Inter-American Court, in exercise of its faculties, has decided that prior to the declaration of a sentence, it will carry out an in situ visit to the territory of the Kichwa People of Sarayaku, on April 21, 2012. Their objective will be to obtain additional information about the situation of the victims and the places in which the reported events have occurred.

The Sarayaku People extends a welcome to a delegation from the Inter-American Court, as well as to the Inter-American Commission that will also participate in the visit and to the State of Ecuador. Together with our representatives, Dr. Mario Melo Cevallos and the Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL), Sarayaku will actively participate in the upcoming delegation. We consider the visit of the Inter-American Court to the territory of an indigenous people – in resistance to the entry of petroleum activity in their territory – as a valuable opportunity to publicize amongst national and international audiences interested in the case the nefarious effects caused by unconsulted state decisions on indigenous peoples. Such decisions violate standards of international law that protect indigenous peoples. The visit is also an opportunity to emphasize the validity and enforceability of the right of indigenous peoples to consultation and to free, prior, and informed consent. This is in a context in which Ecuador has announced a large new petroleum tender that once again threatens the territories of Sarayaku and of other indigenous nationalities and communities of the South-Central Ecuadorian Amazon.

Sarayaku is issuing a call out to the Ecuadorian citizenry, to the indigenous, social, environmental, and human rights organizations of the world, to the media, and to all individuals committed to indigenous rights and Mother Earth, that they follow via Sarayaku's website (www.sarayaku.org) the development of these important proceedings and the sentencing of the Inter-American Court on the Sarayaku case.

Sarayaku, February 22, 2012

José Gualinga

TAYAK APU TAYJASARUTA

(President of the Kichwa First People of Sarayaku)

Contact:

Tayak Apu de Sarayaku (President), José Gualinga: 00 593 (0)83 29 27 34

Director of exterior relations, Franklin Toala: 00 593 (0)83 06 83 67 – 00 593 (0)83 22 67 38

Director of women, Patricia Gualinga: 00 593 (0)99 44 19 03

Email: tayjasaruta@sarayaku.com

CURAGA SALUA