

citing plans for construction of two trans-Andean gas pipelines importing natural gas from Argentina, and the planned construction of new gas-fired powerplants. The US-based Natural Resources Defense Council recently concluded a study demonstrating that improvement of energy delivery systems in Chile would make Ralco unnecessary.

The International Commission on Large Dams is an organization of engineers from 79 countries which promotes construction of dams throughout the world. Founded in 1928, it is headquartered in Paris, France.

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El Salvador: Deputies Threaten Indigenous Organization, Target Community

The deputies Renato Pérez, Adolfo Varela, and activist in the rightist ARENA political party Jorge Ruiz are presently attempting to evict the Indigenous residents of the Las Hojas county of the San Antonio del Monte Sonsonate jurisdiction. Pérez, Varela, and Ruiz accuse the leaders of the National Salvadoran Indigenous Organization (ANIS) of being land thieves and murderers.

Through the Ministry of Agriculture and Ranching, the plaintiffs presented their accusations against the members of ANIS before the tribunals of Sonsonate. They are accused of violating the agricultural norms of the country. At this point 10 members of ANIS were summoned to appear before the Sonsonate courts to present their testimony regarding this situation, according to the president of ANIS, Fermin Garcia Guardado.

Several Indigenous nations inhabit Las Hojas county, including Nahuats, Lenkas, and Mayas. This region was acquired by ANIS in 1978 as a safe region in which to work with the communities. They organized cooperatives and are working communally. In this same spot, 74 Indigenous people were massacred in 1983 by the Salvadoran army. It remains today a sacred place for them and they ask that it be respected.

Since January a number of violent actions have been directed at the Indigenous people of the region, such as on January 27 when unknown masked individuals entered the community at midnight and fired bullets on the house of the spiritual leader and Indigenous leaders connected to ANIS. At the same time they threatened to repeat the bloodshed of 1983. At that time Amnesty International had led a campaign of informing human rights organizations to pressure the Salvadoran state to enforce justice.

On the 12 of March, the national police ransacked the office of ANIS and detained Rafael Arturo Pérez and

Armando Antonio Pérez, two members of ANIS. The Pérez brothers appealed to the Supreme Court of Justice, but to no avail; the court ruled to have them expelled from the community.

Presently, a warrant is out for the arrest of Don Adrian Esquino, president ANIS, on the grounds that he has stolen land and murdered. On May 3, an explosion tore through the house of the Esquino family, but caused only structural damage. Faced with this situation, Esquino is urging human rights organizations to pressure the Salvadoran state to protect the rights of Indigenous communities under fire.

Colombia: Another Zenu Leader Killed

Before the very eyes of Indigenous and national authorities, one by one the members of the San Andrés de Sotavento Resguardo (Indian reserve), are being killed.

At 1:30 pm on Sunday, August 18, in the site known as La Arena (Córdoba state), two armed men on a black motorbike assassinated the Indigenous leader of the town council and mayoral ex-candidate of the town of San Andrés, Alberto Cheito Malo Alean.

The Zenu leader was 38 years old, married, and had two children. By profession, he was a civil engineer. He was the brother of Héctor Malo Vergara, Cacique (chief) of the San Andrés de Sotavento Resguardo, who was assassinated on March 26, 1994, along with three other Indigenous persons. This year 12 Zenu leaders have been killed.

The Zenu of the San Andrés de Sotavento protested the lack of any meeting with representatives of the state in search of solutions to this crisis of civil order. Their attempts have so far yielded nothing.

The Cacique Rosenberg Clemente confirmed that the Indigenous people are scared because they don't know who will be next or when.

He added that the massacres have continued unabated, aided by the indifference of the authorities. This comes after those same authorities had promised in a recent meeting in Martillo to establish a vigilante system and to assure peace and autonomy in the Resguardo.

The International Brotherhood of Human Rights has proposed the creation of a human rights commission in the area. The Church in turn has suggested that a Reconciliation Commission be set up in conjunction with international observers. Nothing has come of any of this, however.

The Cacique requested that impunity be stopped and that the results of the investigations of the murders under way be made public.

He also denounced the fact that there are heavily armed mercenaries in the majority of the ranches existing in the region of the San Andrés de Sotavento Resguardo in Córdoba and Sucre.

Information from El Tiempo, Bogotá