

Guaraní Community Uprooted

Their Homes Burnt to the Ground to Make Way for Tourist Resort!

(Misiones, Argentina) According to *AmerIndia - Boletín de las Comunidades Indígenas*, seven Guaraní families, including 17 children, were forced out of their homes, which were subsequently burned. This atrocity took place in the Port of Iguazú, in the northeastern province of Argentina, bordering on Brazil and Paraguay. Officials from the government's Land and Colonization Department joined police forces in uprooting the families and burning down their homes. The Guaraní families were then forced into a truck and abandoned in a barren, rocky area bordering a garbage dump, where they were forced to spend one of the coldest nights of the year. The violent eviction of the Guaraní families, none of whom held official title to their ancestral lands, came as a result of a contract between the Misiones provincial government and the Iguazú Company. The contract was for the sale of 500 hectares to the Iguazú Company (at a cost of \$400 million). The company is constructing a tourist complex on the land, which is adjacent to the world-famous Iguazú Falls.

People from various organizations expressed their outrage over the evictions and their solidarity with the Guaraní families. The Bishop of Misiones, Joaquín

Piera, and the Popular Ecumenical Action Branch in Misiones were among them. Representatives from many Indian organizations expressed support for their Guaraní brothers and sisters.

The leader of the Guaraní community, José Espindola, expressed "...great sorrow for the seventeen children who were exposed to the extremely low nighttime temperatures as a result of the eviction, as well as for the incredible lack of sensitivity demonstrated by the white men with respect to our culture and lifestyle."

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Indian People of Roraima Issue Call for Help

(Brazil) The Macuxi and the Wauja of Roraima are threatened with extinction because the policies of FUNAI (*the Brazilian Bureau of Indian Affairs*) which encourage encroachment on the lands, lives, and properties of Indigenous peoples. Like the Wauja, leaders of the 15,000 surviving savannah Macuxi have for years formally complained about actions of illegal poachers on their lands. They have witnessed FUNAI effectively defending only those who usurp Macuxi and Wauja lands, lives, and property, and that FUNAI policies have precipitated another era of lawlessness in this region of Roraima.

Acts of violence have been committed on behalf of poachers and landowners who are sanctioned by complicitous FUNAI/Brazilian laws. These acts include assault, battery, and hundreds of murders. They have been committed against trade union leaders, competing peasants and/or poachers, as well as Indian people.

Two Macuxi Indians from the Jiboia maloca (communal house) of Santa Cruz, in the state of Roraima were killed on June 25, 1990. The two men, 19 year-old Mario Davis and 35 year-old Damiao Mendes, were allegedly murdered by employees of an influential landowner while they were out herding pigs. Their bodies were found on the banks of the Mau River, three

kilometers from their house. The *Conselho Indígena de Roraima (Indian Council of Roraima - CIR)* informed the public of the murders.

Earlier in April 1990, the CIR petitioned the federal police and state prosecutor to intervene in racist crimes against lives and properties of Indigenous peoples. They requested an impartial investigation of associated lawlessness involving Roraima's police and poachers and landlords. At present, they also demand: (1) that they undertake full and impartial investigation of the recent murders of Mendes and Davis; (2) that they bring the perpetrators to justice; (3) that they publicize all related decisions, findings, and actions in adjudication of these cases in Roraima.

Atamai, the principal chief of the Wauja Nation seeks support from international groups and individuals concerning the violation of their sovereignty and human rights, including religious rights through usurpation of their traditional lands, destruction of their homes and property, and thinly veiled threats upon their lives by foreign and domestic poachers acting in collusion with the Brazilian government. This very old land dispute between FUNAI and the Wauja concerns sacred and fertile agricultural land located in the southwestern