

11 centers closest to the border have been greatly affected. Furthermore, out of the 25 Quichua communities on both sides of the border (10 in Ecuador and 15 in Peru), the number of affected families reaches 800. Finally, other smaller bordering communities also suffer from the war. These include the Siona, Secoya, Cofán, and the Shiwiar communities. The total number of Indians in Ecuador alone affected by this war reaches 20,000. If the conflict continues, Macas predicts the loss of more Indigenous lives, homes, and livelihoods.

A recent article in the Quito daily *El Comercio* describes the social and economic effect of the war. According to the report, 180 Indigenous communities and approximately 3,000 families "are faced with a social, economic, and psychological crisis because their crops and animals have disappeared and their understanding of their own territory has been changed" since the fighting began. "Life is not the same. Tranquillity has not returned to the selva since the cease-fire," said Luis Yampies, a leader of the Shuar community. "Many communities cannot return to their lands because they are mined. That was a defense strategy by the Ecuadorian military, but we are affected."

In formal and informal declarations, Indigenous groups have denounced the violence and demanded that the governments of Ecuador and Peru stop the war. COICA (The Coordinating Body for the Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin), an umbrella group that represents Indigenous organizations from the eight nation-states with territorial claims in the Amazon Basin, proposed the creation of a bi-national park which would demilitarize the conflict zone and guarantee peace for years to come. The proposal was

born out of an impending need to protect the environment and the desire to re-integrate the Shuar and Achuar communities in Ecuador with their cultural counterparts in Peru—the Aguaruna and the Huambiza Indians.

Another—perhaps more radical—declaration signed by members

of both CONAIE and CONFENIAE (Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon), demands, among other things, that Ecuador be recognized as a "multinational, multicultural and multilingual country" (see side-

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Ecuadorian Indigenous Nationalities to the nation and world:

The Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) and the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENIAE) met in an Encounter of Solidarity for Peace and Dignity in the city of Sucúa, Ecuador, at the headquarters of the Interprovincial Federation of Shuar-Achuar Centers (FICSHA), on February 21-22, 1995. After analyzing recent conflicts between Ecuador and Peru, we declare the following:

In the countries of Latin America and around the world and, particularly among countries which are in conflict, we comprise a diversity of peoples and cultures which are historically located in our own territories.

The border conflicts that today lead to bloodshed in neighboring populations and destroy their harmony and lifestyles, are not in our interests. Rather, they have led to a stalemate and a deepening poverty for the communities involved.

For these reasons, we Indigenous nationalities propose:

1. That Ecuador be constitutionally recognized as a pluri-national, multi-cultural, and pluri-lingual state, because the recognition of and respect for different peoples is not an obstacle to the unity of a diverse country, but rather a resource that will strengthen its cohesion.

2. In homage to the International Decade of Indigenous Peoples that the United Nations declared, we demand of international organizations and the guarantee nations of the Río Protocol that Indigenous peoples in Ecuador and Peru be included in the peace negotiations as active participants in the search for a definitive solution to the conflict.

3. That the Ecuadorian State permanently suspend the colonization programs in the ancestral lands of the Indigenous nationalities of the Amazon Region.

4. The legalization of Indigenous territories in the border area and in the Amazon Region as a fundamental guarantee of the security and territorial integrity of the country.

5. That the National Parks, Protected Forests, and Forest Reserves be given to and administered directly by Indigenous organizations for the appropriate use and management of their natural resources.

6. That we be repaid for the socio-economic and environmental impacts caused by the war; a guarantee of the return of displaced peoples to their Indigenous communities; and the establishment of a fund for the relatives of civilians killed in the conflict.

7. That the budget for the Intercultural Bilingual Education program be augmented.