



VIOLENCE AGAINST INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN PERU: THE ASHANINKA MASSACRE

By Katia Arya

On August 18-19 1993, the village of Mazamari in the province of Satipo, located in the central rainforest region of Peru, was attacked by 150 guerrillas belonging to the revolutionary Maoist group Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path). The massacre resulted in the death and brutal mutilation of 87 Ashaninkas, about a third of which were women and children.

During the early morning hours, a band of Sendero guerrillas came disguised in traditional Ashaninka garb demanding weapons. When the villagers did not comply with their demands, the brutal attacks began.

This has been the worst attack on the Ashaninkas since the capture of Sendero Luminoso's leader, Abimael Guzman. This massacre is just one of the many genocidal actions system-



The massacre left more than 200 orphans

atically conducted against the Indigenous communities that refuse to submit to Sendero's Maoist doctrine of a "Revolution for the People". Due to the Ashaninkas' resistance, they have been targeted and persecuted. Throughout Peru, violence and terror on the part of Sendero Luminoso and the Armed

forces have plagued the nation's inhabitants. In the rainforest regions, since 1992 alone, there have been 1,491 indigenous victims.

According to the local people, some of the attackers of the august 18-19 massacre were young Ashaninka rebels. Sendero will often plant Indigenous rebels within the villages and instigate the Armed Forces' violence against them to prove the government's hypocrisy and betrayal of Indigenous peoples.

About 700 families have been severely

affected by the terror, abandoning their lands, villages, and their way of life. Due to the rapid changes wrought by the invasion of both Sendero guerrillas and the Peruvian Armed Forces, traditional ways of life have been severely disrupted, causing extremely unstable living conditions. The continuous threat of

Sendero's terrorism has forced Ashaninkas and other Indigenous communities of Peru's Central Jungle to concentrate all their energies and human resources toward self-defense.

In response to the unwarranted violence and brutality, the Indigenous peoples of the

Central region are actively engaged in community organizing and creating alliances with Indigenous organizations. The First Congress of the Ashaninka Indigenous Peoples of the Peruvian Amazon will be held from November 29 to December 3, 1993, in Satipo, Peru. Other Indigenous organizations, such as CECONSEC, ANAP, and FECONACA, as well as representatives from concerned public and private institutions will also be attending.

ACTION

There is an immediate need for relief funds for the 200 Ashaninka orphans and widows as a result of the massacre in the Mazamari village. CECONSEC is also in need of economic aid to continue supporting the organization of the First Congress of Indigenous Peoples of the Central rainforest region of Peru. For more information on how you can help, please contact:

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