



A MESSAGE FROM THE HUAORANI

(Ecuador) Under increasing pressure from indigenous peoples of the Ecuadorian Amazon and environmental organizations within and outside Ecuador, Conoco Oil Company announced on October 11 that it was withdrawing from all oil development in the region of the Amazon that comprises the traditional territory of the Huaorani Indians. Conoco's decision came three weeks after the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights heard arguments by SAIIC coordinator, Nilo Cayuqueo and Lauri Adams of the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund. They argued that actions by the government of Ecuador approving Conoco's massive oil development project in the heart of the Huaorani's traditional lands violates the Indians' basic human rights to life, health, home, family, and culture.

The following letter was sent to Conoco by the Huaorani organization in the Ecuadorian Amazon (ONHAE). See issues Vol 5 Nos 3&4 of the SAIIC Newsletter for more information on the Conoco - Huaorani case.

General Manager
DuPont - Conoco Company
United States of America

Dear Sir:

The Organization of the Huaorani Nationality of the Ecuadorian Amazon Region (ONHAE), in an extraordinary meeting held on the 10th and 11th of January, 1991, adopted the following resolutions:

1. That oil exploitation in the Huaorani territory must be prevented, because the pollution has killed many animals, fishes and plants, and has produced many diseases. That is what we have seen, and it is threatening the life of the Huaoranis.
2. That the oil companies enter our territory without taking us into account. That they come in and do their work despite the fact that they know we have the property rights over this land, disrupting our organizational process; the Conoco Company wants to work by itself, using, in an isolated fashion, Huaoranis from Cononaco and Yasuni.
3. That the Conoco Company is discussing the fate of the Huaoranis in meetings in which the Huaoranis are not present and that we are treated as if we are guests. We must not be treated as guests when the discussion is about our lives. We must correct this situation, because our lives are on the line.
4. That we, the ONHAE, ratify our opposition to the construction of any roads in Huaorani territory.
5. That the drilling of oil wells pollutes the rivers.
6. That the Huaorani culture survive and prosper. We do not want companies to come and civilize us.
7. That we do not want to be deceived by the oil companies.
8. That we are aware of the problems of the world. Despite these, we will continue to defend our land.

Awaiting your response to Caja Postal 17-21-166, Quito, Ecuador, we remain sincerely,

Ram'n Huanoni Coba,
President, ONHAE

Moi Enomenga Nantohua,
Vice President, ONHAE

Eugenio Quemperi C.
Secretary, ONHAE