

### **RES 3.056 Indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation and conservation of nature in the Amazon region and Chaco**

AWARE that the Amazon region and Chaco contain a high concentration of both biological and cultural diversity, the latter encompassing over 400 indigenous groups that have been critical to the maintenance of the region's biodiversity, including over 64 indigenous groups that live in voluntary isolation;

RECOGNIZING that the physical and cultural survival of these isolated groups fundamentally depends on the integrity of their lands and territories and the continued access to the resources upon which their livelihoods and cultures depend;

AWARE that the lands and territories inhabited by indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation are rich in biological diversity and minimally disturbed, precisely because they constitute refuges located far from the destructive impacts of development trends;

CONCERNED about the threats to the lives, health, culture and natural resources of indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation posed by the invasion of their lands and the extraction of natural resources by others;

CONCERNED that actions taken to date to protect indigenous groups living in voluntary isolation have not halted the violent encounters, epidemics and forced assimilation that have resulted in the disappearance of entire ethnic groups, decimation of their cultures and degradation of the natural resources upon which they depend;

CONCERNED that the disappearance of indigenous groups living in voluntary isolation in the Amazon region and Chaco signifies a loss of the irreplaceable cultural heritage of the last indigenous groups that have maintained harmony with their surroundings, as well as their invaluable knowledge of biodiversity and forest management;

RECOGNIZING the duty of humanity to respect the dignity, life, culture, lands and territories of indigenous groups living in voluntary isolation, in addition to the preservation of natural and cultural diversity of the planet for present and future generations;

RECOGNIZING the need to take immediate actions at national, regional and international levels to develop programmes that promote a closer articulation between the conservation of nature in the Amazon region and Chaco and the protection of the lives and territories of indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation;

RECOGNIZING that indigenous peoples have the right to various modalities of property, possession and use of their territories within the legal framework established by the states that they inhabit;

AWARE that the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, ratified by the majority of countries of the Amazon region and Chaco, establishes in Articles 14 and 15 that "The rights of ownership and possession of the peoples concerned over the lands which they traditionally occupy shall be recognised (...) Governments shall take steps as necessary (...) to guarantee effective protection of their rights of ownership and possession (...) rights of the peoples concerned to the natural resources pertaining to their lands shall be specially safeguarded";

RECOGNIZING that the concept of the '(indigenous and local) Community Conserved Areas', as discussed and approved by the V<sup>th</sup> IUCN World Parks Congress (Durban, 2003) and mentioned in Decision VII/28 of the 7th Conference of Parties to the Convention of Biological Diversity (Kuala Lumpur, 2004), respects the rights of local communities and indigenous peoples to define and manage

their protected areas by themselves, while also allowing recognition from governments and listing by the United Nations;

MINDFUL of the resolutions and recommendations relating to indigenous peoples and conservation adopted at the 1<sup>st</sup> World Conservation Congress (Montreal, 1996), as well as at other Congresses and General Assemblies of IUCN, which have reaffirmed the institution's commitment to international legislation relating to indigenous peoples, including ILO Convention 169, the CBD and *Agenda 21*, as well as the Political Declaration of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002) that reaffirmed the vital role indigenous peoples play in sustainable development;

FURTHER MINDFUL of human rights recognized in diverse international instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention for the Prevention of Genocide and UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity;

CONCERNED that, in spite of the above resolutions and recommendations, the treatment of the special case of indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation still remains as a fundamental gap in international agreements; and

ALSO CONCERNED that the survival of the indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation in the Amazon region and Chaco requires immediate and urgent action, as does the conservation of the biological diversity of their lands and territories;

The World Conservation Congress at its 3<sup>rd</sup> Session in Bangkok, Thailand, 17–25 November 2004:

1. REQUESTS the IUCN Director General, Commissions, and members, within available resources, to promote the necessary coordination with the governments of the Amazon region and Chaco, in order to develop and implement proposals aimed at protecting the lands and territories of indigenous groups living in voluntary isolation, as part of the respective countries' indigenous peoples policies and conservation strategies in the Amazon region and Chaco;
2. FURTHER REQUESTS that this should be done in cooperation with the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization, indigenous organizations at local, national and regional levels, and other relevant non-governmental organizations, and should be based upon the following principles:
  - (a) indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation have the right to the protection of their lives, ownership of their lands and territories, and sustainable utilization of natural resources located within these lands and territories;
  - (b) indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation have the right to freely decide to remain isolated, maintain their cultural values, and to freely decide if, when and how they wish to integrate into national society; and
  - (c) as established by the CBD, measures for the conservation of biological diversity, in particular the establishment and management of protected areas, should be taken with full respect for the rights of indigenous peoples (CBD Decision VII/28);
3. URGES the governments of the Amazon region and Chaco, in close coordination with national and local indigenous organizations, to immediately take regional and national initiatives that ensure respect for the right of indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation to their lands and territories and to the effective protection of such lands and territories, as well as of the cultural diversity that these indigenous peoples represent, including through provision of sufficient financial resources and ensuring law enforcement;
4. REQUESTS that this work should be grounded in a common agenda that recognizes the synergies between the rights of indigenous people in voluntary isolation and the conservation of nature; and

5. RECOMMENDS that multilateral, bilateral, and non-governmental organizations and other entities interested in the survival of indigenous peoples combine forces with the concerned countries, indigenous organizations, and the conservation community to secure the effective protection of the lives, lands and territories, nature, cultures and communities of indigenous peoples that live in voluntary isolation in the Amazon region and Chaco.

State member Sweden abstained from voting on this motion for reasons given in the Swedish Government's general statement on the motions process (see page x).

The Department of State, United States, provided the following statement for the record:

*State and agency members United States refrained from engaging in deliberations on this motion and took no national government position on the motion as adopted for reasons given in the US General Statement on the IUCN Resolution Process.*