
Declaration of support from SALSA for the Removal of Settlers Illegally Occupying the Apyterewa and Trincheira-Bacajá Indigenous Territories

The Society for the Anthropology of the Lowlands of South America (SALSA), an international academic and professional organization made up of professors, students and researchers, expresses its support for the removal of settlers illegally occupying the Apyterewa Indigenous Territory (homeland of the Parakanã people) and the Trincheira-Bacajá Indigenous Territory (homeland of the Xikrin people).

This is an ongoing inter-ministerial action that brings together various government agencies and is of fundamental importance, and serves to repair damages that have been deepened in recent years and of historical reparation. A few years ago, a joint action led by IBAMA was carried out, but the previous administration of the Brazilian presidency did not carry it out, going so far as to shutter the IBAMA office in the region. In the current political moment in Brazil, in which the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples was created and the President of FUNAI is herself Indigenous, and in which attention to environmental rights gains strength under the leadership of Environment Minister Marina Silva, the effort to remove settlers illegally Indigenous lands begun with important institutional support and care.

The Apyterewa and Trincheira-Bacajá Indigenous Lands are among the most invaded in Pará today, and until now the Indigenous peoples themselves have gone to great effort to protect their territories, even suffering several death threats. Land invasions have resulted in enormous deforestation in these territories, with great loss of biodiversity, and cleared areas are now occupied by a large number of non-Indigenous squatters. It should be noted that both Indigenous Territories are near the Belo Monte Hydroelectric Plant, the construction of which led to greater pressure on indigenous lands, conservation and extractive activities in the region, as predicted in several studies and documented in actions by the Federal Public Ministry (MPF) of Altamira.

SALSA not only supports this action, hoping that it will be successful and that it will be done respecting the human rights of all local residents, but also points to the need to guarantee the protection of all Indigenous Territories. We call for greater security of the borders of Indigenous lands, which is currently insufficient, and for the long-term protection and security of all people involved, as well as respect for human rights, especially of the Xikrin and Parakanã Indigenous peoples and their territories, which have been so regularly and recurrently threatened.

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