

URGENT ACTION

COVID-19 THREATENS INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' LIVES

On 1 July, the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENIAE) reported 1,215 confirmed (45% of 2,673 people tested) and 622 suspected cases of COVID-19 in Indigenous Amazonian communities. They face a higher risk situation due to scarcity of drinking water, food sources, medical supplies, health services and COVID-19 tests. An oil spill from 7 April and seasonal floods polluted the environment and food and water sources of many communities, increasing their risk of infection. We call on the President to urgently implement an action plan to protect them guaranteeing their human rights.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

President Lenín Moreno

Presidencia de la República del Ecuador
García Moreno N10-43 entre Chile y Espejo
170401, Quito, Ecuador

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Dear President Lenín Moreno,

I write to you regarding the urgent situation of Indigenous Peoples in the Ecuadorian Amazon due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Indigenous organizations have denounced that the government's response to this situation has been inadequate and ineffective so far, reporting that by 1 July 2020 there were 1,215 confirmed cases (45% of the 2,673 people tested) and 622 suspected cases of COVID-19 among Indigenous persons in the Ecuadorian Amazon.

I ask you to urgently design and implement an action plan to protect Indigenous Peoples in the Ecuadorian Amazon from the COVID-19 pandemic, complying with human rights standards and in consultation with Indigenous organizations and authorities. This plan should include, among others, actions intended to stop the spread of the virus while guaranteeing their rights to life, to health, to water, to a healthy environment and to an adequate standard of living.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

According to [government information](#), by 2 July 2020, there had been 50,915 COVID-19 confirmed cases (41% of 121,328 people tested) and 4,246 deaths in Ecuador, which has a population of 17 million.

According to the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENIAE), by 1 July 2020, [there were 1,215 confirmed cases](#) of COVID-19 (45% of the 2,673 people tested) among Indigenous persons in the Ecuadorian Amazon, of which 116 had recovered and 25 had died. Additionally, there were 622 “suspected cases” of persons showing symptoms of COVID-19, of which 12 had died. Approximately 290,000 Indigenous persons belonging to 10 nationalities (ethnicities) live in the Ecuadorian Amazon.

People's in voluntary isolation or in recent contact could even be at risk of extinction since their populations are often small and their immune capacity could be reduced by lack of genetic diversity.

In addition to the pandemic, on 7 April, an oil spill in the Transecuadorian Pipeline System (SOTE) and the Crude Oil Pipeline (OCP) polluted the Coca and Napo rivers, affecting the environment, water, food and livelihoods of nearly 120,000 people of which 27,000 are Indigenous persons, mainly belonging to the Kichwa and Shuar nationalities (ethnicities).

On 29 April, a group of Indigenous and human rights organizations filed a constitutional protection proceeding and requested precautionary measures on behalf of the nearly 120,000 people affected by the oil spill. The petition holds responsible the Ministry of Energy and Natural and Non-Renewable Resources, the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Public Health, the state oil company Petroecuador, and the private company OCP. The petitioners [reported](#) that the judge in charge of the case endangered guarantees to due process through procedural irregularities.

On 22 June, Indigenous and human rights organizations in Ecuador [issued a submission](#) to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on the vulnerable situation of Indigenous Peoples in Ecuador in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Spanish.

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: [13 August 2020]

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Indigenous Peoples in the Amazon facing COVID-19 (They, them, theirs)

ADDITIONAL TARGETS

Juan Carlos Zevallos López, Minister of Public Health

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And copies to:

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