

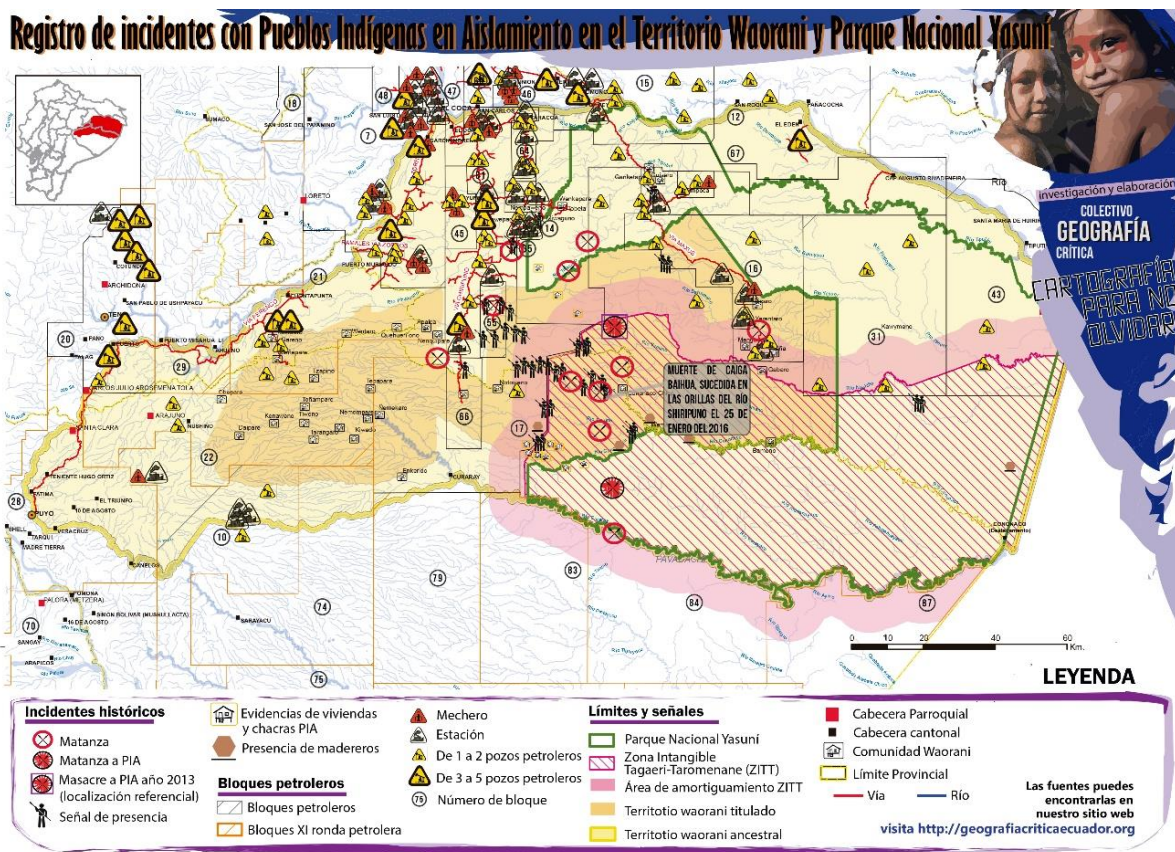
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**ONGOING CONFLICT: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
IN ISOLATION ATTACK A WAORANI FAMILY IN
THE INTANGIBLE ZONE OF THE YASUNI
NATIONAL PARK. Ecuador**

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Introduction¹

On the afternoon of January 25th, 2016, in the Intangible Zone (ZI) Tagaeri Tarmenane in the Shiripuno River before the confluence with the Cononaco Chico River, a group of indigenous peoples in isolation attacked a Waorani couple sailing to Baameno. This community is located in the Intangible Zone Tagaeri-Tarmenane and in the Yasuni National Park and Biosphere Reserve. The couple was transporting tourists to Ñoneno and returning to Baameno to participate in a reunion. As a result of the attack, Caiga² Baihua was killed, pierced by four spears, and his wife Onenka was injured on the leg.



Map 1. Yasuni National Park and Biosphere Reserve and site of the attack.

¹ This document was delivered on March 3rd, 2013 to the Resident Representative of the United Nations in Ecuador, Diego Zorrilla and to the Cooperation Attaché of the European Union Delphine Marié.

² Which means "Bird from waterfall".

Thank you to Anikka Sutter and Chris Russell for the translation of the document into English.

According to the Onenka's narration, the couple was sailing downstream but some logs blocked their way, which prompted Caiga to use a chainsaw to allow them to pass through. Then, a group of four isolated indigenous peoples attacked them from a hill. Immediately, Caiga screamed at his wife: "I was pierced, take care of my children, run!" The group went down and threw four spears at him. They cut some of the spears with a machete and threw them at Onenka. A spear pierced through her leg but hit a fuel tank and bounced off before its pointed end got embedded in her. Another one almost pierced her shoulder blade but she moved and fell into the river. The young attackers wanted to finish her off, but the oldest one told them not to and said to Onenka: "go ahead... if you die on the way you will die and if not, you will live." She began floating downstream again, on the canoe, and soon fainted from her injuries. When she reached Boanamo, she was found and saved.

Considering they did not have a State permit for the operation of an airstrip or a radio transmitter in Boanamo, her relatives moved her to the community of Baameno. From there, they communicated by radio and the next morning, the Department for the Protection of Isolated Peoples transferred Onenka to the Hospital in Coca. The same day, Caiga's brothers went to collect the body of the deceased and the Department delivered a coffin for Caiga Baihua. On January 30th, Onenka was moved to a hospital in the city of Quito where the Prosecutor's Office took the case and she remained under police custody.

1. CONTEXT / BACKGROUND

The above facts are part of the extreme economic, political and sociocultural conflict caused by the expansion of the extractive frontiers of the Ecuadorian Amazon, mainly oil. This activity involves opening roads to attract new settler populations, tourists, unauthorized overflights, illegal forest extraction and the military. The impact of these activities, caused by deforestation, changes in the use of the forests, and violence against jungle inhabitants, affect the populations of the entire Amazon Basin, heightening the pressure over their territories and causing shortages of essential goods. The history of the Amazonian groups is comprised of different stages of accumulation of raw material and extraction of resources, as well as civilizing projects.

Since the mid-nineteenth century, the expansion of the rubber plantations pressured their territories with hunting and enslavement, forced displacement and the destruction of populations (Berroando and Cabo de Villa, 2005). Until the 1950s, the Waorani people lived as semi-nomadic clans of hunters and gatherers in the highlands of the Ecuador's northern Amazon. Later, they were converted to

Christianity by the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) and received more outside contact with the arrival of oil companies, which opened the way for other types of interventions. Other ethnic, kinship and opposition groups, such as Tagaeri, Taromenane and others that have not yet been defined (but that today are called Peoples in Voluntary Isolation (PVI) due to their refusal to submit to the extractive and civilizing agents), inhabit forests cornered by different conflicts.

It is important to mention that the characterization of the Waorani as a culture of violence, war and revenge is short-sighted and ignores the historical context of the forced contacts to which they have been subjected. In fact, the permissiveness of the State provoked and allowed the reduction of their territories and, consequently, the cornering of their population.

THE SPIRAL OF VIOLENCE AGAINST THE AMAZONIAN PEOPLES

Within the context of accelerated loss of territories and use of violence from local, State and transnational extractive agents since 2003, the inter-ethnic confrontations between Waorani clans, as well as between Waorani people and the isolated Tagaeri-Taromenane clans, have deepened. What we report below are the milestones of external violence and their impact on inter-ethnic relationships:

1. In 2003, in their search for new logging territories, groups of illegal loggers – mainly for mahogany and cedar – established themselves in the area of Tihuino and Ñoneno through commercial relationships and kinship. They stimulated an old vengeance for the death of a Waorani man at the hands of the Tagaeri. As a result of that reawakening, Waorani warriors murdered approximately thirty people, mainly women, children and an old man. In addition, loggers successfully expanded into new territories because the already contacted areas were running out of wood.

In these circumstances, the Prosecutor's Office went to the scene of the crime, but did not take any actions to unveil the murders. They did not discuss the presence of illegal actors nor take measures to prevent their repetition. Instead, they argued the "non-citizen" condition of the deceased, portraying indifference, racism and lack of commitment from the State to guarantee the exercise of indigenous peoples' human rights. As for public opinion, these facts went unnoticed or were classified by the newspapers as a matter of "Indians", revealing insensitivity from both society and the State.

2. In 2006, there were rumors of another massacre in the Shiripuno. A group of citizens – biologists and lawyers – filed a lawsuit before the Inter-American

Court of Human Rights (ICHR) requesting precautionary measures for the protection of Isolated Indigenous Peoples. Due to the memory of 2003, these measures were granted immediately. Starting from 2008, the State implemented a Precautionary Measures Plan from the Environmental and Social Reparation Program (PRAS) of the Environmental Ministry. The PRAS created a station for forestry control and closed the bridge over the Shiripuno River, but neglected other areas of pressure mainly related to the oil operations. In 2010, the direction of the Precautionary Measures Plan was transferred to the Ministry of Justice.

3. The previous deaths unleashed other acts of vengeance. In 2013, isolated peoples of the community of Yarentaro (block 16 operated by Repsol) attacked and killed the elderly Waorani Ompure and Buganey. The Waorani warriors then carried out an incursion that caused approximately 30 Tagaeri-Taromenane deaths. As a result of the operation and following their traditional warrior ethics, two female children were adopted so they would not be abandoned after the death of their relatives.

The Prosecutor's Office tried to atone for the deaths of the elderly by giving food to the families in block 16. This food was used to carry out new incursions that led to the death of approximately 30 Tagaeri-Taromenane, many of them children and women.

The Prosecutor's Office of Orellana demonstrated their lack of knowledge regarding the Waorani culture and their incompetence, as their intervention – bringing police into the community – only worsened the situation. These police entered with the purpose of saving the PVI girls that had been adopted by the Waorani families. They did not take into consideration that their immune system was very vulnerable to the viruses of the exterior world, and that taking them to the hospital was a high risk to their health. The emotional impact of being separated from their culture by strangers over the air was also not considered. Even worse, the supposed accomplishment of the Prosecutor's Office of delivering the girls to the Baameno community could entail violent reactions taken by isolated groups towards that community.

In other words, despite the existence of the Precautionary Measures Plan, the State did not act timely or adequately. It failed to prevent the cycle of vengeance and deaths, and did not deliver proper reparation according to the culture of the victims' families. On the contrary, it caused more anger

and indignation to the kinship groups, causing new violent excursions. After the deaths of Ompure and Buganey several Waoranis felt upset with the Prosecutions Office when it entered to collect data.

There have been seven known incursions on blocks operated by Andespetroleum and on the Intangible Zone, from block 16 to the block Armadillo, in the south part of block 17. Despite the fact that, for over twenty one days, several actors officially warned that incursions were being arranged (buying food and weapons, preparing warriors), there was no activation of a Contingency Plan. Clearly, the Precautionary Measures Plan did not concern itself with an integral peace and containment process.

The deaths of the isolated group are considered to correspond with the Nushiño group, however another interpretation is that the deaths were of the Cononaco Chico Armadillo-Cushiyaku.

The incompetent Prosecutors Office and Ministries of Justice, Health, Environment, the Interior and Strategic Resources response to the massacre of the isolated peoples violated the indigenous people's human rights. They prosecuted the Waorani responsible for the incursion, first accusing them of ethnocide-genocide, then murder. While there was an anthropological examination that attempted to investigate the causes in context, there was no critical analysis of the actions that the State could have taken to prevent these events.

The State establishes, in the 57th article of the Ecuadorian Constitution, that it is responsible for reducing to a minimum the probability of attacks and for preventing other causes of violent confrontations, but its actions have not been effective. The State did not prevent the massacre of the Tagaeri-Taromenani groups, and instead exacerbated the situation.

During the prosecution, seven wao warriors from the Yarentaro and Dicaro were apprehended. Two escaped, while the remaining five, one of whom was an elderly man, were imprisoned for nine months. Afterwards, they were freed due to the lack of material evidence (bodies) based on the argument of the Constitutional Court, another judicial action would be initiated under the principle of alternative indigenous justice provided by the Constitution.

At the moment, seventeen Waorani remain in custody, having to present themselves every fifteen days for alternative measures while they wait for the homicide trial. These actions of the prosecution have been counterproductive and caused more aggressiveness. The families' of the prosecuted livelihoods have

been affected, for example in regards to the availability of bush meat through hunting.

While this document does not think the deaths should remain unpunished, we argue that prison and prosecution was not the most pertinent response. These peoples in initial contact know little about the legal framework of the surrounding society. Moreover, the State justice system does not have an understanding of the values and moral codes of indigenous peoples, especially the Amazonian.³

Civil servants have not examined their failures since the massacre of 2013. On the contrary, they attempted to prevent the publication of the book “Una Tragedia Ocultada” (A Hidden Tragedy) as part of their cover up of the events in the Waorani territory. The State even confiscated books on its release. It prosecuted the attackers to shift their responsibility to the Waorani.

The Precautionary Measures Plan has been in place since 2008 in order to fulfill the resolution of the 2006 Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, which included measures to protect the PVI. However most of the State’s actions under the Precautionary Measures Plan have been ineffective or made the situation even worse, with the 2013 massacre as the most telling example. Part of the problem is how unstable the Precautionary Measures Plan has been. It was originally under the direction of the Ministry of Environment, and then moved to the Ministry of Justice, which has been responsible for the execution of the Precautionary Measures Plan on behalf of the Tagaeri-Taromenane people since 2010 (Executive Decree No. 503 from 2010). There is also a Department for the Protection of Indigenous Peoples in Isolation that emerged from the recommendations of the Presidential Commission to investigate the Massacre of 2013 and establish public policy recommendations. However, all State actions from 2008 to 2016 have emphasized oil company interests over the interests of indigenous peoples.⁴

For example, the delimitation of the Intangible Zone ITT was done in coordination with the oil companies operating in the area. The National Assembly also declared

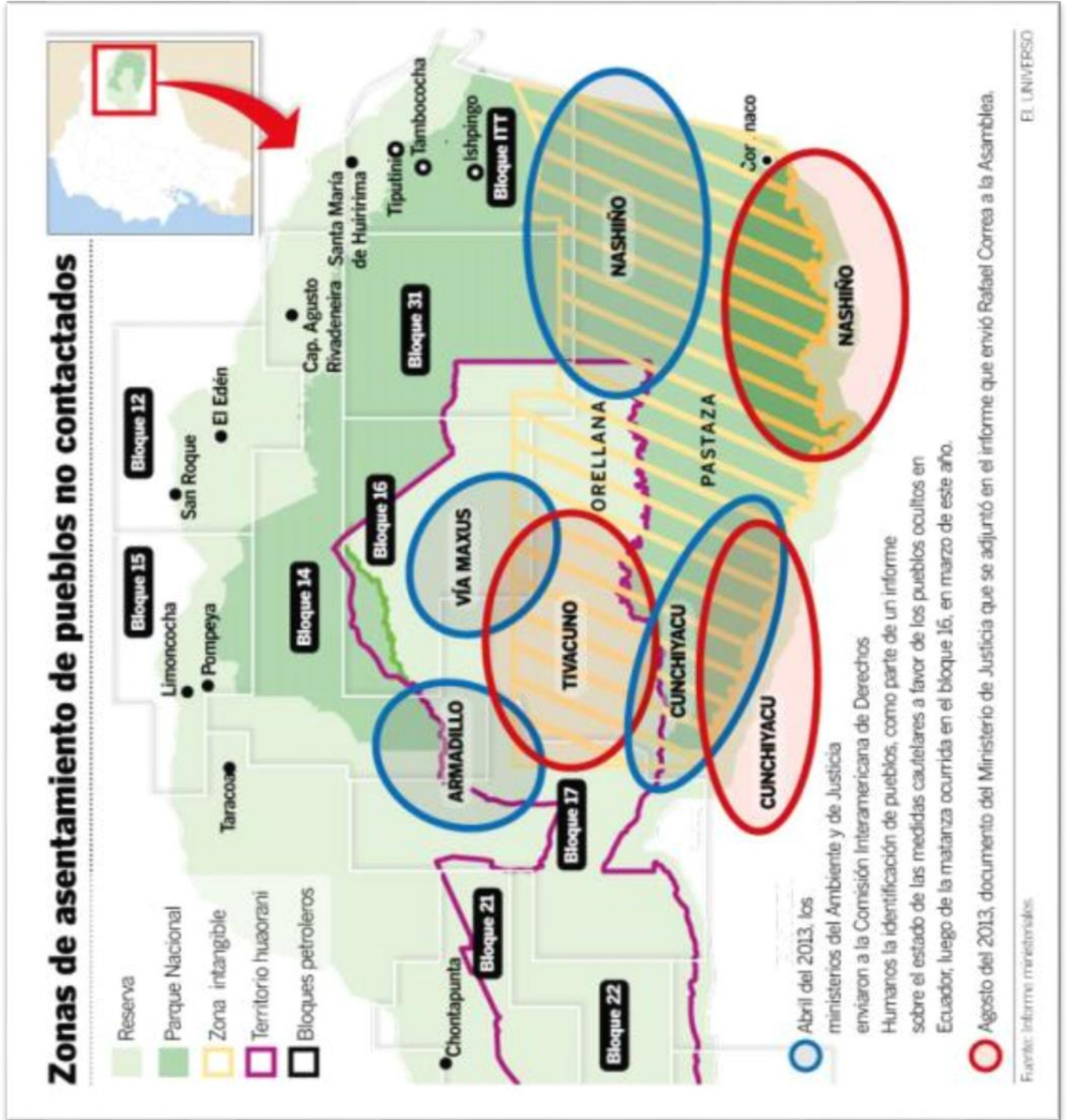
³ “According to the international law of The Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Convention No. 169 of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples), it is recommended to provide alternative measures other than imprisonment, according to the culture in the case of indigenous peoples. Regarding the Convention, the art. 10, number 2, establishes that preference “to methods of punishment other than confinement in prison” should be given; and the art. 9, number 2 establishes “the authorities and courts dealing with penal affairs, must take into consideration the customs of these peoples in this matter”.

⁴ This Department has implemented among their activities, workshops to build awareness in the Yasuni, a plan of monitoring presence signals, and have created a peace proposal. It has planned to have a contingency plan, however it has not been made public.

the exploitation of blocks 31 and 43 (ITT) to be in the “National Interest”.⁵ A report by the Ministry of Justice continues this pattern, as it arbitrarily repositioned the maps previously drawn by the Ministry of Environment. The new maps forbade the presence of the PVI in certain areas and approved actions to extract tribes living there. (See map 2)

A more recent case can be found with the reactivation of the operations in the Campo Armadillo, suspended because of the presence of PVI made evident by the Precautionary Measures Plan (when it was under the supervision of the Ministry of Environment). The policies on ethnic cleansing and opening of spaces for capital continue. Initially, the Precautionary Measures Plan focused on the issue of illegal logging, while the State continued implementing contradictory measures such as the expansion of the agricultural and livestock frontier. The delivery of land to the peasants from MAGAP boosted the acceleration of pressures over the territory with the expansion of the extractive oil frontier on blocks 31, 43 and block Armadillo.

⁵ Asamblea Nacional Ecuador (National Assembly of Ecuador), October 3, 2013, retrieved on February 24, 2016 from <http://www.aebe.com.ec/data/files/noticias/Noticias2013/2doSemestre/DeclaInt-NacYasun%C3%AD-aprobado.pdf>



Map 2: Contrast of the different PIAV's location. Source: El Universo

3. TOWARDS AN INTEGRAL VIEW OF THE CONTEXT OF CORNERING

For an integral view on the conflict of the Amazonian clans, their bond with the territory has to be analyzed. It is a social construction that is the source of their power relations. The jungle's destruction signifies the dispossession of their livelihood. The jungle provides for their day-to-day survival as well as the symbolic configurations needed to give a sense of meaning and purpose to life.

The Amazonian clans use territories based on the seasonal cycle that dictates things like forms of consumption (hunting, gathering, agriculture), defense, creation of ancestral sites, and planting of biodiversity. Additionally, their territory allows the development of kinship and identity. War and death now occupy this sacred place of a ritual, the basis of their culture.

Berraondo and Cabo de Villa (2005) have identified four groups of PVI: Tagaeri, Taromenane, Waorani families in isolation and clans probably related to the remaining Sapara. The Tagaeri are directly related to the Waorani through the clans Baihuairi and Peyemoiri; they share ancestral territory that includes the Intangible Zone.⁶ The Taromenane are more distantly related to the Waorani and they are also associated with the Sapaorani, Sapara or Muratos groups, whereas the Waorani families in isolation are located in the highland of Yasuni and move between Ecuador and Peru (Berraondo, Cabo de Villa, 2005:24).

Even though the Ministry of Environment does not differentiate the origin of the PVI and identifies them all as Waorani, they do provide data about their location: in the area of influence of the Armadillo block, in the Vía Maxus, in Nashiño and in Cuchillacu, all of them in different places of the Biosphere Reserve of the Yasuni National Park and Waorani territory (see map). These are overlapped places: formed by indigenous nationalities that historically have shared and disputed their territories, the oil blocks with their entire infrastructure, the intensive illegal logging and the recently conformed Red Security Line⁷, which is an area of recent colonization.

Despite their contact with extractive and State agents, as with settlers, the Waorani preserve semi-nomadic habits. They build different settlements, and after living in one place they move to another. The elderly or pikenani⁸ return to their original spaces, where they were born and where their dead ones are buried at the foot of a chonta tree, places where before they could hunt and fish and obtain livelihood.

⁶ ZIIT declared as such by Presidential decree on 1999, which additionally is part of the Yasuni National Park.

⁷ Established by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Aquaculture and Fishing (MAGAP). 2007

⁸ Wise elderly Waorani, respected by the clans.

Often, however, upon their return to the ancestry land, they encounter oil extraction installations and their forests have been destroyed.

The presence of oil blocks and the State's infrastructure has caused changes in the lifestyle of the Waorani clans of recent contact, influencing their demographic growth, which was at the beginning 500 individuals and is currently 2,416 (INEC, 2010). This is caused by the conflicts, because the Waorani settlements do not resist big concentrations. However when the communities grow too much, inner conflicts arise and groups get divided and establish new settlements. The settlements that shut themselves in pressure the frontiers of the isolated groups, closing them up, cornering them and creating confrontation. This situation pressures Waorani territory and they at the same time pressure other isolated peoples. As perceived by some Waorani, "they are sending us off to die."

While there is a government agreement to prohibit activities throughout the entire Armadillo block (except certain parts), they are granting operational permits exactly where there are more signals of PVI presence. From the perspective of some Waorani, the State should take responsibility, respond to the pressure of the Red Line and aim to return lands that are colonized. It must be mentioned that the Security Line shows signals of PVI presence, and in 2009, an attack by isolated indigenous peoples caused the death of three peasants on the colonial community of *los Reyes* (the Kings).

The recent violent acts are related to the oil activities that happened 25 kilometers away from the Campo Armadillo on a straight line. In the eyes of some Waorani, the seismic⁹ activities on the Campo Armadillo, such as dynamite explosions and destruction of the forest, scare the fauna and eliminate food supplies. In this way, the PVI lose control over their territory and livelihood.

The situation in which the Waorani live is algid. In Tiwuino in mid-2015, the presence of the PVI was registered for four days and there was no contingency plan. The population feared for their lives, they feared sailing through the rivers and mobilizing through the territory, they were unable to leave their farms, and they asked for assistance with food supplies. In Dicaro and Yarentaro, people have even asked the State and later the oil company REPSOL to put up a fence around their territory. The community of Boanamo has requested to be allowed to operate

⁹ The use of explosives buried underground or placed in water, which when triggered produce seismic waves collected by specialized equipment, that indicate the existence of hydrocarbon deposits. There is a broad amount of information on the seismic impact especially on water bodies, association with large areas of clearing in the jungle, which at the same time causes the death of wildlife (see: "Manual de Monitoreo Comunitario" <http://www.accionecologica.org/petroleo/reporte-demonitoreo/1223-manual-de-monitoreo-ambiental-comunitario-version-2010>).

an air runway, however the request was denied. The fact is that the Waorani clans are vulnerable to an unexpected attack.

The communities in the block operated by Repsol, Dícaro, Guiyero, and Yarentaro still feel aggrieved by the death of the elders Ompure and Buganey (2013). They blame the negligence of the State, which did not take into consideration their protection demands and criminalized their members. In the city of Coca, there have been several conversations between the Ministry of Justice and four direct relatives of Caihua Baigua, but still no compensation mechanism has been specified. The Waorani population of Dícaro and Guiyedo are irritated, which is why the exclusive negotiations with the family members of the case are insufficient and not recommended.

After the events that took place this year, daily life in Bameno and Boanamo has been altered. The touristic activities that provided for their economic necessities have been suspended. The tourism suspension should be repaired by the State, because after losing this income, families could grow to be more aggressive towards the Taromenani.¹⁰

Two weeks after the murder of Caigua, his brother committed suicide by ingesting pesticides, creating further conflict. This is not an incidental event, as depression became part of the conflict for many people. Moreover, his death heightens the discomfort of his familiar group and could spread to other kinship groups. Caiga's brothers are very upset and apparently seek revenge. They were discovered collecting shotguns, and for this reason they were kept at the Vicariate in the city of Coca for two days. The Prosecutor's Office adopted the measure of requiring that they report every fifteen days. The last concerning event¹¹ happened at the end of February when "communitarian guards" from the Precautionary Measures Plan intercepted a canoe with several Waorani that were shipping weapons from Peru to the Intangible Zone. The detention took place at the crossing of the Curaray River and the Cononaco. These two last events send clear signals of the feeling in the Waorani communities. Even though the weapons have been confiscated, which is urgent, a bigger and stronger strategy is needed; in Amazonian conditions, a canoe might be stopped, but it is very unlikely that this will always be accomplished.

¹⁰ Although tourism is not the panacea in a place with isolated peoples because they can spread epidemics on the PVI and place a risk to both tourists and the Waorani, this activity has become an important source of income for the Waorani communities located in the Intangible Zone.

¹¹ Testimony collected from a member of the Precautionary Measures Plan by a woman of the group Saramanta Warmicuna, that was at the Curaray zone.

There is tension between the different opinions within the Waorani; some suggest there should be incursions because they perceive the Tagaeri-Taromenane as enemies, while others defend the PVI to avoid more deaths. The facts suggest there could be further acts of vengeance on behalf of the PVI, which could lead the Waorani to make more violent incursions against those groups. The situation is one of life or death and there is a need for an effective response.

TERRITORIAL PRESSURE AND THE INTER-ETHNIC CONFRONTATIONS: SUMMARY OF EXPLANATIONS

Extraction agents and governmental institutions should be held responsible for the conflict, due to the following:

- The presence of oil blocks throughout the indigenous territory, particularly in the Campo Armadillo.
- Intensive illegal and legal logging of the forests.
- The Red Security Line inhabited by new settlers.
- The expansion of the agricultural frontier and the absence of information regarding pesticides.
- The possible extension of the road “Maxus”.
- The resentment of the Waorani people due to the State’s negligence, the absence of their protection, and the lack of adequate reparation regarding the deaths of Ompure and Buganey. These failures could lead to more furious and secret retaliations.
- The State has not established distinctive relations with the Waorani communities, neither recognizing that they are still in the phase of initial contact, nor the historical particularities of contact related to each clan and their cultural specificity. No efforts have been made to communicate in a more appropriate manner.
- The lack of coordination between governmental entities such as the Prosecutors Office, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Environment have caused disputes over their jurisdiction.
- The absence of a dialogue with civil society, academia, human rights observers and with actors that have an influence over the area.
- The absence of contingency plans and other measures agreed to by the groups at risk.
- While there is an institutional structure, namely the Department for the Protection of Isolated Peoples of the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, their jurisdiction is limited to the extractive activities within the area, restricting their ability to act.

- The action of the State institutions in charge of the conflict is limited to other State interests, linked to the intensification of extractive activities.
- Additionally, there is no clear continuity of the protection policy for the PVI.
- The defense of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is deficient for both the Waorani and PVI.
- The generalized depression of the Waorani nationalities is overlooked.
- The measures taken by the institutions are culturally inappropriate, violent and place at risk the indigenous nationalities (as in the case where the girls were “rescued” in 2013).
- The criminalization of members of the Waorani people, their helplessness before the justice system, and their inability to access the justice system to receive justice for the abuses committed against them and demand the respect of their rights.
- The presidential commission appointed to investigate the massacre of 2013 has yet to publish its report or recommendations, which could provide clues for how to adopt proper measures.
- There are no protocols on how to handle the situation with the PVI in regard to their health care, nutrition, as well as attention to impact caused emotional and psychological states.

4. NECESSITY OF INTEGRATED RESPONSES

Given the past events and with the aim of preventing more vengeance and deaths, avoiding a spiral of massive murder of isolated Indigenous Peoples as well as their decimation, leading them to the edge of their physical and cultural survival, we consider the following:

- Integral and sustained reparation to the Waorani families and their communities (of Boanamo, Yarentaro, Dicaro and Bamenó).
- Timely prevention of new incursions for revenge or war preparations coming from Caiga Baihua’s family and the Waorani allied groups.
- Stop further expansion of the extractive frontiers (oil, mining and timber), agricultural land and settlements on the Waorani and PVI territories.
- Education of those living near the isolated peoples such as public servants like the military employees of government ministries, and other entities such as “Ecuador Estratégico” for the compliance of protocols for the interactions with Wao communities – in initial contact and isolation.
- Consideration for the Waorani nationality as peoples in initial contact, respecting their human rights and acknowledging their cosmology.

- Promotion of their sovereignty, their food and the anthropological self-sufficiency (from the material to the symbolic) of the Waorani.
- Implementation of a legal pluralism framework and an open cultural understanding to those who carried out acts of retaliation and murder (previously). Also, effective consideration of the Waorani condition of initial contact and alternative ways of sanction and reparation besides the application of ordinary punitive legal sanctions.
- A State in favor of the protection and guarantee of human rights and not as the protector of the oil companies' investments and interests.
- Guarantee for the right of self-determination of the PVI to remain in voluntary isolation, under conditions that allow them to support their livelihood and ensure their social and cultural reproduction without any external pressures.
- Encouragement of proposals to create cultures and territories of peace.

With this document, as an anthropologists' collective, we state that, because Ecuador is a State that acknowledges national plurality and interculturality, and considering that the Constitution establishes in the art.57, subsection 21 – 2nd paragraph,

“the territories of the peoples that live in voluntary isolation are of ancestral possession, irreducible and intangible and in them all kind of extractive activity will be banned. The State will adopt the measures to preserve their lives, guarantee the respect of their self-determination and their will to continue isolated, and forewarn observance of their rights. Any violation of these rights will be considered an ethnocide crime which will be typified in the law. The State will guarantee the execution of these collective rights, with no discrimination, in equal conditions among women and men...”

Because we are worried about the upsurge of violence or of new massacres among these peoples, we request that the State takes the proper measures immediately. We demand that prevention measures are taken with an integral and intercultural approach, considering the territorial complexities. We are witnessing the extermination of the isolated peoples, which indicates the urgency of implementing constitutional guarantees and actions framed in the collective rights of the peoples, as established in the ILO, as well as the internationally recognized rights of which Ecuador is signatory. Under these circumstances we request the intervention of the ICHR.

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ANNEXES

NARRATION OF THE ATTACK IN THE SHIRIPUNO RIVER

According to the narration of Oneka, she and her husband Caigua were returning from the bridge of the Shiripuno with their canoe loaded with provisions. Her husband had a premonition of drowning the previous night and had told his mother that he wanted his wife and children to be well; he wanted to buy them new clothes, uniforms for their two adopted children, pots, footballs, knives machetes, etc. They were both traveling in the canoe when, at around ten in the morning, they saw a big log floating on the river. They thought it was a bridge of the Taromenanes, and after moving the log with the canoe, they stopped to cut it with an electric chainsaw. Caigua had already got off the canoe and had chopped the log in half, when they looked up towards the hill and saw that the branches and leaves of the log were moving and realized that there were more people. They became afraid, thinking it was the Taromenanes. In that moment, the first spears fell over Caigua, who tried to avoid them and fled running.

When he heard the voice of his wife, he returned to help her, and the first spear pierced him on the side. Caigua told his wife that the Taromenane had injured him, that she should save herself, take care of their children, protect them, and leave him there because he was going to die. The attackers that were already on top of them took the machete that was in the canoe, and with that weapon they cut a side of the spear that was piercing Caigua. Using the machete, they sharpened the spear and pierced him again on the other side. While Onenka was in the canoe she saw spears and managed to dodge two, before the attackers got in the canoe and she reached to take one of the attackers by the neck to shield herself. In that moment, a spear went through her leg.

Several fighters got in the canoe, and she moved the canoe so they would fall into the river. However, she continued battling them. The attackers asked if she was related to Ompure and Baganey and she answered saying she was their daughter. Consequently, one of the attackers protected her for her circumstance as an orphan woman, implementing the ethical code shared by the Waorani, the Tagaeri and Taromenane. He told her he did not want to kill her, to just let him grab the machete and the knife, while the other attackers urged him to kill her at once. That attacker unleashed the canoe for her to escape, and she followed downstream. At that moment, a spear pierced her on the side while she watched the rest of the attackers hit the one that had helped her.

Already in the canoe, she maneuvered the outboard motor with difficulty and felt how two Waorani spirits of the jungle arrived to give her strength and accompany her on the way to Boanamo. At the entrance of Boanamo, the spirits told her they would stop going with her, but she begged them to stay a while longer, at least until she met with her people. When she arrived at the pier of Boanamo, she had almost no strength to call for help, and then the two spirits told her: take two breaths and then call (Uhh); she did and finally she was heard. When her husband's family arrived to get her out of the canoe, she told Caiga's mother: "your son is dead, go look for Caiga there in the jungle, in the river, the Taromenane attacked us, I was saved, but your son died" and she fainted. In that moment, Caiga's family went to look for his body. Returning at dawn on Tuesday, they found Caiga facedown in the river. A group took Onenka to her parent's place in Baameno, and the body of Caigua stayed in Boanamo where it was buried.

MILESTONES IN THE WAORANI TERRITORY AND THE NATIONAL PARK YASUNI

* Foray of "caucho" (rubber) tappers, gold seekers, traders of indigenous peoples (to incorporate them as labor force for rubber plantations, to capture other Indians and enslave them), trade of fur and other Amazonian resources: mid-nineteenth century and first decades of the twentieth century they depopulate the Sapara group and reduce it nearly to extinction.

*Time of exploratory activities on the Orient: 1860-1950 with intervention between 1921-1925 of the Leonard Company subsidiary of the Standard Oil company (David Rockefeller); 1930 – 1945 (exploratory concessions of the Royal Dutch Shell company).

* The nationalist oil period (1960-1970): CEPE was in charge of activities of oil nationalization. At the beginning of the oil affluence in 1964, Texaco carried out activities first in the Northern Amazonia ("Lago Agrio 1" well); then started to explore to the south, to the now-named province of Orellana, with interventions in 1972 in what is known as Auca field and Cononaco field. The first violent incursions occurred in the Waorani territory that extended from the banks of Curaray to the south and Napo River or Doroboro to the north. The Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), at the request of the Ecuadorian State and in order to introduce oil exploitation, called the Peyemoiri and Baihuairi clans to the protectorate in Teweno, and the south area remained unpopulated by those two clans.

In that territory, two large groups resided: Peyemoiri and Baihueiri. They were scattered in different settlements, which would be moved to the denominated Tihueno Protectorate by the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL)¹² that signed an agreement with Galo Plaza Lasso's government, followed later by Velasco Ibarra, with the purpose of pacifying and freeing the territory for oil activities (mainly for Texaco) and making possible oil exploitation in the area. Emptying the territory, the State encouraged the occupation via colonization and the opening of roads. Both wao groups fought, and Nihua (from the Baihueiri clan) with his group decided to return to their place of origin only to find it occupied by other actors. Provoked by the conflict between these clans, they divided and the Tageiri¹³ group was created, who decided to return to their territories. When this happened, there were already operations in place on Cononaco and Auca fields, and the Auca Via was being opened. There was a colony settled on the territory of these clans. The Tagaeiri decided to settle on a known territory.

*Neoliberal period (1980-200): concessions are given to transnational oil companies, delegating the territory's management, the compensation policies and community relationships to the companies.

In the 80s, due to the problems of concentrating and reducing 90% of the Waorani population, with friction inside the groups creating disputes and health problems (poliomyelitis), the groups concentrated in Tihueno, as recommended by James Yost from the SIL, are allowed to spread again. During the protectorate period, other groups remained in their territories (a faction of the Baihueiri group, currently the Baameno and Gabarón groups; and the Huepe clan of Yarentaro and Dicaro). One of these groups was contacted by the Capuchin missionary Alejandro Labaka, separate from the SIL, with the purpose of pacification. His first contact was to Pahua, being Labaka taken under his wing, in order to attempt later contact (with their help) with the Huepe clan and the downstream groups of Napo/Curaray River (clans of Dicaro, Yarentaro and Timpoca). The groups that exited the protectorate would later return to their places of origin and others would be relocated by oil companies (as in the Tiwino case). The group Ahua was moved by the Maxus Company to the km 32, to stop the entrance of Kichwas.

In 1984, the company Conoco signed an agreement with the Waorani organization ONHAE (currently NAWE), which was promoted as an intermediary for the

¹² The SIL founded in the 30s has been linked to the more conservative factions of the North-American evangelism, as a milestone of big oil companies to enter the indigenous territories with civilizational purposes (Perkins, 2005 in López) leading to ethnocide, considered as "an attempt to destroy entirely the culture of a people, dressed often as philanthropic help for development" (Pujadas, 1993:83).

¹³ This clan takes its name after the Waorani traditions of its leader Taga, Tagaeiri means "people of Taga".

negotiations concerning oil dynamics. Later, ONAHE passed this responsibility to the Maxus Company. The door opened for the construction of the Pompeya-Iro highway in the interior of the National Yasuni Park (NYP), as well as the Auca highway, fragmenting the Waorani and isolated groups territory.

During this process, in 1979, the National Yasuni Park was created with progressive adjustments to its borders according to the oil extraction requirements. On April 3rd, 1983, the Ethnic Waorani Reserve was created with 66.570 hectares, and in 1990, 612.659 hectares were added (which added up to 679.130 and with that the NYP reduced to 544.730 hectares) (Oilwatch, 2005). The deed establishes that the subsoil belongs to the State and that the Waoranis cannot oppose its exploitation. The Maxus Company started their delivery of economic resources policy to the ONHAE in order to limit Waorani politicization, disregarding their initial contact condition.

*New oil concessions in the Yasuni and Waorani territory, with presence of several blocks: block 14 (Mihuagono, Yahuepare), 17 (Tagaeri-Taromenani), 16 (Yarentaro, Dicaro, Timpoca, Peneno, Guillero, Ganguetapare- from the Huepe clan), block XX (Gareno).

*Creation of the Intangible Zone under the Executive Decree No. 552, on February 2nd, 1999.

* In 1991: reserves were found, opening two wells (marginal Campo Armadillo) on behalf of Cape-Petroecuador.

* In all these processes, there have been several incursions and attacks: the Waorani and isolated towards Kichwas, settlers and oil companies, as well as mixed Waoranis. (It is not clear who is attacking and who is being attacked.) Afterwards, from isolated groups against timber settlers, Waorani and oil companies.

POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS TO THE PVI ATTACK ON THE ELDER WAORANIS OMPURE AND BUGANEY

The death of Ompure and Buganey is particularly remarkable given that Ompure supposedly maintained contact and friendly relations with the isolated groups, residing himself far from the Yarentaro settlement and the oil camps of block 16.

Among the various attempted explanations for the death of the elders, it has been mentioned that, in 2011, an elder of Guillermo was murdered by his brother with a

shotgun. He was beloved by the isolated man who visited Ompure to warn him about their plan to kill the perpetrator. Another version pointed to the anger of the PVI toward the Waorani because of their acculturation. The PVI sent monkeys with feathered crowns painted in a way that mocked them for becoming “cohuori”. A third version, the one regarding the flight of birds of prey over the Tagaeri-Taromenane paths, says that they were getting sick of being isolated because of the incursion of settlers killing them with shotguns. In this version, Ompure was killed for not letting them know and not interceding to warn them. Other versions suggest over-flights, that they threw objects and food from planes, which bothered them and could have provoked the death of an isolated group member if ingested. Another version suggests that Ompure did not deliver what the isolated demanded (pots and machetes) or possibly, did not respect the hunting and collecting areas of the isolated.

In other versions, the isolated would have expressed being very upset because of the noise caused by the oil operations and the loss of animals available to hunt for their survival, and this would be the reason for asking Ompure to intervene to stop such disturbances.

A more diachronic view would be the existence of friction among the Huepe clans (from Ompure) and Tagaeri-Taromenane for taking a woman of the Huepe clan in 1974, against which they retaliated with murder. In 2011, Ompure confirmed that the isolated asked for a Waorani woman to marry her, bringing her gifts.