



A statement to denounce and repudiate the attack on lives in the *Ñande Ru Marangatu* Indigenous Land: a plea to stop the state of violence in Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil!

Today, September 18, 2024, the ABA learned of an attack by the Military Police that took place this morning, which fatally wounded a young indigenous man, Neri Ramos, in the *Ñande Ru Marangatu* Indigenous Land, in the community of the same name, in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul.

Last month, and in previous situations over the years, the Brazilian Anthropology Association (ABA), through its Commission on Indigenous Affairs, has already made statements about similar episodes, which demonstrate a recurrence of violence against the Kaiowa indigenous people throughout that state, without any efficient action on the part of the Brazilian state to curb, punish and resolve them. This inertia, therefore, is part of the chronic problem of the lack of resolution in guaranteeing the constitutional right of the Kaiowa, as well as the Guarani *Ñandéva*, to their spaces of traditional occupation.

At this time, the ABA, together with the ABIA (Brazilian Articulation of Indigenous Anthropologists), the National Association of Graduate Studies and Research in Social Sciences (ANPOCS); the Brazilian Society of Sociology (SBS), the Brazilian Association of Political Science (ABCP), the Brazilian Association for the Social Study of Science and Technology (Esocite.Br) and the Brazilian Society for the Advancement of Science (SBPC) come out publicly to express their concern and repudiation of this chronic situation left unresolved, and their demand that the Federal Government, through its Civil House and its ministries of Justice and Public Security, of Indigenous Peoples, Human Rights and Citizenship, to immediately promote a lasting solution, with permanent vigilance and control over these conflict-ridden areas, where the rule of law is proving incapable in the face of locally and

nationally articulated forces repressing the demands of indigenous communities for the realization of their right to territory.

With today's violence, there have now been four attacks on the Marangatu Indigenous Land alone. This Indigenous Land has reached its last legal stage of regularization, having been homologated, but with the case being held up in the Supreme Court since 2005, without being judged.

In 1983, indigenous leader Marçal de Souza was murdered in the same place as today's episode, the Ñande Ru Marangatu tekoha (territory). In 2005, an attack by paramilitary forces resulted in the murder of Dorvalinho Rocha and, in 2015, following the mobilization of landowners, the siege of the indigenous people resulted in the murder of Simião Vilhalva.

In addition to the Marangatu community, attacks against the Kaiowa and Guarani Ñandéva have followed one another in the state: in 2002, on returning to their land from which they had been expropriated, the Kurusu Amba community had an elderly woman, Churite Lopes, murdered. In 2003, it was the turn of the Takuára community to have its leader, Marcos Verón, murdered. In 2009, the communities of Pyelito Kue and Mbarakay were attacked, with several of their members injured by firearms and rubber projectiles. Also in 2009, the Guarani Ñandéva community of Ypo'i had Genivaldo and Rolindo Vera kidnapped; Genivaldo's body was found shot to death in a stream, but Rolindo Vera's body was never recovered. In 2011, the Guaivry community was attacked, resulting in the disappearance of its leader Nísio Gomes. The Federal Police later concluded that he had been murdered. In July 2016, the community of Apika'y (in Dourados) was evicted, without the community having seen any progress in the demarcation of its territory.

In 2022, the attack, also with fatalities, took place in the communities of Guapo'y Mi Tujury (in Amambai) and Kurupi/Santiago Kue (in Naviraí). Last August, just a month ago, the attack was on the community originally from the territory of Panambi/Lagoa Rica, also with victims hospitalized in serious condition.

In all these cases, the communities were trying to return to their territorial spaces, which they had been forced to leave due to the effects of a neo-colonial policy throughout the 20th century. In recent decades, most of these actions have been carried out by agents linked to a private security company, Gaspen, which has been identified by the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office as having paramilitary and criminal activities.

In 2022, what we saw were violent actions by armed private security guards, in the case of Kurupi, and by the Military Police, in the case of Guapo'y Mi Tujury. In the case of the latter, the presence of the Military Police characterizes an action by state forces which, from the images and footage released by the indigenous people, appeared to be a war operation. More precisely, the PM used massive force, using a helicopter, firing a huge number of shots with rubber projectiles, but also firearms, which resulted in deaths in Guapo'y Mi Tujury (one of them already identified: Vito Fernandes) and seriously injured people in both communities. According to information from the Amambai Regional Hospital, three indigenous people were released from hospital, but at least four were still in a more serious condition, with gunshot wounds to the head and other vital areas of the body. The Military Police tried to justify their conduct with the argument that they had been called to “curb a crime against property”. It thus denied the fact that this was an ethnic territorial conflict involving indigenous people, with an absolutely disproportionate use of force. In this new siege by the Military Police, an indigenous victim once again falls.

It is therefore against this general backdrop of violence and violations of constitutional and human rights that we join the institutions and organizations that have been denouncing the cases and calling for an impartial investigation into responsibility and for the appropriate and urgent legal measures to be taken. It is also clear from the facts that there is an immovable persistence on the part of each community to recover their traditional territories, which refers to the constitutional principle of recognizing them, and it is up to the Brazilian state to demarcate them.

In these terms, we request:

- As said, to the Federal Government, through its agencies listed above, for immediate action of permanent vigilance and control in Mato Grosso do Sul;
- The 6th Chamber of Coordination and Review of the MPF for continuous monitoring and procedures, according to its attributions;
- To the AGU and/or the Attorney General's Office, in the figure of its Attorney General, due to judicial decisions by the JF/MS and the TRF-3, to ask the President of the STF to overturn these decisions, determining the actions of the PF and the FNSP;
- To the National Council of Justice (CNJ), to monitor and investigate the stages of the legal process regarding the cases as a whole;

- To the President of the STF, the scheduling of the trial of the Writ of Mandamus against the approval of the Ñande Ru Marangatu Indigenous Land;
- The MPF/MS to order an investigation into the actions of the MP(s) who murdered the indigenous man Neri Ramos;
- The Ministry of Justice to rigorously investigate any crimes committed and punish them.

Brasília-DF, September 19, 2024

Brazilian Anthropology Association (ABA)

Brazilian Articulation of Indigenous Anthropologists (ABIA)

National Association of Graduate Studies and Research in Social Sciences (ANPOCS)

Brazilian Political Science Association (ABCP)

Brazilian Association for the Social Study of Science and Technology (Esocite.Br)

Brazilian Society of Sociology (SBS)

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