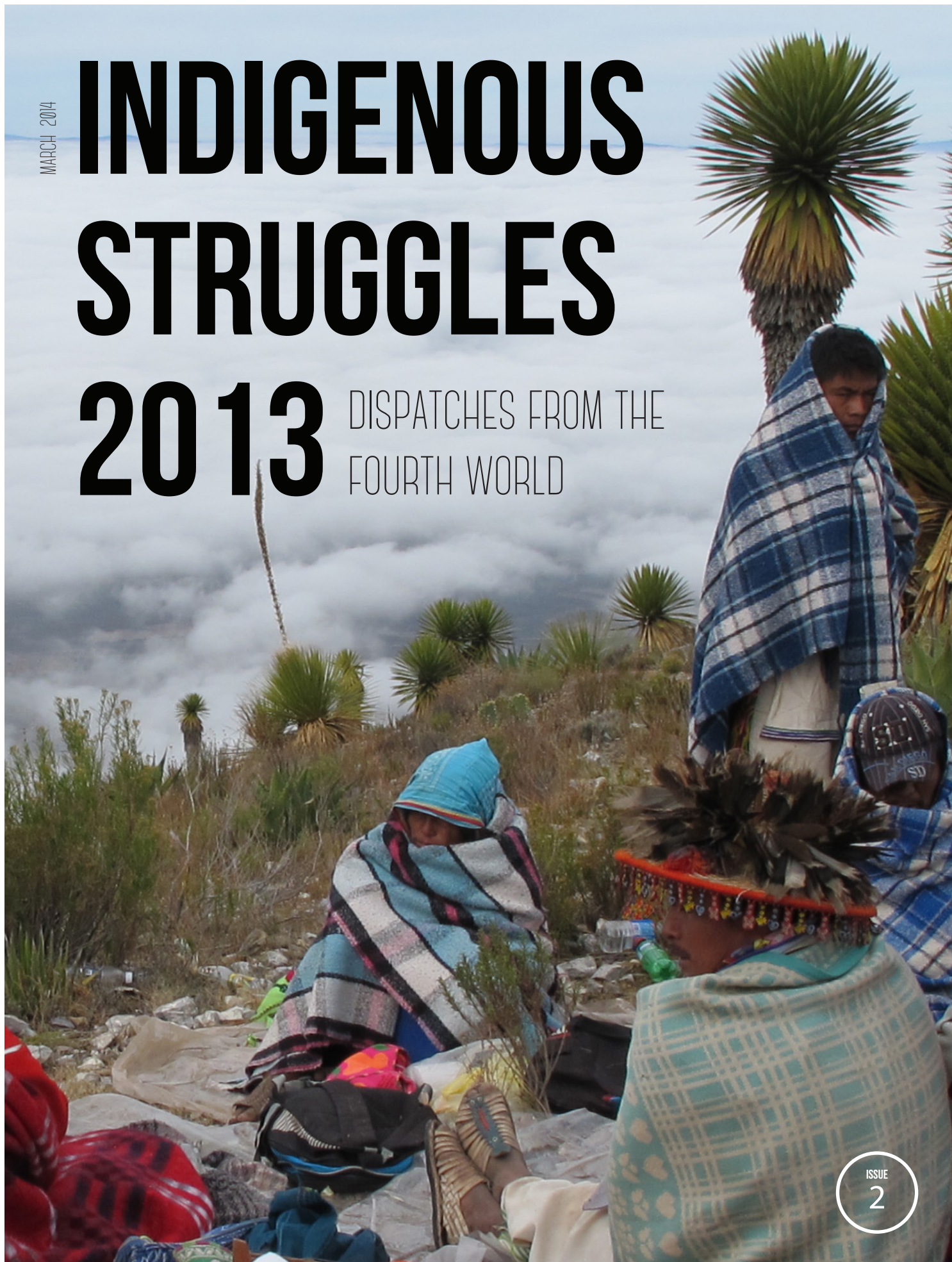


MARCH 2014

INDIGENOUS STRUGGLES

2013

DISPATCHES FROM THE
FOURTH WORLD



ISSUE

2

FROM THE EDITOR

DEAR READER,

I would like to welcome you to the second volume of IC Magazine's annual publication, ***Indigenous Struggles: Dispatches From The Fourth World***.

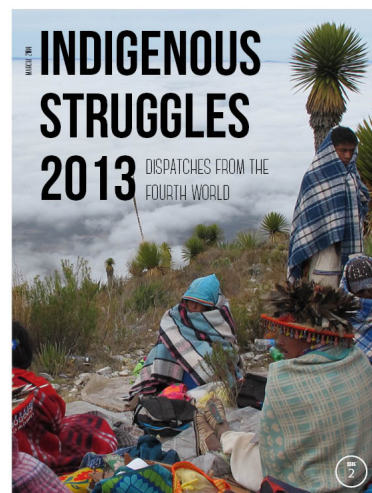
As with its predecessor, ***Indigenous Struggles 2013*** is a comprehensive annual briefing that will introduce you to some of the most pivotal moments in 2013 concerning the Indigenous Peoples movement. Overall, there are some 450 dispatches contained in this year's volume, which have been distributed across 12 monthly chapters so that you can more readily observe the progression of events as they unfolded throughout the year.

That said, ***Indigenous Struggles 2013*** is pretty far from being a complete archival record. Such a document would be thousands of pages long and I don't think we need something so extensive. It's far more important that we're aware of all the essentials: the protests, the blockades, the land reclamations, and the many inspiring acts of Indigenous resurgence; in addition to the full spectrum of abuses that Indigenous Peoples and Nations faced throughout the year at the hands of governments, corporations, police and military forces, judicial bodies, paramilitary groups, settler populations, lobbyists and various others.

The stories that we chose for this volume, which took more than a hundred hours to collect, are also limited to a single paragraph each, which means if you want to learn more--and I hope you do--you will have to do some research of your own. If you happen to be reading the digital version of the magazine, you'll find that we've made the journey a little easier, by adding links to each story. You can download a digital copy of the magazine for free at our website -- www.icmagazine.org.

In closing, I would say nia:wen ko:wa (thank you very much) to Jeff Corntassel, Tracy Barnett, Courtney Parker, and Curtis Kline for their valuable contributions to ***Indigenous Struggles 2013***, in addition to the scores of individuals who contributed to our recent fundraising campaign. Without your support and involvement, this magazine would have not been possible.

John Ahni Schertow
Editor & Publisher
<http://icmagazine.org>
<http://facebook.com/Intercontinental.Cry>
http://twitter.com/indigenous_news



EDITOR IN CHIEF

John Ahni Schertow

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Tracy Barnett

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Curtis Kline

Courtney Parker

Jeff Corntassel

COVER PHOTO

Tracy Barnett

DESIGNER

John Ahni Schertow

PUBLISHER

Intercontinental Cry



TRIQUI PEOPLE RECLAIM POSITION IN FRONT OF GOVERNMENT PALACE; KICWHA COMMUNITY SAYS IT WILL “DIE FIGHTING TO PROTECT THE RAINFOREST”; THE AINU HEAD TO AOTEAROA TO LEARN FROM THE MAORI



WINNEMEM OPPOSE GENETICALLY MODIFIED SALMON; MAYA LEADERS REJECT OIL COMPANY ATTEMPTS TO BUY SUPPORT FOR DRILLING; PEMON DISARM AND DETAIN 43 SOLDIERS



TRADITIONAL OWNERS SPEAK OUT AGAINST FRACKING; INDIGENOUS ORGS UNVEIL FIVE NEW MDGS IN COLOMBIA; THE OCETI SAKOWIN MEET FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 100 YEARS



ESQUIMALT FIRST NATION UNVEILS NEW BARTER CURRENCY; 700 INDIGENOUS LEADERS LOCK DOWN BRAZIL’S HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES; LENCA COMMUNITIES BLOCK ACCESS TO “AGUA ZARCA” DAM



GWICH’IN SPEAK OUT AGAINST DRILLING PROPOSAL IN ANWR; ELDERS AND CHIEFS WALK OUT OF KEYSTONE XL MEETING; WSÁNEC NATIONS RECLAIM THE TRADITIONAL NAME OF PKOLS



YINKA DENE ALLIANCE GIVES ENBRIDGE A FINAL WARNING; GUNA GENERAL CONGRESS DECIDES TO REJECT REDD+; WEST PAPUANS RECEIVE “ORIGINAL NATIONS” PASSPORTS



COASTAL FIRST NATIONAL ALLIANCE PREPARES TO BAN BEAR HUNTING FOR SPORT; MANITOBA FIRST NATIONS ISSUE STOP WORK ORDERS TO MINING COMPANIES; INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY POURS ON THE SUPPORT FOR BEDOUIN PEOPLES



DONGRIA KONDH OVERWHELMINGLY REJECT PLANS TO MINE ON SACRED MOUNTAIN; ESCUELITA ZAPATISTA WELCOMES MORE THAN 1600 STUDENTS; MURRAWARRI PEOPLES TAKE FIRST STEPS TOWARD BECOMING AN INDEPENDENT REPUBLIC



WIXARIKA PEOPLE CELEBRATE SUSPENSION OF MINING IN WIRIKUTA; HAUDENOSAUNEE AND DUTCH HONOUR TWO ROW WAMPUM TREATY'S 400TH ANNIVERSARY; MISKITO GAIN RIGHTS TO OVER A MILLION HECTARES



INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN WEST PAPUA FORBID UN-PERMITTED ENTRY TO THEIR LANDS; LUMMI CARVERS HEAD OUT ON A JOURNEY TO INSPIRE; 120,000 INDIGENOUS PEOPLES MOBILIZE IN COLOMBIA



MAORI WOMEN SPEAK OUT AGAINST TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT; INDIGENOUS LEADERS HOLD A CLIMATE SUMMIT OF THEIR OWN; MI'KMAQ-LED ANTI-FRACKING EFFORT SHOWS NO SIGNS OF BACKING DOWN



WIYOT PEOPLES ANNOUNCE PLAN TO HOLD FIRST 'WORLD RENEWAL CEREMONY' IN 150 YEARS; CARCROSS TAGISH FIRST NATION BANS FRACKING ON TRADITIONAL TERRITORY; GUARANI SAY THEY WILL NOT COMPLY WITH RECENT COURT DECISIONS



INTRO

BY JEFF CORNTASSEL
(CHEROKEE NATION)

PHOTO BY EL VECINO DE CASI TODOS

"What is it that Native people want?" This is usually one of the first questions that I get from yonegas (settlers) when seeking an answer that will magically line up with their values and expectations. Of course this question is always a trap. How can I as a Cherokee man speak on behalf of all the 370 million Indigenous peoples and some 7,000 Indigenous nations around the world? It's also a question laced with privilege, ethnocentrism, and ignorance of the ongoing violence of settler colonialism toward Indigenous nations, ultimately presuming that there's a simple, straightforward, and universal solution to overcoming 500 years of colonial invasion. The late Standing Rock Sioux scholar Vine Deloria, Jr. provided a concise response to this question back in 1969: "What we need is a cultural leave-us-alone agreement, in spirit and in fact." However, the nature of any leave-us-alone agreement will vary from nation to nation, and community to community.

At the heart of "what do Natives want?" is the old colonial adage "how can we solve the Indian problem?" According to writer Thomas King, this is clearly the wrong question to ask:

The Indians of this question are "the Indian" that Canada and the United

States have created for themselves. And as long as the question is asked in that way, there will never be the possibility of an answer.

As the above quote from King indicates, Indigenous peoples live within a contemporary colonial society that constantly demands an impossible answer. Some mistakenly refer to colonialism in the past tense, which fails to account for ongoing destructiveness of contemporary, shape-shifting colonization. While the Doctrine of Discovery was formally repudiated in 2012 by the World Council of Churches, its underlying logic and practices of dispossessing Indigenous peoples from their homelands are still in place. At times, the modern world system still closely resembles the 1550's at Valladolid, Spain, where Dominican friar Bartolomé de las Casas and theologian Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda publicly debated whether Indigenous peoples were "rational"/"civilized" and whether they could be brought to Christianity with or without the use of force. This was essentially a battle of invented images and stereotypes that continues today – the "noble savage" versus the "savage" Native. Other terms such as globalization, reconciliation, and economic development are contemporary invocations of age-old colonial practices still grounded in the dispossession, dependency and destruction of Indigenous

nations and homelands. It becomes increasingly clear, as Euro-Canadian historian Roger Epp states, that what we really have is a “settler problem”.

2014 marks 20 years since the Zapatista uprising on January 1, 1994 in Chiapas, Mexico, and this is an appropriate time to examine the contemporary terrain of Indigenous resurgence and struggles for land and liberation around the world. So as we read about the several stories of Indigenous resilience and resurgence in 2013, the question is not “What do Natives want?” but “how are Indigenous nations reasserting and acting on their self-determining authority?” And how is a culture of resistance, which according to Kahnawake Mohawk scholar Taiaiake Alfred, embodies the “power that the ethic of sacrifice, restraint and social unity produced”, promoted and sustained over time within Indigenous nations? These can sound like bigger than life questions, which is why it’s important to consider their everyday applications: the daily acts of resurgence and renewal. By focusing on “everyday” acts of resurgence, the colonial script and timeline is thrown out and Indigenous stories of reclamation of homelands, restoration of relationships, and regeneration of communities take center-stage. Mississauga Nishnaabeg scholar Leanne Simpson describes Indigenous nationhood as a “series of radiating responsibilities”, which require daily actions to reciprocate and renew these relationships. It is about the conscious actions we take everyday that enable us to protect and honor our responsibilities to our homelands/waters, communities and cultures.

Everyday acts of resurgence are extensively documented in this volume of **Indigenous Struggles 2013** and these stories are often missed by the mainstream media. As Anishinaabeg reporter Duncan McCue states, Indigenous everyday actions don’t make the news when they fail to conform to what he calls the “WD4 rule”:

Be a warrior;
Beat your drum;
Start dancing;
Get drunk;
Be dead.

*“2014 MARKS 20 YEARS
SINCE THE ZAPATISTA
UPRISING ON JANUARY
1, 1994 IN CHIAPAS,
MEXICO, MAKING IT
AN APPROPRIATE
TIME TO EXAMINE
THE CONTEMPORARY
TERRAIN OF INDIGENOUS
RESURGENCE &
STRUGGLES FOR LAND &
LIBERATION AROUND THE
WORLD”*

All of the above standards for newsworthiness perpetuate one-dimensional views of Native peoples and confine them to the colonial script. Indigenous peoples have defiantly stated that colonization will not be the only story that is told about their lives. Indigenous peoples will represent themselves on their own terms. 2013 had so many important everyday acts of resurgence that were often overlooked by the mainstream media, such as the Marrawarri Nation taking their first steps toward becoming an independent republic by challenging the sovereignty of Australia, the WÁSÁNEC nation’s reclamation of PKOLS (formerly known as Mount Douglas), the Tahltan people stopping Fortune Minerals from engaging in mineral exploration on their territory, and the opening of the Zapatista revolutionary school Escuelita de Libertad, just to name a few. Read on for more motivating stories of everyday resurgence and take the challenge to decolonize your news feed and your mind.

IN BRIEF

JANUARY



PHOTO: AOTEAROA AINU MOSIR EXCHANGE PROGRAM

TRIQUI PEOPLE RECLAIM POSITION IN FRONT OF GOVERNMENT
PALACE; KICWHA COMMUNITY SAYS IT WILL “DIE FIGHTING
TO PROTECT THE RAINFOREST”; THE AINU HEAD
TO AOTEAROA TO LEARN FROM THE MAORI

Guatemalan Judge Miguel Ángel Gálvez ruled that former dictator **Efraín Ríos Montt** will be put on trial for genocide and crimes against humanity committed during his 1982-1983 regime. When the trial begins, Montt and his former intelligence chief, General José Mauricio Rodríguez Sánchez, will be accused of killing 1,771 Maya Ixil men, women and children, and ordering 15 massacres against the Maya Ixil people. This will be the first case in the Americas where a former head of state will be tried for genocide in the country in which it took place.

Barrick Gold, one of Canada's most notorious mining companies, implemented a conditional treatment program for women in Papua New Guinea who have been gang raped by the company's employees. In order to receive support from the program, Barrick says the women must sign away their right to seek any future legal action against the company. Overshadowing these horrendous conditions is an even more horrendous statement by the Founder and Chairman of Barrick Gold, **Peter Munk**, who claimed back in 2011 that gang rape was a "cultural habit" in Papua New Guinea.

A string of events in the southern Chilean region of **Araucanía**, where the Mapuche Peoples are struggling for their land rights, turned for the worst when two people died in one of several arson attacks. Pedro Cayuqueo, the Indigenous Mapuche editor of the newspaper **Mapuche Times**, said the attack reflects the "abandonment of the authorities' political responsibility to handle the conflict, and their insistence on using repressive measures that merely inflame antagonisms and produce this kind of escalation". These events highlight what analysts call the "supine ignorance" of the authorities when it comes to the history of this country, and especially the history of Araucanía.

The Maori group Nga Kaitiaki o te Awaawa o Manaia declared a halt on all mining activity in the **Manaia catchment**, located south of the town of Katikati in northern New Zealand. Last September, the government awarded Broken River Co. Ltd with an exploration permit giving them rights to explore for gold, silver and quartz across some 80,000 hectares. According to the local Maori, the company has yet to speak to them face to face, raising concerns that the company is avoiding them because the operation will negatively impact their lands and waterways.

Despite the best efforts of the Idle No More movement, the **Canadian government** unapologetically announced that it would not budge from its position on Bill C-45 or any of the other unconstitutional bills that led to the movement's popular uprising in December. The announcement came in the wake of a high level meeting with a government-selected group of "aboriginal elite" led by Assembly of First Nations executive Shawn Atleo and former executive Matthew Coon Come; both of whom were chided for ignoring the demands of 4000+ people to call off their meeting with Prime Minister Harper. Immediately after the meeting, Atleo offered a glowing pronouncement about how well the meeting went; however, it later turned out that Canada rejected almost all the points that his organization brought to the table, many of which had nothing to do with the efforts of Idle No More.

Amidst the tears and jeers, another new bill was tabled in Canada that Indigenous Peoples could whole-heartedly accept. While no consultation has been carried out, **Bill C-469** or the "Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act" would compel the government of Canada to ensure that its laws are consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of

Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

The **Triqui people of San Juan Copala** reclaimed their long-held position in front of the Government Palace in Oaxaca City after being forcibly evicted from their plantón (protest camp) by state and municipal police in December. The plantón was cleared, for the second time since 2011, to make way for the many tourists that would descend on Oaxaca during the Christmas period.

A 12-year-old Indigenous Qom boy, **Imer Ilvencio Flores**, was beaten to death in the Chaco Province of North-East Argentina. Flores was celebrating summer festivities with several friends but never returned home. His body was found the following day in Villa Bermejito, a village in Chaco. 300 members of the Qom community camped outside a local police station to demand justice; an incident which through social media shocked urban Argentina. "Once again naroqshe (white man) impregnates with pain and death the Qom people," said the Qom Carashes Council from the region.

The **Guyanese High Court** unexpectedly ruled in favour of a miner who was previously holding a concession on titled indigenous lands. The ruling stated that miners who obtained mining permits prior to the Amerindian Act of 2006 are not bound by its provisions, and consequently do not have to obtain permission from Indigenous Peoples before carrying out operations on their lands.

Anonymous launched **#OpThunderbird**, a new campaign that is responding to the utter lack of investigation concerning widespread reports of murdered and missing Indigenous Women across Canada. The campaign has created a vehicle not only for witnesses, victims and their families but also for the larger public who have remained largely ignorant of the situation.

The historic piece of legislation in India known as the **Forest Rights Act** (FRA), took center stage as India's Supreme Court case continued its deliberation over Vedanta Resources' proposed mine on the Dongria Kondh's sacred mountain. While the Prime Ministers Office called for an alarming watering down of the FRA, saying that tribal peoples' consent is not necessary for many industrial projects, the Minister for Tribal Affairs, Kishore Chandra Deo, expressed concern that parties to the case are 'seeking to argue that they can bypass, ignore or undermine the Forest Rights Act'. The case regarding the Vedanta mine has increasingly become a battleground not just for the Dongria Kondh, but for tribal rights all over India.

As South Africa's government looks to nuclear power for its energy demands, increasing nuclear power from its current 6% of total power to 22% by the year 2030, they have chosen land for a new nuclear power site that is culturally sensitive to the **Khoisan** (Khoi-San), an indigenous tribe, who are determined to fight the development. Evidence from their ancestors shows a Khoisan presence in the area dating back thousands of years. They were, however, marginalized and dispossessed from their lands during colonization. Putting the nuclear power plant on Indigenous territory will serve to further alienate the impacted Khoisan communities.

Indigenous organizations held a **Mapuche Summit**, hosting 600 guests from communities in Biobío, Los Ríos and La Araucanía to demand respect for territorial integrity and self-determination. Aucán Huilcamán, one of the Summit's coordinators, said "the government of Chile confirmed in 1825 the

treaties confirmed by the Mapuche government; let's then fulfill the Treaties." The organizers also claimed that the Summit was convened to ease the ongoing tensions in La Araucania region.

Without support from the local or federal authorities, the **Pukobjê-Gavião** Peoples in Maranhão state, Brazil, **blocked four trucks and a tractor** filled with illegally logged timber, preventing the equipment from leaving their lands. The Federal Police were informed of the confrontation by the Indigenous Missionary Council (CIMI) and the Federal Public Ministry. The police came to investigate; however, they left empty-handed just hours later. A group of 100 people -- made up of loggers, according to media reports -- barricaded the access road to the territory with burning tires, preventing the police from leaving the indigenous land with the seized machinery.

After successfully carrying out a major online fundraiser to pay for the journey, a group of 7 Ainu youth, accompanied by 3 Ainu committee members and 3 interpreters, **traveled from Japan to New Zealand** in order to study the various ambitious endeavors of the Maori people who have successfully revitalized their rights as Indigenous People while living with strength in the society of New Zealand. As explored on the **Ainu Maori Exchange** website, the Ainu spent their time well, learning a language teaching method called Te Ataarangi, sitting down with the Maori Party Whangaehu Marae, and visiting several Maori-based schools, television and radio stations and many different historical sites.

The Western Australia State government gave Woodside petroleum permission to destroy ancient burial grounds near **James Price Point** for its controversial gas hub. State Aboriginal Affairs Minister Peter Collier issued the permit under Section 18 of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 (permission to desecrate an Aboriginal site). Traditional owners, allies and some sympathetic politicians are now calling on Tony Burke, Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, to **reverse the decision**.

Legislative members of **Indonesia** **considered a bill on the recognition and protection of Indigenous Peoples**, a bill inspired by UNDRIP that would, however, conform to the concept of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI). The National Alliance for Indigenous People (AMAN) East Kalimantan coordinator Margaretha Seting Beraan, commented, "Actually, I don't agree with the concept of NKRI if they homogenize groups. I only agree with the NKRI concept if pluralism is respected," she said. "Basically we come from different cultures with different customs and laws that come together in one country". While land disputes are numerous in Kalimantan, Margaretha also said that disputes of customary land could be solved using customary law, but that the government's commercial interests in those lands undermined these laws.

A nine-year legal battle between the Pollution Control Department of the Natural Resources and Environment Ministry of Thailand and the 22 **Karen** people who filed the lawsuit in 2004, came to a close. The Supreme Administrative Court **ordered the department to pay** a total of 3.8 million baht in compensation to the villagers over lead contamination at Klity Creek in Tambon Chalee of Thong Pha Phum district of Kanchanaburi province. The lawsuit centered on the suffering and health hazards caused by Lead Concentrate Co, who illegally discharged lead-contaminated water into their stream, and the far too slow cleanup by the department.

India's Supreme Court finally **banned all tourists** from traveling along the **Andaman Nicobar Trunk Road**, a controversial highway that has been used by tourism companies for over a decade to conduct "human safaris" on the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Union Territory of India. The welcomed decision to shut down the road, which cuts through the lands of the Jarawa Peoples, arrived one year after a reporter working for the Observer released a shocking video in which a group of Jarawa women and children were being forced to dance for tourists.

Three Indigenous **Bribri** men were injured in an ongoing dispute over 30 hectares of land in Salitre, near La Amistad International Park in southern Costa Rica. Eight Bribri families had moved onto the land in order to reclaim it; however, just one day after doing so, a group of non-indigenous people **entered the property** and confronted them. "They came in with guns and knives," said Felipe Figueroa, a Bribri land reclamation coordinator for the area. "They broke things, they took food and they killed the animals," he said.

France, the former slave power of West Africa, poured into **Azawad** with a vengeance, **bombing towns and cities across the southern end of the territory** -- what is otherwise considered to be the northern half of Mali. The attack comes one month into a U.N. Security Council authorized military occupation of Mali, reported in the media as an effort to restore the territorial integrity of the Malian state and to stop "Islamic terrorists" and "jihadists" from gaining a foothold in the region. Following the Tuareg National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad's (MNLA) brief seizure of their traditional territory last year, jihadist factions stepped in and took control, driving the MNLA out.

Representing the **Six Nations Confederacy**, the Haudenosaunee Grand Council **released a statement** warning that the Stephen Harper government is working to destroy "any semblance of nation-to-nation relationships" by terminating Canada's obligations to Indigenous Peoples and their distinct status in the country. The statement also reminded "the people of Canada of its desired relationship through the tenets of the Two Row Wampum, which champions coexistence and non-interference. "Beginning with this basic relationship of mutual respect, our two peoples can resume our journey along the river of life as independent equals and resolve our problems along the way," it said.

The government of **Guatemala** **announced the restart of the Xalalá Hydroelectric Dam Project** located at the confluence of the Copón and Chixoy Rivers in the Cobán and Alta Verapaz departments. This is despite a delegation travelling to the capital to present their concerns and speak out against the negative impacts that communities are already suffering downriver from existing hydroelectric dams. In April 2007, the communities of Ixcán exercised their right to free, prior and informed consent, holding a referendum (consulta). Almost 90% of the more than 21,000 inhabitants voted to reject the construction of the hydroelectric dam and oil exploration in their municipality. The government, however, has persisted, announcing the opening of bidding to contract the studies necessary for the dam's construction.

The **Kaurna language**, which began to disappear from daily use in South Australia as early as the 1860s due to the weight of European colonization in Australia, **has been revived**. The Kaurna language once thrived and was spoken by the original inhabitants of Adelaide. Now, eighty years after Ivaritjji,

an elder who was thought to be the last fluent speaker of Kaurua, died in the late 1920s, the languages unique sounds have been brought back to life through a course for both Indigenous and non-indigenous students.

Indonesian police forces in West Papua tried and failed to provoke violence at a demonstration in **Manokwari**, where protest has been banned. Well over 1000 people engaged in a **colourful and vibrant demonstration** calling for West Papuan independence. They were shadowed at all times by at least 200 police personnel, 2 truckloads of soldiers, 8 armed motorcyclists, and an extra truckload of elite Dalmas Riot Police.

As peace talks continue between the Colombian National Government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia–People's Army (FARC–EP), **Indigenous Peoples say they are still suffering** as a result of continued clashes between the rebels and Colombian forces. Such clashes have already taken the lives of more than 2000 Embera, Arhuaco, Awa, Nasa and others who have been caught in the relentless crossfire which so often take place on Indigenous lands.

A Kichwa community in Ecuador is taking legal action **against a back door deal** between their chief and the state-run oil company, **Petroamazonas**. According to the community, the chief acted against the majority's wishes when he signed an agreement selling the community's rights to 70,000 hectares of their land in exchange for approx. \$2.8 million. After the deal was signed, Petroamazonas told the community that it will immediately begin prospecting and that it will be backed by government security forces. The community says they are now prepared to "die fighting to protect the rainforest." "If there is a physical fight, it is certain to end tragically," said Patricio Jipa, a medicine man and former community chief. "We may die fighting to defend the rainforest. We would prefer passive resistance, but this may not be possible. We will not start conflict, but we will try to block them and then what happens will happen."

A British law firm said that Indigenous people exposed to **British nuclear tests** in South Australia during the 1950s have **no hope of compensation**. According to the firm, medical science cannot conclusively prove that fallout from the tests made people sick. UK servicemen, Australian soldiers and civilians, including Indigenous people, have all been exposed to radiation as a result of British atomic weapons testing in South Australia's outback. Recently, British firm Hickman and Rose had hoped to represent more than 150 civilians, if a huge class action suit by 1000 British veterans had succeeded. The UK Supreme Court blocked the class action suit, however, ruling that 60 years after the events their claims were too late.

Three Bushman (San) children were arrested by paramilitary police forces in **Botswana**. The arrests were the latest signs of a new government policy to intimidate Bushmen who have returned to the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR). The children were **arrested for being in possession of antelope meat**. All have since been released, but further reports of harassment and intimidation have surfaced, and there have been a growing number of arrests.

The Government of Ontario **began proceedings to overturn a major legal victory** for **Grassy Narrows** in their decade-long battle against unsanctioned clearcut logging on their territory. In 2011, the Ontario Superior Court found that the Government did not have the power to unilaterally take away rights

promised in Treaty 3 by authorizing industry activities on Grassy Narrows land. The Province now argues that it has "exclusive proprietary jurisdiction over public lands and forests in the province", calling the trial judge's analysis the "antithesis of reconciliation" and claiming that implementing the judgment "would needlessly hamper the economy."

Citizens from the Mathias Colomb Cree Nation **delivered a 'stop work order'** to **Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Co.** which had been developing the area near Snow Lake, Manitoba. The stop work order states "We totally reject Hudbay's Environmental Act License Application submitted for the Lalor Lake Mine without our consent." Chief Arlen Dumas also added "We are sovereign and asserting our laws and jurisdiction over our unceded ancestral traditional territory." Members of the Idle No More movement also offered their support to the Mathias Comb Cree Nation regarding lands and resources.

The Ethiopian Government continues to move forward with its plans to construct the **Gibe III Dam**, a project that threatens the cultures and traditional economies of some 500,000 **Indigenous Peoples in Ethiopia and Kenya**. Despite the immensity of the threat, and the overt willingness on the part of the government to remove anyone in their way, the situation continues to be widely ignored by activists.

The Ngäbe and Buglé Peoples headed out for **another round of demonstrations** to call attention to the Panamanian government's non-compliance with peace accords that ended last year's deadly protests. Activists and leaders of the Ngäbe-Buglé Comarca in western Panama claim the state has failed to compensate victims of police violence, and has allowed the continued construction of the **Barro Blanco** hydroelectric dam which will drown Ngäbe communities and farmland along the Tabasara River.

About one hundred protesters gathered in downtown St. Louis outside of the **Peabody Coal** corporate headquarters **to demand that Peabody cease its strip mining practices** and become accountable for the land and people it has impacted. Banners were dropped from two nearby buildings stating, "Stop the War on Mother Earth. Peabody: Bad for St. Louis, Bad for the Planet" and "Peabody Kills." After Peabody refused to meet with Navajo representatives who made the trip from Black Mesa, Arizona, around 12 protesters were arrested for linking arms and refusing to leave the company's property. Peabody's mines on Black Mesa have been operating for nearly 45 years, damaging graves, sacred sites, homes and the once-pristine desert aquifer that is now used almost exclusively for coal operations.

The **Kaska** proclaimed a **moratorium on all resource development** across their entire traditional territory in southeast Yukon, Canada. The chiefs maintain they were forced into asserting the moratorium by what they describe as the unwillingness of Premier Darrell Pasloski to sit down and resolve matters. "Unfortunately, it seems consistent with this government's approach that they will try to march on with mining and oil and gas development in Kaska Territory without involving [the] Kaska," Chief Ladue said in a press release. "In the midst of growing First Nation unrest in Yukon and across the country, this comes on the heels of the Court of Appeal recognizing how the 'free entry' mining process is now illegal and infringes on the aboriginal rights and title of the Kaska."

IN BRIEF

FEBRUARY



PHOTO: DAN BACHER

PEMON VILLAGE DISARMS AND DETAINS 43 SOLDIERS; MAYA
LEADERS REJECT OIL COMPANY'S ATTEMPTS TO BUY SUPPORT
FOR DRILLING; WINNEMEM WINTU OPPOSE
GENETICALLY-MODIFIED SALMON

The Pit River Tribe **unanimously affirmed** a resolution opposing geothermal and other industrial developments in the sacred **Medicine Lake Highlands** of northeastern California. The resolution affirms that geothermal development would threaten the underlying aquifer and sent toxins into the atmosphere. The Tribal resolution calls upon the Bureau of Land Management and the United States Forest Service to reject all proposed geothermal development in the sacred Medicine Lake Highlands.

Several communities in Puncak Jaya regency, **West Papua**, became the **target of military reprisals** after a bloody confrontation between West Papuan independence guerrillas and Indonesian armed forces that ended in the death of eight soldiers. The soldiers were taking part in the construction of military posts on top of a sacred burial site, despite being asked not to do so by community representatives and emissaries from the West Papua National Liberation Army. The military responded to the attack by conducting sweeping raids, forcing villagers to give their food and homes to soldiers, and subjecting the villagers to harsh interrogations. The military also set fire to several homes and churches.

Citizens of the **Mi'kmaq Nation** **denounced** the "Made in Nova Scotia" Process and the "Made in New Brunswick" Process, two framework agreements that are being carried forward under the premise of economic opportunity. Idle No More organizer Shelley Young, a citizen of Eskasoni First Nation, commented, "The framework agreements promise economic opportunity for a select group of Mi'kmaq people at the price of all Mi'kmaq peoples' inherent treaties... We have a voice and we say 'NO!' Drastic measures have been implemented with the declaration of a hunger strike by a Mi'kmaq citizens assembly.

India's central government **walked away from its position on the need to obtain consent** from Indigenous Peoples and forest dwellers before handing their lands over to industry. The government simply announced that major "linear projects" such as roads, railways, transmission lines and pipelines do not need to obtain consent from affected populations before clearing their lands, despite provisions in **the Forest Rights Act** that say otherwise. The move could make way for hundreds of new industrial projects that would have never otherwise seen the light of day.

A Ceremonial Grand Council was held on **lhanktonwan** (Yankton Sioux) homelands **to affirm a unifying International Treaty** between Indigenous Peoples and allies who seek to protect the sacred from the Tar Sands and the Keystone XL Pipeline. The International Treaty—signed by Tribal Elders and their allies—built upon the Save the Fraser River Declaration, Rights of Mother Earth Accord, Indigenous Leaders Spiritual Declaration, and UNDRIP.

Maya villagers who are suing **HudBay Minerals** — for the alleged gang-rapes of eleven women, the killing of community leader Adolfo Ich and the shooting and paralyzing of German Chub at HudBay's former mining project in Guatemala — recently learned that HudBay has abruptly abandoned its legal argument that the lawsuit should not be heard in Canada. **The surprise move is an important precedent-setting development** for the accountability of Canadian mining companies for overseas human rights abuses.

In Arauca, Colombia, a series of **peaceful community protests against oil exploitation** were brutally attacked by the government's Mobile Anti-Disturbance Squadron, **ESMAD**. At one of the protest sites, near the gate

to the petroleum complex Caricare, ESMAD along with the Police and the Army assaulted the mobilized communities "by setting fires to the surrounding pastures, discharging their weapons, destroying common buildings (a school), taking away the food supplies to the protesters" and beating and retaining various people. During the attack, the police also acted to prevent on-scene reporters from contacting any media while the national army set up checkpoints to prohibit the passage of reporters "for security reasons."

Hickory Ground Tribal Town member, Wayland Gray, Muscogee-Creek, was **arrested and charged with making a terrorist threat** for entering the construction site of the expansion of the **Wind Creek Wetumpka Casino**. Wayland, who was arrested with three others, entered the site to pray over the desecration of the grounds because it is where 57 ancestral remains were unceremoniously moved to make room for the casino expansion. Wayland has since been released from jail, however, the charge of uttering a terrorist threat remains.

Australia's Federal Court affirmed that **Fortescue Metals Group has an obligation to negotiate** with the **Yindjibarndi** Peoples on matters concerning Yindjibarndi Country (lands). The Mining company has continuously dismissed and attempted to undermine the credibility of the Yindjibarndi, even going so far as to manufacture consent for their Firetail mine by creating and funding a **fake** Yindjibarndi representative organization. The company has also surreptitiously destroyed Yindjibarndi sacred sites.

The **Cora** Peoples **issued a resounding "No"** to a proposed artificial reservoir on their ancestral lands in the Sierra Madre Occidental mountain range of western Mexico. The Cora believe that the artificial reservoir heralds the destruction of a central part of their world. Not only would they lose a large quantity of land, the reservoir would inundate or otherwise endanger 18 sacred sites and place several conditions on their traditional cultural practices.

Assembly of First Nations Chair **Shawn Atleo** praised Canada's Land Claims Agreements as immensely "successful", **stating in a press release** that, "This is our work going forward — coming together recognizing our diversity and united by our common objectives for respect for our lands and the success and prosperity for our peoples and Nations." First Nations are effectively forced to sign the agreements which can lead to the forfeiture of their Indigenous and Treaty rights usually in exchange for short term monetary gains. If a First Nation refuses to sign, they face the risk of Canada nullifying any ongoing or future land claims.

In an unprecedented ruling in Colombia, all mining and exploration activities in 49,421 acres of territory belonging to indigenous **Embera Katio** communities were **suspended for up to six months** due to a failure to consult and protect the communities in the area. According to the presiding Judge, the six-month period will give the Embera some desperately needed security after being repeatedly attacked by employees of mining companies in the area. The six-month term will also give the courts enough time to hand down a ruling concerning the 'legality' of the Embera's land titles.

B'laan communities affected by the **SMI-Xstrata Tampakan Copper-Gold Mining Project** and their support groups **called for a high level investigation** by the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Commission on Human Rights on the escalating tension and violence in South Cotabato. The request

arrived just two weeks after two B'laan clan members were killed in an alleged military operation; and three months after the massacre of an entire B'laan family.

An important **Teribe** museum was mysteriously set ablaze by 'vandals' during a Cultural Encounter that brought a Teribe delegation from Panama to visit their relations in Costa Rica. The community museum plays a key role in helping to revive Teribe cultural values and promote the identity of its people. Council of Elders member and manager of the museum, Enrique Rivera, informed reporters that the Teribe are facing many such attacks, which are being carried out by both indigenous and non Teribes who have been 'influenced' by outsiders.

The **Neskonlith** Band of the Secwepemc Nation, in response to Imperial Metals' proposed lead and zinc mine in the headwaters of the Adams River, drafted a water declaration stating the importance and sanctity of their watersheds and their opposition to mining in the territory. The declaration was inspired in part by the landmark water declaration that the Oji-Cree community of Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug (KI) authored in 2011, which led to the protection of 23,000 km² of their territory from mining.

France continued to steamroll ahead with its UN-sanctioned invasion of **Azawad**, with some 4,000 French troops and 3,800 African soldiers killing several hundred indigenous Tuareg freedom fighters. The France-led assault, celebrated in the media as a victory against terrorism, was followed by a quick visit from French President Francois Hollande -- who headed to Timbuktu just days after the city was re-taken -- to proclaim, "We are serving a cause defined within the United Nations' framework ... to bring the entire Malian territory under the legitimate authority of the Malian president and then the leaders who will be elected by the Malians."

The **Wixárika Regional Council** for the Defense of Wirikuta announced a new stage in the struggle to defend the sacred land known as Wirikuta in San Luis Potosí, Mexico. At the center of the new effort is a set of dialogues with Wirikuta residents, scientists and the federal government; and a demand for a new plan for regional economic recovery, based on respect for human and territorial rights of the people of the desert and the Wixárika people.

The **Winnemem Wintu** of Northern California spoke out in opposition to the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) tentative approval of genetically engineered AquaAdvantage salmon, explaining that such frankenfish would "impact our obligation to salmon and [...] change the traditional responsibility to salmon and our relationship that [has existed] for thousands of years". According to the FDA's draft environmental assessment (EA) finding, in spite of much evidence to the contrary, AquaAdvantage salmon, which have been engineered to grow year-round instead of only during spring and summer, pose no risk to the environment.

Brazil's Federal Public Ministry (MPF) rejected Belo Sun Mining Corporation's proposed "**Volta Grande**" gold mining project downstream of the controversial Belo Monte dam in Para, Brazil. The MPF decision arrived in the wake of a five-month investigation into the Volta Grande project's environmental impacts, which concluded that the Canadian company did not prepare adequate socio-environmental impact studies and further failed to consult several Arara, Juruna and Kayapo Xikrin communities who might be affected by

the project. Rather than consult the Indigenous Peoples, the company tried to sell their project to the general public as "a panacea for local development with investments in infrastructure, education, and health... while fostering an egalitarian and sustainable quality of life".

A Malaysian state minister announced that the government will no longer pursue a set of twelve new hydro dams in **Sarawak**. The Minister stated unequivocally that the government was backing off in response to widespread criticism, which has included several protests over the years by the Indigenous Peoples of Sarawak as well as environmentalists.

A shocking report was released by Human Rights Watch documenting both ongoing failures by Canada's police forces to protect indigenous women and children in the north from violence and violent behavior by police officers toward women and children. The damning report, "**Those Who Take Us Away**", uncovered a pattern of systemic abuse that ranged from excessive use of force against girls, strip searches of women by male officers and in some cases, rape. The 89-page report arrived just days after Operation Thunderbird and Anonymous launched a crowdmap detailing cases of murdered and missing Indigenous women and children in North America.

Approximately 450 Ch'ol women and men from the organization **Laklulal Ixim** (Our People of Maize) initiated a highway blockade to demonstrate against the newly elected state government in Chiapas, Mexico. The Ch'ol group explained in a communiqué that the government is continuing to employ "A strategy of looting and abandonment toward the indigenous and campesino communities of the state" instead of attending to their demands and needs. They also strongly condemned the "National Crusade against hunger", calling it "a farce that seeks merely to share crumbs to our communities that experience poverty, while our natural resources are handed over to foreign firms for exploitation."

A **Pemon** village in southeastern Venezuela disarmed and detained a total of 43 soldiers in an effort to prevent any further abuses and mistreatment at the hands of the soldiers. Several days after the rather bold move, the Pemon met with government officials to define an equitable, non-violent solution to the protest action. An agreement was drawn up in less than a day wherein the government pledged to investigate any possible abuses by the soldiers and remove any foreigners who are independently mining for gold on Pemon lands. In exchange, the Pemon agreed to release the soldiers.

Australian Environment Minister Tony Burke introduced the "Completion of Kakadu National Park (**Koongarra Project Area Repeal**) Bill" signaling an end to one of three longstanding struggles against uranium mining within the Alligator Rivers Region of Australia's Northern Territory. After struggling for some 30 years to prevent uranium mining in the area, Jeffrey Lee, Djok Senior Traditional Owner and the Custodian of Koongarra—who was once offered \$5 million to reverse his opposition to uranium mining—welcomed the new bill.

Traditional Maya leaders in Belize reported that the Texas-based oil company US Capital Energy made several attempts to buy support for an oil-drilling project that was approved by the government without any notice to or consultation with the Maya. According to Cultural Survival, the company tried to take advantage of a leadership election by endorsing a pro-oil candidate to lead **The Toledo Alcaldes Association** (TAA), the group of 78 traditional

leaders or *alcaldes* who govern all 38 Maya villages in southern Belize. The company went so far as to offer bribes to every alcalde to encourage them to vote for their candidate. The plan ultimately backfired: A secret meeting was held in which the alcaldes voted to remove said candidate and anyone else who demonstrated support for the company.

The **Canadian government** announced that it will appeal a landmark court decision that recognized Metis and non-status peoples as “Indians” under the constitution, a decision that almost doubled the population of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Former Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan said in a statement that the feds are appealing **the court decision**, issued during the height of the Idle No More protests in January, because it raises “complex legal issues” (*Editor’s note: They’re having a hard enough time as it is legally extinguishing the current Indigenous population*).

Indigenous leaders from the Ecuadorian Amazon **challenged the Ecuadorian government face-to-face** during the XI Round oil concession promotional activities around **the North America Prospect Expo** (NAPE), the oil prospecting industry’s semi-annual trade show. The leaders were joined by North American indigenous leaders and human rights groups in a collective effort to raise attention and call on the Ecuadorian government to suspend its tendering of oil concessions that threaten to devastate the rainforest and the native communities that live there.

Indigenous Peoples on the Isthmus of Tehuantepec **resisted a new police offensive** meant to impose the construction of a mega wind park project in the **Barra de Santa Teresa of San Dionisio del Mar**, Oaxaca, Mexico. This wind park, the largest in Latin America, would completely do away with the habitat, natural resources and food supplies of the fishing and farming families of the Barra and would also destroy their sacred sites. Moreover, the project is a direct violation of their human rights as Indigenous Peoples.

Mapuche leaders and organizations in Chile **rejected the government’s announcement** of a plan to implement three bills meant to promote the development and political participation of the Mapuche people in the country. The Mapuche said the legislation was being imposed unilaterally and that the government was ignoring the recommendations established at a recent Mapuche summit. They are demanding a proper dialogue with government.

The controversial “**Los Ciruelos**” eco-tourism project was **halted in Colombia’s Tayrona National Park** for threatening sites considered sacred to the Kankuamo, one of four Indigenous Peoples who live the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, where the national park is situated. In its ruling, the administrative court in the Department of Magdalena suspended the eco-tourism project until such time that the opinions of the Indigenous Peoples have been considered and the project itself is seen to be consistent with the “social, cultural and economic integrity of the communities.”

A broad alliance of indigenous and civil rights groups, trade unions, campesinos, activists, environmentalists, and educators staged **a day of coordinated action** across **Panama**, protesting what they see as the aggressive and exploitative policies of the Martinelli administration. The day of action marked the first anniversary of the death of Ngäbe protester Jerome Rodríguez Tugrí, who was murdered during anti-mining demonstrations in western Panama in 2012.

The **Saami** filed an appeal with Sweden’s Court of Land and Environment **Issues** in order to stop a controversial mining operation by Beowulf Mining subsidiary Jokkmokk Iron Mines AB (JIMAB). The appeal followed a previous intervention by the Saami last year that resulted in the mining operation’s temporary suspension.

IN BRIEF

MARCH



PHOTO: ROBIN OISÍN LLEWELLYN

TRADITIONAL OWNERS SPEAK OUT AGAINST WIDESPREAD THREAT
OF FRACKING; INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS UNVEIL FIVE
NEW MDGS IN COLOMBIA; THE OCETI SAKOWIN MEET FOR THE
FIRST TIME IN 100 YEARS

Peguis First Nation informed the Manitoba government about [the discovery of several sacred artifacts](#) buried at the Sunterra peat mine inside Peguis' traditional territory north of the Province. According to the First Nation, the artifacts were being handled in a grossly irreverent fashion, with the workers showing little or no respect for the spirituality of Anishinabe Peoples. For these reasons, Peguis instructed the government to suspend all work at the mine to carry out a full and proper inventory.

An updated and strengthened version of the **Violence Against Women Act** [was signed into law](#) by US President Obama. The bill was first authorized in 1994 and currently provides \$660 million over the next five years for programs that provide legal assistance, transitional housing, counseling and support hotlines to victims of rape and domestic abuse. The changes to the bill include the expansion of coverage to Indigenous women on reservations, granting authority to tribal courts dealing with non-indigenous Americans who are accused of a crime on a reservation.

India's Supreme Court [reversed its previous interim order](#) to ban 'human safaris' in the Andaman Islands, dealing a major blow to the campaign against the controversial tours. Prior to the widely celebrated [interim order](#), hundreds of tourists traveled daily along the Andaman Trunk road in the hopes of seeing the **Jarawa** tribe. Several cases were documented where the tourists treated the Jarawa like zoo animals.

Over the past two years, Australian mining companies have been busy [appointing Papua New Guinea politicians](#) to their boards of directors. Many are responsible for internment camps, the mortaring of children, aerial bombardments, assassinations, rape, and the denial of humanitarian aid, among other crimes, during the decade-long civil war. Sir Rabbie Namaliu, who was PNG's prime minister during 1988-1992, has been appointed to the board of Bougainville Copper Limited (BCL), the PNG subsidiary of British-Australian giant Rio Tinto—the very company which had fed, housed and helped transport troops as they sacked Bougainvillean villages — earning him K120,000 (A\$55,000) annually. Meanwhile, many on **Bougainville** live with their painful memories from the war on a daily basis, still without the chance of a truth commission or reparations.

Uranium mining companies have [renewed their interest](#) in the Navajo Nation which is still reeling from the uranium siege that allowed the US government to build up its nuclear arsenal during World War II and the Cold War. There are estimated to be about a thousand abandoned uranium mines across **Navajo-land**, only a fraction of which have been cleaned up.

The **Havasupai Nation**, meanwhile, teamed up with three conservation groups [to sue the U.S. Forest Service](#) over its decision to allow Energy Fuels Resources, Inc. to begin operating a uranium mine near Grand Canyon National Park without initiating or completing formal tribal consultations and without updating a thirty-year-old federal environmental review. The Canyon Mine threatens Havasupai cultural values, wildlife and endangered species and increases the risk of pollution and depletion of groundwater feeding springs and wells in and around the Grand Canyon area.

A small delegation of respected Rohingya leaders [unexpectedly showed up at a conference](#) at Mahidol University in Bangkok to halt the further degradation of the history of **Arakan**. None of the Rohingya leaders nor any member of the Rohingya community were invited to the so-called "International

Conference on the History of Arakan", a conference whose speakers followed the traditional make-believe story that there are no Rohingya in the history and that the term "Rohingya" was created in 1951. The delegation did their best to set the record straight.

A committee of 17 **Yukpa** [met with Venezuela's minister for foreign affairs](#), Elias Jaua, concerning the promise of compensation for land and building renovations made by cattle ranchers who are occupying 25 areas to which the Yukpa hold legal collective titles. The meeting came three weeks after Yukpa leader, Sabino Romero, was murdered. Two local police were detained in connection to the murder and then released due to lack of evidence linking them to the crime. The Yukpa demanded that Captain Lopez and other soldiers be detained and judged, for allegedly allowing the two hired killers to flee on their motorbike after killing Sabino. Cattle ranchers have refused to hand over the land to the Yukpa, claiming they haven't received payments for it. The ranchers often resort to violence when Yukpa attempt to reclaim their lands.

A group of grassroots Red Lake Chippewa from Nizhawendaamin Inaakiminaan (We Love Our Land) [stepped forward](#) alongside non-indigenous allies to occupy lands that Enbridge has claimed since 1949, when the company -- then called Lakehead Pipe Line Company -- installed a pipeline in the area without an easement from the Red Lake Chippewa Nation authorizing the project. Since then, the company has built three more pipelines on the land. The peaceful protesters say that it's time for the company leave.

Leaders from **Agua Caliente**, a community of Maya Q'eqchi Peoples from Guatemala, [traveled to Washington, D.C.](#), to raise awareness about a harmful nickel mine planned in their indigenous territories. The mining company behind the proposed project, Compania Guatemalteca de Niquel, a subsidiary of the Solway Investment Group, has already used threats and violence against Agua Caliente and surrounding communities. In one case, the son of Rodrigo Tot (one of the Q'eqchi delegates) was killed, it is believed, as an act of retribution for the family's public opposition to the mine.

COONAPIP, Panama's Indigenous Peoples Coordinating Body, [formally withdrew from the UN-REDD process](#) in Panama. In a letter to the UN, COONAPIP explained that UN-REDD "does not currently offer guarantees for respecting indigenous rights [nor for] the full and effective participation of the Indigenous Peoples of Panama." In a previous letter, dated 20 June 2012, COONAPIP wrote that the process "has been riddled with incongruences and inconsistencies" and that "We feel used in this process."

The **Shuar** stepped up their efforts [to defend their culture and way of life](#) against the impending threat of the 25,000-acre Mirador mining Project. They initiated a legal action using Articles 71-73 [on Rights of Nature](#) in the Ecuadorian Constitution. In their case, the plaintiffs have asked the courts to stop the Mirador Project using the precautionary principle. If the project is allowed to go ahead, it would have a severe impact on the Shuar's culture, their sacred sites, and the very water and land they depend on.

The Right Honorary **Powes Parkop**, the Governor of Papua New Guinea's National Capital District, issued [a welcomed dose of support](#) for West Papua, stating in front of a crowd of 3,000 people that "there is no historical, legal, religious, or moral justification for Indonesia's occupation of West Papua". Turning to welcome West Papuan independence leader Benny Wenda, who

was in Papua New Guinea as part of a global tour, the Governor told Wenda that during his stay “no one will arrest him, no one will stop him, and he can feel free to say what he wanted to say.” These are basic rights denied to West Papuans who continue to be arrested, tortured and killed.

The **Tsimané** people have traditionally lived a nomadic lifestyle in the northern lowlands department (province) of Beni, Bolivia. However, they have gradually settled into sedentary communities, **on land that ranchers and other outsiders are trying to take**. Since rejecting some small payments offered for their land Tsimané village of El Jatatal, have experienced intimidation and attacks. Carmelo Tayo, a “corregidor” or traditional community leader says “we just want to be allowed to live in peace. We don’t want them to take our things away from us. And above all, we want recognition that this is ours, that most of us were born here and that it is here we want to die.”

Chief Allan Adam of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation in Alberta pointed to a policy of extortion while discussing **the Canadian government’s revised funding contribution agreements**, stating that “The government [...] is trying to get First Nations to sign onto [their policies] or else be cut from their funding.” Liberal MP Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul’s, Ont.), her party’s ‘aboriginal’ affairs critic, told **The Hill Times** that what the federal government is doing is “appalling” and asked about the issue during a Question Period in March. “Concerns are being raised by First Nations that new federal contribution agreements include a clause that prohibits challenging government legislation through the courts” she said, adding “Surely, the new minister understands how completely inappropriate it would be for the government to hold First Nations funding hostage to such an undemocratic condition”.

Indigenous Peoples from Peru and Brazil **joined together to stop a Canadian oil company** from destroying their land and threatening the lives of Indigenous Peoples who live in voluntary isolation. The oil giant **Pacific Rubiales** is headquartered in Canada and has already started oil exploration in area referred to by industry as ‘Block 135’, which lies directly over an area proposed as a reserve for the ‘Jaguar Peoples’. Despite promising to protect the rights of its Indigenous Peoples, the Peruvian government has allowed the \$36 million project to go ahead.

The **Mathias Colomb Cree Nation (MCCN)** was **taken to court by Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting** (Hudbay) after some first nation citizens gathered for a second time at the entrance to the company’s gold, zinc and copper mine. The peaceful effort was aimed at drawing attention to the fact that neither Hudbay or the Manitoba government obtained consent before going ahead with development. The company is suing MCCN for millions of dollars in alleged ‘damages’.

Hudbay, meanwhile, continues to face serious charges in **another Canadian court room**. A group of Maya villagers from Guatemala are suing the company for serious human rights abuses that took place prior to the company’s purchase of the fenix project. The villagers believe that Hudbay inherited liability for the crimes that were committed by employees of Skye Resources, including murder of a community leader and the gang rape of several Maya women.

Norberto Pinto, leader of the **Pemon** community of Kurum Eupay in Paraguay, was **arrested by military officials** in the town of Angostura. An act of retaliation for the community’s capture and disarmament of 19 soldiers last

October, within days, the military also arrested the ultimate authority of the people Musuk Pa, Alexis Romero, for the same events. Both are now to be tried in military courts. These clear attempts at intimidation are in breach of the agreement releasing the 19 captured soldiers, which does not allow the government to take administrative or judicial retaliation against the Pemon.

Indigenous Traditional owners in **Arnhem Land**, Australia, issued a petition calling on the Northern Territory and Federal governments to ban fracking from their territory. According to ABC News, the Indigenous Peoples had to object to Paltar Petroleum’s application for its land and sea exploration project in order to find out what the company’s plans were. After learning the scope of the company’s plans, they made their position clear. At public demonstration, the **Traditional owners burnt a letter from Paltar Petroleum** who was responding to their objections. As they burnt the document the men called out in unison: “Paltar this is what you wrote to us, and we say no!”

Elsewhere in Australia, Environment Minister Tony Burke introduced a new Bill to include the Koongarra Project Area into **Kakadu National Park**, signaling **the end to one of three long standing struggles** against uranium mining within the Alligator Rivers Region of the Northern Territory. Just a few weeks later, the Bill was ratified by Australia’s Senate. The move was widely welcomed, however, the Mirrar People expressed grave concerns over the government’s claim that it ‘completes’ Kakadu National Park since there are two more uranium project areas the Mirrar are similarly attempting to bring into the Park.

The **Oceti Sakowin**, otherwise known as the seven council fires of the Lakota, Dakota and Nakota people, **met for the first time in over 100 years**. Another meeting has already been planned to take place in April and will be hosted by the Rosebud Sioux Tribe. Oglala Sioux President Bryan Brewer told **The Rapid City Journal**, “This has been something the tribes have talked about for years,” adding, “It has always been a dream of our tribes, but it actually happened now. This is a historic event for us all to pull together again.”

Leaders of 26 **Kayapó** communities **unanimously rejected the Brazil government’s recent offer** of US\$9 million, deeming it “dirty money” intended to placate indigenous resistance to Brazil’s plans to dam the Xingu River while sowing disunity among their communities. In addition to their response to ElectroBras (Brazil’s state-owned electricity agency), Kayapó leadership also sent a letter to Joaquim Barbosa, the President of Brazil’s Supreme Court, requesting “the urgent ruling upon the lawsuit...referring to the lack of prior consultation of Indigenous Peoples affected by Belo Monte” stating that this ruling is necessary to guarantee their constitutional right.

The Ontario court of appeal shamefully **reversed a landmark ruling** that found the Ontario government cannot unilaterally issue logging permits on **Grassy Narrows** First Nation’s traditional territory. The government argued it had “exclusive proprietary jurisdiction over public lands and in forests in the province” despite the fact that the First Nation has a legal treaty relationship with Canada which necessitates the protection of Grassy Narrows’ hunting and trapping rights.

Colombia’s indigenous organizations **revealed five new ‘millennium development goals** (MDGs), presenting the world’s first national framework for realizing indigenous rights in response to **the Millennium Declaration**. The move challenges the country’s authorities to record their progress in meeting the

new targets, which include the protection of indigenous territory; the implementation of free, prior and informed consent protocols and the 'institutional redesign' of the state in its relations with Indigenous Peoples.

To discuss issues concerning the environment, retaining their cultures, self-governance and journalism, a delegation of six indigenous leaders from the Russian Far East visited the St. Regis Mohawks at Akwesasne. Tribal Chief Randy Hart said in a press release, "It's clear that these indigenous people face many of the same issues as we do in North America. Sharing information will hopefully let them better face them." Akwesasne wasn't the delegation's only stop in the United States. They also stopped in Seattle, Washington as well as Albuquerque, New Mexico, and met with other Indigenous Nations to discuss education, hunting and fishing rights, health care and youth programming.

The Enxet community of Sawhoyamaxa announced their return to their ancestral lands from which they were expelled more than 20 years ago. Since the forced eviction was carried out, the community has been living along the side of a road, right next to the land they were removed from. Seven years ago, the community won a favorable ruling at the Interamerican Court of Human Rights; however, the Paraguayan government has thus far refused to act on it, leaving the community to roam around like cattle. No longer. The community resolved to occupy their lands in the hopes of compelling the government to do the right thing. As a part of the effort, Sawhoyamaxa called on all Indigenous brothers and sisters to express solidarity with their struggle.

Commenting on the US/Mexico border wall, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination stated, "The Committee expresses its concern regarding the potentially discriminatory impact that the construction of the border wall might have on the Kikapoo, Ysleta del Sur Pueblo and Lipan Apache indigenous communities, including their access to tribal lands located north and south of the border and to resources required for traditional ceremonies." This came in an Early Warning and Urgent Action letter to the United States government. In the letter, the UNCERD also requested information and updates on the situations of two previous cases examined under the early warning and urgent action procedure, those being the Arizona Snowbowl Ski Resort project in the San Francisco Peaks and the situation of the Western Shoshone.

An indigenous Ngäbe protester was killed in the hamlet of Las Nubes, Chiriquí province, Panama, after attending a rally against the controversial Barro Blanco hydro dam. The incident, which was only sparsely reported in the Panamanian media, occurred at a time of heightened tensions with the Ngäbe and other local villagers increasing their efforts to stop the project.

Approximately 1000 Himba and Zemba peoples carried out their third protest against continuing human rights violations in Namibia despite prevailing drought conditions due to Climate Change, and their increasingly frantic search for grazing and water for their livestock. Among the Himba and Zemba's list of concerns is the Orokawe hydro dam which would put even more pressure on the region's water, destroy local fish stocks and medicine plant areas and force the resettlement of affected communities.

Ulu Masen, the first REDD project to be validated under the Climate Community and Biodiversity (CCB) Standards, also became the first REDD project to lose that validation five years later. Anwar Ibrahim, the Head of the Mukim

Association in Aceh Jaya, told REDD-Monitor "Ulu Masen is like a dream. It is unclear. We've never seen anything from REDD. It's like the wind. We can't see it, can't touch it." Land tenure issues became major issues for the REDD project as free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) was included in the second edition of the CCB Standard -- Ulu Masen was audited against the first edition, which did not include a requirement for FPIC. A 2007 moratorium on logging concessions had been weak and ineffective leaving villagers and NGOs to pressure to prevent the companies from restarting the concessions.

Peru's national government declared an environmental state of emergency in the Pastaza River basin, a region that has been devastated by close to 40 years of oil pollution. The long-overdue emergency order aims to reduce the risk of contamination to the local population. The region is largely occupied by the Quichua and Ashuar Peoples, who have been working for years to address the problem. Authorities claim that they're only taking action now because Peru lacked the requisite environmental quality standards. The area in question will now be cleaned up by Pluspetrol, the country's biggest oil and natural gas producer.

The Superior City Council in Superior, Arizona, voted to oppose the proposed Arizona Southeastern Land Exchange (HR 687). The land exchange was for a proposed mine by Resolution Copper Company, a subsidiary of mining giants Rio Tinto and BHP, based in Australia and China. Spiritual leader, Wheeler Grimes, Sr. discussed the decision, saying "We, as the Apache people, believe that Oak Flat is a holy site and we still have traditional ceremonies there." He added, "There is hardly any water in Arizona. We don't want Resolution Copper to tap into our water that belongs to our Apache people". The land exchange must now go before the house Subcommittee of Energy and Mineral Resources part of the Natural Resources Committee in Washington, D.C.

The Philippine Government depicted oil palm as the "tree of peace", of "economic growth" and as the most environmentally friendly option for eradicating rural poverty while reducing dependence on imported edible oils. However, according to the impacted indigenous communities, oil palm expansion in the country is wreaking havoc on their lives by destroying their farmlands, hunting grounds and forest products and polluting their water sources. As a result, the communities say they are now experiencing unprecedented levels of poverty.

Indigenous sacred lands activists from throughout the United States—including O'odham, Navajo, Havasupai and Muscogee Creeks—demonstrated at the National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA) conference to support the preservation of Hickory Ground in Wetumpka, Alabama. In an enormously controversial move, The Poarch Band of Creek Indians excavated approximately 57 sets of Muscogee Creek human remains from the ceremonial ground at Hickory Ground to make way for a \$246 million casino expansion project.

Brazil's federal government sent a military force to Itaituba, lands of the Mundurucu Peoples in the northern state of Pará, to make sure a group of 80 technicians can complete an environmental impact study (EIS) for the São Luiz do Tapajós hydro dam. The technicians previously tried to carry out their study in September, however the Mundurucu asked them to withdraw because they had not received permission to be in the area. The government claims that the technicians were threatened, necessitating an armed escort. According to the Mundurucu, the government has yet to carry out any con-

sultations as required by The International Labour Organization's Convention 169, a legally binding international agreement dedicated to the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (**RAIPON**), which represents 41 indigenous groups and more than 250,000 indigenous people across the Russian Arctic, [has been restored](#). Last November, Russia's Ministry of Justice gave RAIPON an order to suspend its operations until April 2013. The ministry claimed that RAIPON did not comply with Russian federal law because "not all regional offices of the association are legal entities." The ministry then concluded that RAIPON's "activities are illegal." Amendments to the charter of RAIPON were registered ending the suspension of activities. The suspension was opposed by the Arctic Council, Canada, Norway, Greenland and many others.

A hunger strike by Shelley Young of Eskasoni First Nation and Jean Sock of Elsapogtog First Nation to [get the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs to withdraw](#) from the 'Made in Nova Scotia' process ended after 11 days. The Aboriginal Affairs website identifies the Made in Nova Scotia process as a comprehensive land claim and self-government table, however, Chief Terry Paul of Membertou First Nation says the Nova Scotia negotiations were unique in the country, and they are neither comprehensive land claims nor self-government negotiations. The chiefs agreed to halt the negotiations until their communities can become better educated as to what exactly is at stake in the process, admitting that "the chiefs failed to adequately consult with the people in the communities".

Tuareg rebels called on the **International Criminal Court** (ICC) to investigate what they called war crimes [committed by soldiers during the ongoing conflict](#) in west Africa. "Soldiers have engaged in acts of torture, summary executions and forced disappearances" the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) said in a statement. The movement said its lawyers have asked the ICC to specifically investigate "crimes committed by the Malian army against members of ethnic groups (such as) Fula, Tuareg, Arab and Songhai."

Organizers in Malawi [planned a two week long set of protest activities](#) to be kicked off with a blockade on the road to the Kayelekera uranium mine, run by **Paladin Energy Limited**. The goal of the demonstrations will be to eject the company out of Karonga unless it fulfills some issues as demanded by the organizers. These demands include for Paladin to open an account in Malawi; to disclose the projects on which the company claims to have spent K5 billion; to rescind its decision to retrench Malawian workers saying it violates its Development Agreement Clause 12; and to guarantee an amount of money to restore the area after mining.

18 young women and an adolescent girls were [held hostage and forced to prostitute themselves](#) at a nightclub located within the **Belo Monte** dam's work camp before being freed last month. The president of the Belo Monte dam-building consortium Norte Energia was summoned by Brazil's Parliamentary Commission on Human Trafficking (CPI) to explain its relationship with the nightclub. "It's impossible that the company has no type of culpability. This brothel is on the side of the only road inside the work camp. We cannot accept this kind of complicity," said Congressman Arnaldo Jordy, president of the CPI on Human Trafficking. He added, "Whatever explanation is offered, whatever the defense presented by the consortium, we will evalu-

ate the possibilities, among them to suspend the project until conditionalities are observed."

The **Manitoba Metis Federation** asked the Supreme Court of Canada for a declaration that Canada had reneged on its fiduciary obligation to the Métis people of Manitoba with unconstitutional bills passed between 1870 and 1880. [The Supreme Court, in turn, ruled](#) that the Crown "failed to implement the land-grant provision set out in Section 31 of the Manitoba Act, 1870 in accordance with the honour of the Crown." The decision gives the MMF more authority regarding negotiations for land or cash settlements with the federal government. The MMF says it will now use the ruling to argue that the federal government needs to live up to promises made 143 years ago.

The Association of Affected Peoples of the Quimbo Hydroelectric Projects (**Asoquimbo**) has been [backed by the Comptroller General of the Republic of Colombia](#) in their demands for an environmental license to be respected. The National Authority of Environmental Licenses' (ANLA) has thus far refused to hold the energy company Enel-Endesa-Emgesa accountable for failing to comply with the environmental license, which addresses matters of resettlement, compensation and environmental mitigation in connection to the Quimbo dam project. While the resistance to the Quimbo dam project grows in Huila, so does the resistance in communities in Gigante and Garzón affected by petroleum company Emerald Energy, as well as communities in southern and central Huila resisting the Master Advantage Plan of the Magdalena River. This plan would hand over the country's largest and most important river in concession to the state-owned company HydroChina.

Representatives of nearly 200 **Kreung** families living in Ratanakkiri province's O'Chum district in Cambodia [filed a complaint](#) accusing a Vietnamese rubber company of clearing their ancestral lands. Chhay Thy, provincial investigator for rights group Adhoc has said, "the 700-hectare area is located outside CRD's government-awarded economic land concession (ELC). If the company continues to bulldoze the area, all 186 families in Kaim village will lose the land they have depended on for generations". The government alleges that the Kreung no longer have rights to the land in question, because it was sold to the company. The government has also told the villagers to start applying for private land titles; otherwise, they'll have nowhere to go when the company arrives.

IN BRIEF

APRIL



PHOTO: OCUPAÇÃO BELO MONTE

ESQUIMALT FIRST NATION UNVEILS NEW BARTER CURRENCY; 700
INDIGENOUS LEADERS LOCK DOWN BRAZIL'S HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES; MUNDURUKU WARN THAT THEY WILL GO TO
WAR WITH THE GOVERNMENT

The traditional chiefs of Collingwood Bay in Papua New Guinea's Northern Province [filed a complaint](#) with the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) accusing the Malaysian Company, **Kuala Lumpur Kepong**, of acting contrary to the RSPO Code of Conduct. In their detailed [submission to the RSPO](#), the traditional chiefs note how they have actively opposed oil palm developments on their lands since 2010. Rejecting options of mediation, the chiefs insist that the company desist from developing oil palm on their lands.

Esquimalt First Nation, in an effort to reform the monetary system, unveiled a new barter currency on their territory known as **Tetlas**. Similar to a gift certificate, the Tetla was developed by the organization [Tetla Tsatsuwatil](#) to assist economic development in the S'amuna' Nation and other Indigenous Nations, and to encourage trade with and among non-natives. So far, 35 businesses have signed on to the Tetla system.

Suspected FARC guerrillas shot and killed **Benancio Taquinás**, a traditional healer and spiritual leader of the indigenous Nasa resguardo o reservation of Jambaló, in the southwestern department of Cauca. Following Taquinás passing, the Traditional Nejwesx Authority of Jambaló issued a [statement blaming the FARC](#) for "seek[ing] to debilitate our organizational process." Since January of this year, eight Jambaló community members have been assassinated.

Elsewhere in Colombia, a group of Nasa Peoples [detained three soldiers](#) as suspects in the murder of one of their own leaders, **Alvaro Chocue**. The Nasa believe that Chocue was killed at an army checkpoint, however, the soldiers insist that he was caught in a crossfire between them and left-wing rebels. The Nasa agreed to release the soldiers after the army promised to thoroughly investigate the death of their leader.

The O'odham Nation is [taking action](#) to officially oppose Kinder Morgan's proposed **Sierrita Pipeline**, a project that could harm up to 60 "sacred and significant" cultural resource sites, village sites, trash mounds and quarries, according to a resolution approved by the Tohono O'odham Legislative Council. The pipeline would also harm Baboquivari Peak, an area central to the O'odham Peoples creation story.

Akha Life University (ALU) spoke out against the activities of American missionaries in Thailand, Burma, Laos and southern China. In an [interview](#) with **Voice of Russia**, an ALU spokesperson explained that Akha children are being offered various incentives including free housing and scholarships. In return for the 'generous offerings', the children are enlisted in a program designed to make them "give in to the Christian faith." The ALU's findings show that cultural assimilation is actively being practiced, putting even more pressure on the Akha's already-endangered culture.

Dauphin River First Nation decided to sue the **Manitoba government** for damages stemming from the intentional flood of 2011, which has made much of the community uninhabitable. Officials with the First Nation, located near Lake Winnipeg, say the government was negligent in its operation of a number of water-control structures, including the Shellmouth Dam and the Portage Diversion, which caused excessive flooding in their reserve leading to \$100m in damages. With [this latest legal action](#), the province now faces four separate lawsuits related to the 2011 flood. Other First Nations suing the government include Little Saskatchewan, Pinaymootang and Lake St. Martin First Nations.

Indigenous allies [crashed a private meeting](#) in Calgary that was organized by the **government of Ecuador** to promote its upcoming 11th Round of oil concessions. The oil auction, announced last November, includes vast swaths of territory traditionally used by 5 Indigenous nationalities in the Amazon region. At the meeting, the allies delivered a declaration on behalf of the affected Indigenous Peoples that they do not consent to oil drilling on their lands. The meeting was attended by Ecuadorean government officials, Canadian investors and oil-company executives.

Chile's Agriculture Ministry announced plans to restore a number of the Rapa Nui Peoples' ancestral gardens across **Rapanui**, the island most commonly known as Easter Island. According to the Ministry, many of the gardens, unused since the 1500s, have been stripped of the stone that the Rapa Nui used to protect their plants from wind and other harmful elements. By restoring the gardens, [the government says it is seeking to preserve](#) the Rapa Nui's traditional form of agriculture while promoting cultural education and increasing ethno-tourism on the Island.

A peaceful two-week occupation of the Burns Lake Band Council office in British Columbia, Canada, took a disturbing turn when **Albert Gerow**, chief of the 101-member First Nation, arrived with approximately 50 riot police, many with shotguns drawn, to clear the protesters out. [The community was stunned](#) by the massive show of force, given that the protesters consisted of no more than seven adults and their four children. The protesters were speaking out against the band's surreptitious financial activities including suspected deals made with pipeline companies against the communities wishes.

The African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) issued provisional measures to ensure that the Ogiek Peoples of the Mau forest [cannot be evicted](#) by the Kenyan government as long as the matter of the Ogiek's land rights continues before the court. The government wants to remove all Ogiek from the Mau forest, without due consultation, under the guise of protecting the environment.

The Goolarabooloo People and the Broome Community are celebrating after the Australian petroleum exploration and production company, **Woodside Petroleum**, [announced plans to abandon](#) its proposed \$45b gas processing hub at James Price point, north of Broome, in Western Australia. Woodside says it decided to walk away because the project became 'financially unviable', however, it's more likely that the company wants to get out before opposition reaches critical mass. As Wilderness Society national director Lyndon Schneiders pointed out, "Australia's hugest environmental battle has [now] been avoided."

The Cibola National Forest Service (CNFS) [issued a Draft Environmental Impact Statement](#) (DEIS) for a mine proposed on **Mt. Taylor** that will violate the existing Forest Management Plan. Instead of upholding their current standards in regard to historic and cultural properties, CNFS is planning to "deviate" from them to allow the desecration of Mt. Taylor with a "Project-Specific Forest Plan Amendment." Mt. Taylor, located near Grants, NM, is held holy by many Indigenous Nations in the Southwest, including Dine', Hopi, Acoma, Laguna, and Zuni.

Meanwhile, the Obama administration [granted Energy Fuels Resources approval](#) to reopen the old **Canyon Mine**, located on Havasupai lands, six miles

away from the Grand Canyon's popular South Rim entrance. The approval was granted despite the million-acre ban on uranium mining that went into effect last year. As the Canadian company confidently pointed out, the ban was aimed at preventing any new uranium mining projects in and around the famous tourist destination, which means it has no bearing on their plan to restart the old project.

Uncle Kevin (Kev) Buzzacott, a Peacemaker from Arabunna Nation at Lake Eyre in South Australia and Jacob Rumbiak (exiled Foreign Affairs Minister from the Federated Republic of Occupied West Papua) **announced plans to reunite their peoples** while acknowledging both Aboriginal Sovereignty and West Papua Independence. **The West Papua Freedom Flotilla** will travel from Lake Eyre to Cairns through the Torres Strait on to West Papua where the convoy will attempt to engage in ceremony and cultural exchange with local Elders.

In Brazil, approximately **700 indigenous leaders occupied the country's House of Representatives** in a concerted effort to stop the nomination process for the Special Committee on **PEC 215**, a proposal that would transfer from the federal government to the National Congress the authority to approve the demarcation of traditional lands. Despite a heavy-handed response from police officers and security personnel, the Indigenous leaders held their ground until the government representatives took appropriate action.

Elsewhere in Brazil, a federal court suspended the use of military and police personnel during technical research on the controversial **São Luiz do Tapajós Dam** in the Brazilian Amazon. According to *Mongabay*, **the judge decreed** that impacted Mundurucu Peoples must give their free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) before any further study can take place on the proposed dam. However, the decision is expected to be appealed. Earlier in the month, the Mundurucu warned they would "go to war" if the government forced the dam on them.

Meanwhile, a judge from Brazil's 4th Civil Court of the District of Altamira issued an "Interdito Proibitório" (prohibited interdiction) prohibiting demonstrations against the controversial **Belo Monte Hydroelectric Dam**. The decision, which came at the request of the consortium of companies behind the Belo Monte Dam project, arrived just one day before the Movement of People Affected by Dams (MAB) convened a meeting at the Bulamarque School of Miranda about 30 km from the dam's main construction area. MAB later issued a statement affirming that **the struggle is legitimate and will continue**.

To Hopis' dismay, several dozen culturally and spiritually significant **masks were sold off** at the **Neret-Minet Tessier & Sarrou auction** in Paris, France. The Hopi had filed an injunction against the hotly contested auction; however, the court rejected their appeal. Taking a remarkably atheist standpoint, the presiding judge ruled that, while the Hopis ascribe "sacred value" to the masks, "clearly they cannot be assimilated to human bodies or elements of bodies of humans who exist or existed." The masks were taken from Hopi during the 1930s and 1940s.

Authorities in northern China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region **blocked an attempted cross-country march** by traditional Mongol herders, with police assaulting hundreds of people on two separate occasions. The herders were attempting to march to Beijing for the meeting of the **National People's**

Congress to protest the ongoing confiscation of their grazing lands. In addition to land-grabbing by corrupt officials, some grazing lands have been seized for new mining operations and military bases. In an effort to suppress media coverage about the blocked protest marches, online posts were quietly removed from blogs and social media outlets. Beijing-based activist Yu Guofu was also accused of being an "anti-revolutionary" for posting information about one of the police assaults.

Ashéninka indigenous leaders in Peru **called on authorities to guarantee their safety** after receiving alleged death threats from irate loggers whose wood was impounded by National Police agents and investigators from the country's environmental crimes prosecutors office. Members of the **Alto Tamaya-Saweto indigenous** community alerted the authorities that the timber had been illegally taken from their territory.

The Oglala Sioux Tribal Council renewed its commitment to stop TransCanada's proposed **Keystone XL Pipeline** with resolution 13-60, **prohibiting the proposed KXL** "from crossing the Mni Wiconi Water Line, any part of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and any and all 1851 and 1868 treaty lands". The resolution follows in the wake of Moccasins on the Ground, a training camp on Pine Ridge that was organized in coordination with the Great Plains Tar Sands Resistance and Tar Sands Blockade.

In Guatemala, the Canadian mining company Tahoe Resources **received a mining license** for its **Escobal mining project** despite ongoing violence against Indigenous Peoples, including the unresolved kidnapping of four Xinca Leaders, one of whom was brutally murdered. More criminal acts were carried out on the same day the license was issued: Three shots were fired at the offices of the Center for Legal, Environmental and Social Action (CALAS) while its director was inside. A lawyer from this same organization also discovered that his home had been raided. The lawyer insisted that it was a direct message from the mining company, because, "we have participated in the entire legal process against the mine and are accompanying the consultations that are taking place in the communities."

An **anti-indian conference was held** at the Lakeway Inn in Bellingham, Washington, about ten miles from the Lummi Nation. **The April 6th event** -- which went by almost completely unnoticed by activists, human rights groups and the media -- was dedicated to teaching people how to fight casino gambling, water rights, fee to trust, land acquisitions and sovereignty. The event was sponsored by **Citizens Equal Rights Alliance** or CERA, one of the most prominent Anti-tribal organizations in the United States. Three additional conferences are now being organized by CERA in Massachusetts, New York and Northern California as **part of a new national offensive** to end tribal sovereignty.

In northern Chile, Environmental groups and indigenous Diaguita communities celebrated a **court decision to suspend the controversial Pascua Lama mine** owned by the world's largest gold mining company, **Barrick gold**. The court suspension was in response to a legal action that was brought forth by the affected indigenous communities who warned that the mine threatens their water supply along with several local glaciers. Lorenzo Soto, a lawyer representing the Diaguita, said the suspension will remain in effect until the company addresses the pollution issue and properly consults the Indigenous Peoples.

Peguis First Nation along with Fisher River First Nation and several local cottagers **blocked a road leading to the Berger Peat Mine** in the interlake region of Northern Manitoba, Canada. The action was in response to the Manitoba government's decision to uphold a license to **Berger Peat Moss Ltd. and Sun Gro Horticulture Canada Ltd.** despite a failure to adequately consult the first Nations about the many impacts that peat mining would have on their culture and Treaty Rights. Immediately after the government's decision, Berger began to clear the forests and build roads in the project area; however, according to Peguis First Nation, the company did so despite key provisions in its license which stipulate that no land clearances or road construction can take place until a required plant study and inventory, including for medicinal plants, has been carried out.

A Danish politician **ridiculed a traditional Maori welcome to New Zealand**, dubbing it an "uncivilised" ritual, and a "grotesque" mark of multicultural worship. **Marie Krarup**, a member of parliament for the Danish People's Party, commented in the Danish newspaper **BT** that she was expecting a handshake or a salute; but she was instead greeted with a man who performed "strange rituals and poked his tongue out." In the wake of public outcry against the offensive comments, Krarup offered a lite apology claiming that it was a "mistranslation." In a follow-up interview by **BT**, Krarup explained, "It sounds like I look down on the Maori. I do not do that, even though the culture is alien to me." She then preposterously asked, "I do wonder, though, why the Maori culture is forced upon New Zealanders of European ancestry. It would be the same as if we here at home gave little girls scarves on their heads to appreciate Muslims."

The indigenous Lenca communities of **Rio Blanco**, Honduras, **blocked access to the construction site** of the "Agua Zarca" hydroelectric dam to demand the removal of all construction equipment and the cancellation of the project. The communities of Rio Blanco, whom hold a communal title to their territory, say they were not adequately consulted nor allowed to participate in the process leading to the project, as required by ILO Convention 169. Two weeks after issuing their ultimatum, 40 heavily armed National Police evicted the protesters; however, the protesters soon returned, subsequently managing to expel the machinery.

The Indigenous Peoples Network of Malaysia or **Jaringan Orang Asal SeMalaysia** (JOAS) **condemned remarks** that the indigenous Dayak Peoples in Sarawak are 'squatters living on state land' and 'natives who can be manipulated to circumvent the law.' The deplorable comments were **secretly recorded** by an investigator with Global Witness who spent a week in Sarawak posing as a "foreign investor" who was looking to buy land to develop new oil palm plantations. In their response, JOAS urging relevant authorities to immediately investigate and take appropriate actions against those responsible for the comments, especially in light of the huge number of existing land disputes and conflicts between the indigenous communities and some plantation companies throughout the state.

Indigenous **Magars** called on the Government of Nepal to **immediately halt any preparations** to declare a buffer zone in Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve without consulting them or obtaining their consent as required by UNDRIP and ILO Convention 169. The Magars explained in a memorandum that, since the reserve was declared, indigenous and local communities have been denied development opportunities and forced to live in extreme poverty. They added that the buffer zone is little more than a ploy to expand the Reserve,

persecuting the communities even further.

Tens of thousands of **Maasai** people in Tanzania, are **now facing eviction** from their traditional lands so that wealthy tourists can use the area to shoot lions and leopards. The government of Tanzania recently proposed the creation of a 1,500 square kilometre "wildlife corridor" in Ngorongoro District right next to the Serengeti National Park, which was similarly cleared of its own indigenous population in 1959 by the British Government. Now, not only would the Maasai pastoralists lose their land, they would also be cut off from vital pastures and water, threatening the Maasai's very existence. The Maasai are now in the process of lobbying Tanzania's President to oppose the evictions, which the government is attempting to justify as a heroic conservation effort to protect wildlife and water catchments.

A group of prominent Indigenous scholars **sent a message** to Navajo Nation President **Ben Shelly** expressing disappointment over his support for Israel and urging him to "rethink your partnership with this corrupt and contested state and seek out international relationships that better reflect on all of us as Indigenous Peoples." Shelly recently met with Israeli diplomats and members of the Arizona Israel Business Council in Arizona to follow up on his December visit to Israel, where he expressed a profound desire to partner with the State and learn from their "expertise" in becoming self sufficient.

The development of national parks, reservoirs and wildlife sanctuaries in **Sri Lanka** are **pushing the Vedda way of life to the edge of extinction**, according to Vanniyaletto Uruwarige, chief of the Vedda Peoples. In an interview with **Global Press Journal**, Uruwarige warns that it is becoming increasingly difficult for his people to resist modernization with the government placing so many restrictions on their access to forest bounties. Uruwarige says his hope is that the Vedda culture will last the next 100 years, however, as there are no fishermen without the sea, nor can there be Veddas without forests.

Guatemala's long awaited "**genocide trial**" was **declared invalid**, rendering null and void five weeks of harrowing testimony from dozens of survivors and witnesses of massacre, forced disappearances and rape of Indigenous Maya Ixil people during Guatemala's civil war. Two days before the proceedings were declared invalid -- due to an "apparent breach of due process" -- prominent former government officials issued a public statement expressing concern that the trial is threatening the peace process and dividing Guatemala. President Perez Molina was implicated in the trial by a witness who was asked to keep his experience 'private' until a trial verdict had been reached.

A landmark victory for Indigenous rights, India's Supreme Court ruled that the **Dongria Kondh** will have the **final word on Vedanta Resources' plans** to construct a bauxite mine in the Niyamgiri hills of Orissa, India. "This ruling is a clear vindication of the protests by local communities", commented G. Ananthapadmanabhan, Chief Executive of Amnesty International India. "Authorities in India must now establish a clear and transparent process to ascertain the free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) of Indigenous communities in Niyamgiri and all other contexts where their traditional lands and habitats may be affected by state or corporate projects."

The **Wixarika** turned to the United Nations for help in their ongoing effort to protect their sacred land from mining companies. In a report presented to James Anaya, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Wixarika's advocacy group, The Wirikuta Defense Front, **stressed the**

threat that mining poses to the people who live there. They also denounced various steps taken by the federal government “to make it seem as if the conflict has been resolved.”

Dozens of Innu protesters blockaded the Newfoundland and Labrador Child, Youth and Family Services offices in Sheshatshiu, boarding up the windows of the building with signs bearing slogans such as “bring our children back” and “baby snatchers.” Sheshatshiu band councilor Jonas Rich said the group is upset that so many children have been removed from their homes. He said children are being put into care in other provinces, such as Ontario and Saskatchewan, where the children are losing their language and their culture.

St. Regis Mohawks condemned the US EPA’s decision to dredge and cap PCB-contaminated sediment along the long Grasse River in New York State. According to St. Regis Mohawk Chief Ron LaFrance, the EPA will only remove around seven percent of the 1 million tonnes of contaminated sediment through dredging and cover the rest with layers of clean sand, silt, gravel and anchor stone. The community wanted a complete removal of the industrial pollutants which began to pour into St. Lawrence River and its tributaries during the 1950s. A study from the 1980s determined that PCB levels found in snapping turtles, frogs and fish on the reservation (Akwesasne) was so high that the animals would qualify as hazardous waste.

The Mapuche community Lof Felipin was terrorized by a group of ten hooded individuals carrying blunt objects and knives, believed to be the employees of a local businessmen, Pedro Alejandro Chaparro. No one was physically injured, however, the hooded men threatened to kill all the men, women and children who were at that time present in the community’s ruka (communal home). The Mapuche said in a statement that the irruption was instigated by the media in the midst of the government’s ongoing refusal to restore the their rightful title to land, which is presently owned by Chaparro.

After establishing their peaceful camp just one month ago, Nizhawendaamin Indaakimincan (We love our land) took their protest to Enbridge Energy’s head offices in Bemidji, Minnesota. After trespassing on Red Lake Sovereign land for 64 years, the group of Red Lake citizens continue to demand that Enbridge remove its four pipelines and leave. During the recent protest, one woman locked herself to Enbridge’s door, stating, “Enbridge has been trespassing on our land for 64 years, and now I’m trespassing on theirs.”

In a controversial move, Aung San Suu Kyi, Burma’s pro-democracy leader and Nobel Peace laureate, urged communities affected by a copper mine in Sagaing Division’s Monywa District to cease their opposition and accept an offer of compensation for lands that the government seized to make way for the project. Dismayed by Suu Kyi’s recommendation, the affected communities vowed to continue their protests. Three locals also announced their intention to sue president Thein Sein for his alleged role in a violent crackdown last November.

The U.S. Supreme Court dismissed a lawsuit against Royal Dutch Shell that was brought on by the Ogoni Peoples in the Niger Delta. In the widely watched Kiobel vs. Royal Dutch Petroleum case, the Ogoni plaintiffs had accused Shell of being complicit in gross human rights abuses -- including torture, extrajudicial killings, rape and crimes against humanity -- that were carried out in the mid-1990s by the military government that was in power

at the time. The Supreme Court’s dismissal is seen as a serious setback for the Ogoni, whose lands have been absolutely devastated from years of oil pollution.

In a public statement littered with factual inaccuracies, U.S. Senator John McCain (R-AZ) made it very clear that he doesn’t care about Indigenous Peoples or public health. Commenting on the supposed success of the snowmaking project at the Arizona Snowbowl ski resort, McCain completely ignored the decades-long struggle to protect the sacred mountain while incorrectly claiming that the issue of using treated sewage water was a struggle between the ski resort and the federal government. As Dine’ activist Klee Benally observed, the struggle to save the Peaks is in fact a matter of religious freedom and potential environmental contamination. The treated sewage effluent used to create snow for the San Francisco Peaks is known to contain industrial waste, pharmaceuticals and personal care products including anti-seizure medication, antibiotics and oral contraceptives.

A series of protests unfolded on five Hawaiian islands that Monsanto, Syngenta, Dow AgroSciences, DuPont Pioneer and BASF have turned into the world’s ground zero for chemical testing and food engineering. Over the past 20 years, the five chemical companies have carried out more than 5,000 open-field-test experiments of pesticide-resistant crops on an estimated 40,000 to 60,000 acres of Hawaiian land without any disclosure, making the place and its people a guinea pig for biotech engineering. Their presence, however, is now being met with one of the largest movements that Hawaii has seen in decades; as Walter Ritte, a Hawaii activist, explained, “All of the resources that our kupuna [elders] gave to us, we need to take care of now for the next generation [...] That is our kuleana [responsibility]. That is everybody’s kuleana.”

IN BRIEF

MAY



GWICH'IN SPEAK OUT AGAINST DRILLING PROPOSAL IN ANWR;
ELDERS AND CHIEFS WALK OUT OF KEYSTONE XL MEETING; WSÁNEC
NATIONS RECLAIM THE TRADITIONAL NAME OF PKOLS

Citizens of the Secwepemc, Ahousaht and Tla-o-qui-aht Nations joined up with members of the Wilderness Committee, Friends of Clayoquot Sound, Clayoquot Action and others to [confront Imperial Metals](#) at their Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Vancouver, British Columbia. Among the many concerns raised at the protest were two controversial mining projects that Imperial wants to build in two different Indigenous territories within the **Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Reserve**.

After being 'lost' for more than 40 years, a [shocking report](#) into genocide, torture, rape and enslavement of Indigenous Peoples during Brazil's military dictatorship has re-surfaced, raising fresh questions about whether the government ever made amends and punished those responsible. For the heinous acts. The 7,000-page **Figueiredo report** -- believed to have been destroyed by a fire at the agriculture ministry -- reveals hundreds of severe crimes and many of its perpetrators. The report is now being examined by the National Truth Commission, which is investigating human rights violations between 1947 and 1988.

WSÁNEC nations lead an action to reclaim the traditional name of **PKOLS** on what is now southern Vancouver Island. Originally known as Mount Douglas, PKOLS is an historically important meeting place and a part of the WSÁNEC creation story. The Douglas Treaty was signed atop PKOLS in 1852. [The action to reclaim the name](#), which signified the renewal of the original nation-to-nation treaty relationship, included a march and a re-enactment of the original treaty signing with governor James Douglas. A joint Declaration reclaiming PKOLS was also signed and a permanent sign was installed.

Mexico's newly-appointed secretary of public security in **Chiapas** announced that [discussions had taken place between his office and the Israeli defense ministry](#). The two countries talked about security coordination at the level of police, prisons and effective use of technology. Chiapas is of course home to the Zapatistas (Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional), a mostly indigenous Maya liberation movement that has enjoyed global grassroots support since it rose up against the Mexican government in 1994.

Alberta's Court of Appeals upheld Beaver Lake Cree Nation's (BLCN) [constitutional claim against the crown](#) in what is considered to be one of the most significant legal challenges to the Tar Sands in Canada. BLCN's claim, first filed in 2008, identifies approx. 19,000 individual infringements on their land, the cumulative effect from which may constitute a legal breach of **Treaty 6**, which the First Nations signed with the Canadian government in 1876. The governments of Alberta and Canada tried to have the case dismissed under Rule 3.68, a measure meant to protect defendants from cases that are "frivolous, improper, and an abuse of process."

A group known as the **Belize Territorial Volunteers** recently discovered several large agricultural developments and one large pasture field encroaching on the Guatemala-Belize border. [Just before making the discovery](#), the BTV, which was joined by at least one local Maya resident, unexpectedly met representatives from the Organization of American States (OAS) who alleged that the group had reached the borderline and warned them not to proceed any further. The group pushed on after realizing they had not yet in fact reached the border.

Indigenous Peoples in southern **Botswana** breathed a sigh of relief after Botswana's High Court suspended a [planned community eviction](#) by local

authorities. The government asserted that the community, which lives in a so-called 'Wildlife Corridor,' is blocking the free movement of animals in the region. The High Court ruled that the eviction be [suspended until at least mid-June](#), when the "San" Bushmen will be forced to return to court to defend their land.

About 100 police and riot squad agents [used tear gas and live ammunition to break up a demonstration](#) by members of the indigenous Lenca community of **San Antonio Chuchuitepeque** in the northwestern Honduran department of Santa Bárbara. The Lenca were continuing their protest against the Agua Zarca hydroelectric project, which is being built by the Honduran company Desarrollos Energéticos S.A. (DESA). Two days after the attack, Berta Isabel Cáceres Flores, the coordinator of the Civic Council of Grassroots and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH), who was present at the demonstration, was arrested with one other person and charged with possession of a firearm. Defense attorney Marcelino Martínez said the weapon was planted to inculcate the COPINH leader.

New Zealand's government [signed a rare agreement](#) with the **Maori**, recognizing it historically acted "unjustly" and offering a combination of financial and cultural redress -- said to be a true act of reconciliation for the Maori. The signing took place on a site south of the city of Hamilton, where in 1863 Tamihana reached out to the invading British forces in a gesture of peace.

The U.S. company **Herakles Farms** finally succumbed to local and international pressure, [halting development](#) of its 60,000 hectare palm oil plantation in the middle of the Cameroon rainforest. The move came just weeks after an order from the Forestry Ministry to cease 'preparing land' near its Talangaye palm oil nursery pending an assessment of the public usefulness of the project to the region. As [noted on IC](#) in 2011, the project threatened the ancestral lands and livelihoods of the Baka, Bakola, Bedzang and Bagyeli Peoples.

The **Unist'ot'en** People of the Wet'suwet'en Nation [continue to maintain](#) a "Soft Blockade" on Morice West Forest Service Road, south of the town of Houston, in the province of British Columbia, Canada. The blockade was set up last November, after a group of pipeline workers were caught illegally trespassing on Wet'suwet'en lands. To make sure there are no further infractions, the Unist'ot'en now require prospective visitors to answer a series of six questions to justify their entry. The peaceful checkpoint has thus far prevented any more pipeline workers and subcontractors from carrying out any work for the proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway and Pacific Trails pipelines.

The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) [issued a warning](#) that soldiers from the **Philippine Army** were "harassing and preventing indigenous villagers, who were displaced en masse last month due to an armed conflict, from getting access to their farms to harvest crops." According to the AHRC, the soldiers imposed heavy restrictions on the villager's movements under the pretext of ensuring their safety. The AHRC urged the international community to write letters urging relevant authorities to conduct a full and impartial investigation into the allegations and to order the soldiers to cease their repression.

The **Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians** (ATNI) unanimously adopted a [resolution](#) opposing Goldman Sachs, as well as the transporters and exporters of fossil fuel energy, who are proposing projects in the ancestral territories of ATNI Tribes. ATNI represents a total of 57 ATNI Tribes in Oregon, Idaho,

Washington, southeast Alaska, Northern California, Nevada and Western Montana. From the Powder River Basin of the Northern Cheyenne, through the Columbia River to the Salish Sea, ATNI Tribes believe it their sacred duty to protect their ancestral territories and natural resources.

A landmark piece of legislation was passed in **Colombia** establishing a new category of protected area explicitly for lands held sacred by Indigenous Peoples. After the bill became law, the Colombian government **wasted no time putting it to good use**, handing over the ceremonial site of Jaba Tañiwashkaka to the Kogi People, making it the first sacred site in Colombia to be listed as an area of “national and cultural interest.” The government further pledged to double the area of Chiribiquete national park in southern Colombia to help protect two indigenous populations who are living in voluntary isolation.

The SAVE Rivers network -- along with 300 indigenous people from around Sarawak -- **gathered in protest** outside the Borneo Convention Center in Kuching, where the **International Hydropower Association’s biennial congress** was being held. The protesters, which included several community members affected by the Bengoh, Murum and Bakun dams, left peacefully after they managed to reach the main entrance of the event and get their message across to IHA, Sarawak Energy and the Sarawak Government: that they are open to development, but not at the expense of their ancestral lands and their ways of life.

The Gwich’in Nation **spoke out** against Alaska’s Governor Parnell’s \$50 million dollar drilling proposal on the Coastal Plain of the **Arctic National Wildlife Refuge**. In a public statement, the Gwich’in explained that their way of life is “dependent upon the Porcupine (River) Caribou Herd whose birthing and nursery grounds are on the Coastal Plain.” The Gwich’in also observed that the Refuge is presently closed to any and all drilling “and it would take an act of Congress to open it.”

An Ontario Superior Court judge **dismissed an attempt by a group of Quechua** to have a Canadian court enforce the well-known \$19 billion judgment against multinational oil giant **Chevron**. In his ruling, Justice David Brown concluded that the judgment was levied against Chevron Corp., and not Chevron Canada, therefore the subsidiary’s assets do not belong to the U.S. parent company. The Quechua launched the court action in Canada last May, and started similar proceedings in Argentina and Brazil. Alan Lenczner, the Toronto lawyer for the Quechua, said they would appeal the decision given that the subsidiary is 100% owned by Chevron Corp.

Some twenty-three **Tonocoté** families, located in north-central Argentina, were **violently evicted from their community** of more than 200 years. According to news reports, dozens of police mounted on horseback used rubber bullets, tear gas, and dogs to force the Tonocoté people out of their community. Once the people were gone, the land was quickly bulldozed in preparation for a real estate development project. A few days after the eviction, a number of the Tonocoté families reached an agreement with the Argentinian government for new housing.

Meanwhile, the **Qom** Peoples from the Argentinian province of Formosa were **granted a hearing** with the Supreme Court to discuss the provincial government’s usurpation of the Qom’s land in 2010. Just prior to the hearing, there was an extreme political and police crackdown on protesters from 13

different Qom communities. As many as 50 people were injured, and more than 100 were arrested in the attack.

Officials from the Navajo Nation’s Department of Justice said **they won’t grant Wate Mining Company permission** to transport uranium ore across Navajo land, threatening the company’s hopes to secure a mineral lease in an area that is surrounded by the Navajo Nation’s **Big Boquillas Ranch**. The Arizona State Land Department informed the company that it has to figure out the issue of transport on its own.

According to prominent linguist, **Professor Ghil’ad Zuckermann**, **Australia is a world record holder in “linguicide.”** Professor Zuckermann, Chair of Endangered Languages at the University of Adelaide, explained in an interview that ninety-three per cent of Indigenous languages in the country no longer exist; but that efforts are ongoing to breathe new life into some languages.

Police in Belize **launched a full investigation** into the demolition of “**Nohmul**” a Maya pyramid mound located some 80 kilometers northwest of Belize City. According to statements, De’ Mar’s Stone Co. picked the pyramid to use as road fill after the chairman of Douglas Village, where the company was building and repairing roads, said he didn’t like the material he was shown. The 30-meter high pyramid -- part of the Noh Mul ceremonial center -- was reduced to a small mound of debris.

The **Haudenosaunee Grand Council** issued an **illuminating statement** reiterating its position on “imposed elected Band and Tribal councils”. Discussing the Haudenosaunee’s historical relationship with Canada, the Grand Council explained a “proposed remedy to standardize governance within the domain of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.” The statement also condemns efforts by non-governing indigenous bodies to “supplant [...] the legitimate voice of our communities internationally [...] in the interest of their colonial masters Canada and the United States.”

The Papuan Regional Police (Polda) and Indonesian Military (TNI) **violently dispersed a set of peaceful demonstrations** meant to commemorate the annexation of **West Papua** by the Indonesian state on 1 May 1963. According to various West Papuan journalists, at least two people were killed and scores of others were injured or arrested in Sorong, Jayapura and Timika. Indonesian police, soldiers and citizens also organized a counter demonstration in Jayapura, driving around in vehicles emblazoned with giant Red and White flags, the Indonesian national flag, honking their horns. Since the UN-sanctioned occupation of West Papua began, as many as 30,000 West Papuan people have been killed.

Later in the month, **Indonesia’s Constitutional Court invalidated the government’s claim** to millions of hectares of forest land, potentially giving indigenous and local communities across the Nation State the right to manage their customary forests. In a review of a 1999 forestry law, the court ruled that customary forests should not be classified as “State Forest Areas”. Such a classification enables government agencies like the Ministry of Forestry to grant large concessions to companies for logging and plantations even if the area has been managed for generations by local people. The ruling paves the way for a wider recognition of Indigenous Peoples’ rights in the archipelago.

Nicaraguan Congressman Brooklyn Rivera, president of the National Assembly’s Commission on Indigenous and Afro-Descendant Affairs, **warned** that

tensions between Indigenous Peoples and mestizo “colonists” have reached a boiling point following the assassination of Mayangna leader Charley Taylor. News of Taylor’s passing -- at the hands of mestizo invaders who had cleared a 35-acre swath of Mayangna forest lands inside the **Bosawás Biosphere Reserve** -- triggered the mobilization of a virtual brigade of 100 indigenous volunteers who planned to oust the invaders. Soon after Rivera’s warning, Mayangna leaders informed **The Nicaragua Dispatch** that the National Police finally started to respond to the ongoing crisis by forcibly removing 180 of the invaders from the Mayangna territory of Sauni Tuahka.

The **Majhis**, an Indigenous fishing community in the Dolalghat area of Nepal, say that local fish populations are disappearing because of water contamination and unethical fishing practices by non-indigenous tourists who are staying at illegal hotels. Some Majhis say their catches have declined by as much as 75 percent, forcing many to seek alternative employment outside their village. “The hotel people have made the river waters filthy,” says Phool Majhi. “They wash their utensils, cattle and poultry in the river and also discharge sewage waste carelessly, letting it flow into the river.” Some tourists have also been caught using electric currents, explosives, and even poisonous substances to catch fish for themselves.

The **Grand Council of the Crees** (Eeyou Istchee) issued a formal challenge to the Forest Stewardship Council’s (FSC) Certification in the Saguenay Lac Saint Jean region in Québec held by Resolute Forest Products. The Grand Council contends that Resolute Forest Products’ refusal to respect the Baril-Moses Agreement between the Crees and Québec constitutes a major infringement of FSC’s International Principles concerning compliance with laws, agreements and treaties and compliance with the rights and interests of Indigenous Peoples.

The **Goomeroi** Peoples called for a freeze on all mining and development projects on their ancestral lands in New South Wales on the eastern coast of Australia. After meeting in the town of Tamworth, Goomeroi representatives said that they will no longer be silent over mining issues in their country. “Mining is coming to our country but we are going to fight them every step of the way through the courts, through the protests, and through the support of the Gomerioi people,” Gomerioi claimant Anthony Munroe told **NITV**.

Elders and chiefs of at least 10 sovereign nations walked out of a meeting with U.S. State Department officials in Rapid City, South Dakota, in which the government was attempting to engage in tribal consultation over the **Keystone XL pipeline**. Deeming the meeting “invalid,” leaders of the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen’s Association said they would meet only with President Barack Obama to discuss the pipeline.

Guatemala’s Public Ministry revealed wiretapping evidence that identified a Tahoe Resources security chief giving direct orders to assassinate indigenous opponents of the Escobal mining project. For months, **Tahoe Resources** claimed to have no part whatsoever in the murders and kidnappings of Xinca community members who were working to stop the Escobal silver mine. Days after the revelation, a second Tahoe employee was implicated in the violence.

Indigenous Peoples from southwest Colombia urged FARC leader “**Timochenko**” to arrange a personal meeting with their leaders to discuss putting an end to ongoing acts of political and physical aggression. Their open

letter to Timochenko reads in part, “Let’s sit down to talk directly. Urgently. However, our communities want to see the dialogue does represent changes to our conditions; that you stop killing, accusing and dividing us.”

TransCanada filed a lawsuit in the US to prevent individuals from resisting the construction of the southern leg of the controversial Keystone XL pipeline. Clearly a response to the “Protect the Sacred” international Treaty gathering along with “**Moccasins on the ground**” and similar activism training camps, the new lawsuit seeks to prevent a number of named defendants from “trespassing or interfering with construction” as well as prohibit them from “organizing, communicating, encouraging or inciting resistance” to the Keystone XL.

The **Supreme Court of Canada**, meanwhile, ruled that individual members of any First Nation community cannot use blockades or other so-called “self-help” remedies to address government breaches of law, specifically its duty to consult. The court was addressing a camp blockade that was set up in 2006 to interfere with a logging operation on Fort Nelson First Nation’s Treaty 8 territory, an operation that was authorized by the Crown. According to the judge, the protesters, who claimed (but failed to “prove”) that there was no prior consultation, “should have” sought to address the license issued by the Crown, not the license holder (ie, the company benefiting from the Crown’s allegedly illegally issue of consent to harvest the traditional territory).

The Walt Disney Company quietly tried to put a trademark on the words, “**Día de los Muertos**” for an upcoming Pixar animated feature film. Dia de los Muertos, better known to English speakers as “the Day of the Dead”, is an annual religious observance during which people in Mexico honor their ancestors and loved ones who have passed on. Though the celebration now coincides with the Catholic holidays of All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day (November 1 and 2) Dia de los Muertos is at its roots an Aztec and Maya tradition.

A healing and prayer ceremony was held at the site of the **Hiawatha Indian Insane Asylum** in South Dakota, where the Bureau of Indian Affairs committed Indigenous People with purported mental illnesses from 1902 to 1933. A total of 121 people languished and died at the facility—their remains buried in a cemetery that is now a part of the Hiawatha Golf Course.

Indigenous leaders from the Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum (BIPF) and Kapaeng Foundation (KF) urged the government of Bangladesh to take effective measures to implement the 1997 **Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Peace Accord** and to protect the human rights of Indigenous Peoples in the CHT region. Although the CHT Accord—which brought an end to a decades-long insurgency between the Shanti Bahini and government forces—included provisions for the recognition of the rights of the peoples and tribes in the CHT, the government has yet to act on them. As a result, Indigenous Peoples in the CHT, collectively known as the Jumma, have faced a constant stream of brutal attacks at the hands of Bengali Settlers. In what can only be compared to 18th century European witch hunts, the settlers are well known for going on widespread ethnic rampages against the Jumma. What’s more, Bangladesh soldiers frequently turn a blind eye to the attacks or even take part in them.

An Alabama Grand Jury rejected the absurd terrorist charge against Muscogee (Creek) protester Wayland Gray, who was arrested along with three other

men in February, after attempting to access the **Hickory Ground** ceremonial ground in Wetumpka, Alabama, in order to pray for their ancestors who were excavated by the Poarch Band of Creek Indians. The grand jury found that there was no probable cause to prosecute Gray for making a “terrorist threat” as alleged by Poarch Creek law enforcement. As demonstrated in a video recording of the arrest, Gray makes the comment, “We will be back, after this casino is down, we will be back.”

According to a report by the **Hawaii Free Press**, **important sacred sites in Hawaii are being irreparably damaged** by the **Hawaii Community Development Authority** (HCDA) in order to develop a new photovoltaic power station (aka, solar energy farm). One such site, known as “Leina a ka Uhane” was considered to be spiritual leaping point for spirits returning to the Tahitian homeland. The area was well documented in the Hawaiian chants of Hiʻiaka going back nearly 1000 years. The HCDA, a State agency, is allowing construction work to take place “Without archaeological surveys or supervision.”

A **European Union court** in Luxembourg **upheld its ban on the commercial trade of seal products** dismissing a petition by the Inuit Tapirii Kanatami and 20 other Inuit and sealing rights groups to overturn the seal ban. In their petition, the Inuit argued the important role that the seal hunt plays in the socio-economic well-being of Arctic dwellers. The ban, enacted in 2009, prohibits the sale of seal meat, pelt, and oils. Though it includes an exemption for indigenous sealers, critics argue that the exemption has failed because the price of seal pelts has plummeted since the introduction of market restrictions.

The **Bedouin** People—still widely ignored by the international community—are **continuing to resist Israeli efforts** to force them off their lands. The government wants to move the Bedouin to various settlement blocks which are totally inadequate for grazing; and in some cases, located between restricted areas including an Israeli closed military zone, and a Palestinian Authority security forces training area. The Israeli government claims that moving the Bedouin from their current location will greatly improve the quality and level of services they receive.

The **High Court of Australia** **dismissed a case** regarding the legality of the government’s decision to send 140 Indigenous youths to Hakea Prison, a minimum to maximum security prison for adult males, located in Canning Vale, Western Australia. The boys, aged 12-17, were sent to Hakea for taking part in a ‘riot’ at the Banksia Hill Juvenile Detention Centre also in Canning Vale, where they were being kept in their cells anywhere up to 23 hours a day. According to legal sources, approximately 40% of the boys had never even been to court, and up to 85% were in the juvenile centre for minor crimes. In its ruling, the Supreme Court said the West Australian government had no other option but to send the kids to Hakea because they virtually ‘destroyed’ the detention centre.

The **Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe** tribe **opened a treaty harvest and educational camp** on the Penokee Hills in Wisconsin, near the site of the proposed 22-mile mountaintop removal open pit iron mine that Gogebic Taconite (GTac) wants to build upstream from the Bad River Reservation. The Harvest Camp includes an area that hosted almost 200 ‘Indian allotments’ in the late 1800s which were stolen or deceptively removed from Indigenous ownership in favor of wealthy investors of the original shaft mining in the area.

IN BRIEF

JUNE



PHOTO: FREEDOMFLOTILLAWESTPAPUA.ORG

YINKA DENE ALLIANCE GIVES ENBRIDGE ITS FINAL WARNING;
GUNA GENERAL CONGRESS DECIDES TO REJECT REDD+;
WEST PAPUANS GIVEN “ORIGINAL NATIONS” PASSPORTS; BALATOC
PREVENT MINING COMPANY FROM ENTERING TRADITIONAL LANDS

Three Nahua-Otomi communities are facing dispossession from their lands by a consortium of mining companies in Colima, Mexico. According to the Mesoamerican Movement Against the Extractive Mining Model (M4), the consortium **Peña Colorada** wants to gain control of Nahua-Otomi lands so it can be used as a mine waste dump site. M4 is urging people to contact government officials to **stop the expulsion**.

The **Yinka Dene Alliance** issued a **public notice to all employees and contractors** of Enbridge Inc. and any of its affiliates, warning that they are “not permitted entry onto the collective territories of the Yinka Dene Alliance nations”. “Any unauthorized entry onto our lands”, the warning states, “will be considered trespass and prosecuted accordingly”. Yinka Dene Alliance includes Nak’azdli, Nadleh Whut’en, Takla Lake, Wet’suwet’en, Tl’azt’en and Saik’uz First Nations in northern BC who formally banned Enbridge from their territories within the bounds of customary law.

The Chilean ambassador to New Zealand said his government wants to empower Indigenous Peoples and is looking at how Maori and Pakeha (New Zealanders who are of European descent) work together as a model it can use with the **Mapuche** people. He said **the government is eager to learn** from New Zealand’s model of racial equality and what Maori have achieved in the political system.

Indigenous Youths in the Valle de Sibundoy, Colombia, are **standing up against a road** to Brazil that would cut through their territory, including an ancient pathway used by their ancestors. Some indigenous campaigners in the valley tried to assert their right to be consulted over the project; However, they say that the government responded by claiming that their community did not exist. The valley is home to the **Inga and Camentsa** Peoples, who do not presently hold any communal title in the area.

The **Santa Ysabel Tribe of Kumeyaay Indians** became the first Indigenous Nation in California and the fifth in the United States **to affirm marriage equality for its citizens**. “In our support of their battle for equality, we want the LGBT community to know they are welcome here, and that the encouragement and respect of our membership are with them,” Chairman Virgil Perez said in a press release. Santa Ysabel Tribe joins the Coquille Tribe of Oregon (2008), Suquamish Tribe of Washington (2011), Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians in Michigan (2013), and Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians in Michigan (2013) in supporting marriage equality.

As many as 150 indigenous people came out of voluntary isolation in the district of **Monte Salvado**, Tambopata, Peru. According to a report in **El Comercio**, the indigenous group **may be suffering from hunger** due to illegal logging activity in the region. The sightings have been causing a stir among the residents of Monte Salvado. Many in the small town fear that approaching the indigenous peoples will hurt them or become infected with illnesses of which they have no immunity due to their status of voluntary isolation.

Weeks of peaceful protests in Kent County, New Brunswick, have resulted in the arrest of at least 30 Indigenous and non-Indigenous activists and concerned citizens who are trying to stop a seismic testing project owned by **SWN Resource Canada**. The protesters recently welcomed a team UN observers who arrived just days after being called; however, that has done little to sway police from trying to crush the protest. Most recently, police arrested a reporter from the **Media Coop** and a prominent anti-shale gas advocate

from Elsipogtog First Nation.

More than 80 organizations from around the world sent a letter to **the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights** to protest the fact that Indigenous women in Porgera, Papua New Guinea, who were raped or gang raped by security guards at Barrick’s gold mine, will only receive an individual benefit package if they grant Barrick legal immunity from future civil action. **The letter urges** the High Commissioner to “call for a halt to Barrick’s requirement for legal waivers in the case of rape victims in Porgera” and to “investigate the case of Barrick’s remedy process”.

The **Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke** (MCK) **condemned recent legal action** by neighboring communities from the Roussillon Regional County Municipality (MRC) to annul Quebec’s decree for the return of land that rightfully belongs to Kahnawà:ke. Since 2008, the MCK has been working with the Federal and Provincial Governments for the return of 700 acres of land as compensation for the alienation of another 700 acres of land that was previously taken. Mayors from the Municipality said their decision is between them and Quebec, however, the MCK is questioning the MRC’s underlying motives in challenging the decree.

A court in Santa Bárbara, the capital of the western Honduran department of the same name, **threw out the case** against indigenous leader **Berta Isabel Cáceres Flores** who was charged last month for the alleged illegal possession of a weapon. According to Cáceres’ lawyer, Marcelino Martínez, the judge found that there was not enough evidence to proceed with the case. Representatives from as many as 40 organizations came to the city to express solidarity with the activist.

A group of Pimicikamak citizens from **Cross Lake** traveled to the headquarters of Manitoba Hydro to **deliver their own version** of the “Friendly Reminder Notices” that the Hydro company has sent to roughly 280 households on the reserve. The goal of the friendly notice was to remind Hydro of its legal and moral commitment to ensure that all hydro-affected communities share in the abundant wealth created by the dams. MB Hydro started cutting power to some of the 280 Cross Lake households just before winter started last year.

Large tracts of pristine coastal land in the **Comarca Ngäbe-Buglé** in western Panama have been **sold to foreign developers**, including Costa Rican businessman and politician, Antonio Álvarez Desanti. According to an investigation by one of Panama’s national newspapers, **La Prensa**, the land was originally acquired through a process of “prescripción adquisitiva de dominio” (uninterrupted possession) which normally requires years of continuous occupation; however, in this case, the process lasted only “months”. A regional Ngäbe meeting is being prepared to discuss the situation, particularly a development project that Desanti has proposed.

The **American Indian Movement** said it is **conducting its own investigation** into five missing-women cases in Manitoba. Members of the activist organization, which established a chapter in Winnipeg earlier this year, say they are taking matters into their own hands with regards to missing and murdered Indigenous women.

Pressed by two months of resistance, the Brazilian Government **finally suspended the construction** of hydro dams in Tapajós River region. The **Mundurucu** Peoples organized a multitude of actions including two occupations

that paralyzed construction of the Belo Monte hydroelectric power plant for a total of 17 days. They also halted the Tapajós study group which intended to carry out unsanctioned studies on rivers Tapajós and Teles Pires, where 13 thousand Mundurucu people live. While the Mundurucu welcomed the government's decision, they are considering it as nothing more than a partial victory. States the head of the Mundurucu Paygomuyatpu, "We will continue in our struggle... We want the studies and works to be cancelled."

The **James Bay Cree Nation** welcomed news that Quebec Minister of the Environment Yves-François Blanchet **plans to refuse to issue a permit** for Strateco Resources Inc.'s Matoush advanced uranium exploration project. "This is good news for the Cree people, and another positive step in our continuing efforts to ensure that Eeyou Istchee remains free of uranium mining," said Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come.

The **EZLN**, in honor of a highly-respected Purépecha leader, announced the creation of a traveling Indigenous seminar that will provide a forum "in which the Indigenous Peoples of the continent can be heard by those who have an attentive and respectful ear for their word, their history, and their resistance." **The announcement** was supported by more than 30 Indigenous organizations and governments.

San communities in **Botswana** **won a significant court victory** in their struggle to remain on their ancestral land, obtaining a temporary injunction against their eviction. The court, which convened as trucks filled police arrived to intimidate the San, ruled that no government officials can enter the San's compounds without their consent and that the San's lawyers must be notified before any further attempt is made to resettle them.

A wrecking crew **demolished a pyramid** featured within the, **El Paraiso** archaeological site in Lima, Peru. The ancient construction was dated to the Late Pre-Ceramic Age of 2000 to 3000 BCE. Archaeologist Marco Guillén Hugo, in charge of excavations at the site, said he had reason to believe two private construction companies, Compañía y Promotora Provelanz and Alisol SAC Amba, were behind the destruction. The vice-minister for Cultural Patrimony, Rafael Varón, stated that, whoever is responsible, could face up to ten years in prison. Earlier in the year, a limestone quarrying company was discovered maintaining an illegal operation at the site of the famous Nazca lines in the southern Ica region, disfiguring artifacts there as well.

A village belonging to the Soliga tribe in southern **India** gained **an important legal victory** after its entire stock of honey -- its key source of livelihood -- was seized by local forestry officials earlier this year. The confiscation of honey was in direct violation of the 2006 Forest Rights Act, which recognizes the rights of India's tribal peoples, such as the Soliga, to live in and from their forests, and protect and manage their land.

The government of **Mali** **signed a peace deal** with two main Azawadi organizations, the MNLA and the High Council for the Unity of Azawad (HCUA). Under the accord, which establishes an immediate ceasefire, the Malian army will be allowed to enter Kidal, a part of the Tuareg's traditional territory that the MNLA re-reclaimed after a French-led offensive forced Islamist rebels out. The peace deal will allow next month's presidential elections to move ahead in the northern region.

The Ye'kuana and Sanema peoples of **Venezuela** launched a **renewed**

campaign for the recognition of their lands rights and the expulsion of illegal miners operating in their territory. The move comes after a government decision to impose another ineffective 'protected area' designation on the river basin upon which the Indigenous Peoples rely (there are already six) and the lack of action by the government in the light of studies which show that levels of mercury poisoning due to gold mining in their own bodies is way above safe levels.

The Land Trust for the Little Tennessee (LTLT) transferred 108 acres of historically and culturally significant land back into the hands of **the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians** (EBCI), **marking the end of an eight-year effort** to save the land from development. Hall Mountain, located in Macon County, North Carolina, was the largest, busiest diplomatic and commercial center for the Cherokee and all other Indigenous Peoples on the East Coast until the late 1700s. In more recent times, the tract was slated for a major residential development project, but after those plans fell through, LTLT stepped in and purchased the property in order to conserve it.

The **Guna General Congress** made the historic decision **to reject all REDD+ projects** in the Guna Yala territory in Panama. While the Congress did not offer any reasons for the decision, the Congress further announced that it "withdraws from all discussions at the national and international level on the REDD+ issue", and prohibits "All the Guna national or international governmental and non-governmental organizations" from having anything to do with REDD in Guna Yala.

The Salish Sea Foundation proposed an international **Salish Sea Marine Sanctuary** as a means of partnering Coast Salish First Nations, British Columbia and Washington State in **protecting and restoring the estuarine ecosystem** of Puget Sound, Strait of Juan de Fuca and Strait of Georgia. In a statement from the Tsleil-Waututh Nation, tribal leader Rueben George said protection of the Salish Sea would benefit all people, commenting, "There is no price for the sacred, whether it is the mineral, plant, animal or human. This is not just an environmental challenge; it is an issue that pertains to all of us, including our future generations and all life on Mother Earth."

West Papuan Independence advocate, Ronny Kareni, **rejected comments** by Australia Foreign Minister **Bob Carr** that the people who 'fly the Papuan flags' and who 'talk the language of independence' are part of a 'cruel deceit' by 'self-indulgent people' who are safe in their 'own democracy'. "The West Papuan's struggle for freedom is not as Bob Carr suggests 'a fun little game for the greens party,'" said Kareni, whose parents fled to Papua New Guinea in the early 80s to escape Indonesian security forces. "[The situation was] and remains very dangerous for West Papuans [...] even raising our Morning Star flag can mean between 3-15 years in prison."

It turns out that National Geographic's infamous **Genographic Project** is alive and well. The highly controversial cross-global research project -- that's attempting to determine the origins of Indigenous Peoples by collecting and examining their DNA -- has been very quiet for the past few years, leading many to believe that the potentially disastrous project was over. One of the biggest concerns among Indigenous Peoples is that any findings may run contrary to knowledge concerning their origins, providing governments with 'evidence' that could be used to extinguish Indigenous land rights. Another major concern is that the collected DNA could be used in other scientific research without the knowledge or consent of the Indigenous Peoples

(something that is far from unprecedented). Despite these concerns, National Geographic appears to be **trotting along without a care in their world**. They are presently focusing on the people of County Mayo in northern Europe.

After 38 years of work, the US government **affirmed the water rights** of Klamath Tribes in southern **Oregon**, declaring that the tribes' water rights have existed since "time immemorial." The decision is still subject to court challenges, however, it gives tribes -- who are strong advocates for salmon and other fish -- a key advantage in one of the most persistent "water wars" in the country.

The Inspector General of the Namibian Police, Lieutenant-General Sebastian Haitota Ndeitunga, issued a press statement ordering all illegal settlers and cattle herders to vacate **!Kung** lands or be forcibly removed. **The order came just one week** after the !Kung, one of two Indigenous San communities in Namibia, sent an urgent plea to the government asking for help with the ongoing land invasions. Ndeitunga also urged the Ministries of Land and Resettlement, and Local Government and Housing to "not sit back but to intervene as a matter of urgency" -- a key demand of the !Kung.

The **Achuar** people **rose up in protest** after learning of oil giant Petroperu's intentions to drill in a familiar section of sacred Achuar lands in the northern Peruvian Amazon labeled by industry as "Lot 64". More than 20 Achuar communities came together to warn Petroperu that they will face the same opposition that so many other company's have faced including the US companies ARCO and Occidental Petroleum and most recently, Canada's Talisman Energy. The Achuar successfully stopped all three oil companies from drilling in "Lot 64".

To the dismay of Indigenous communities in South West Cameroon, the Cameroonian government **lifted its suspension of Herakles Farms'** widely contested forest clearing operations without a single word of explanation. The decision, gave Herakles Farms, a New York-based agribusiness company, the dirty green light it needed continue developing its proposed plantation.

An historic ceremony was held outside the Victorian Trades Hall in Melbourne, Australia for the issuing of **"Original Nations"** passports and West Papuan visas in conjunction with the **West Papua Freedom Flotilla**. The flotilla convoy, which will travel from Lake Eyre to West Papua, aims to highlight the abuse of human rights and land rights occurring in West Papua and reconnect the Indigenous Peoples of West Papua and Australia.

Internal memos leaked by a whistleblower showed that a top US State Department official **stymied investigators** who were trying to get to the bottom of the shocking 2012 murder of four Miskito Peoples -- two pregnant women, a child and a young father -- during US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) activities inside the Miskitu coast of **Honduras**. According to one memo, William Brownfield, the assistant secretary for international narcotics and law-enforcement affairs, "reportedly was not forthcoming and gave the impression" that State "should not pursue the investigation." The DEA insists that its two agents, who were under the authority of the State Department chief of mission in Honduras, never fired their weapons. **Testimony from Miskito survivors** of the attack says otherwise.

Indigenous Peoples in the Province of Kalinga, Philippines, **blocked a mining company, Carrascal Nickel Corporation (CNC)**, from entering their ancestral lands. Discussing the action with **Northern Dispatch**, a Balatoc woman said

that the company failed to obtain the necessary FPIC before commencing with any mining in the area. Instead, the woman explained, CNC acquired signatures of several community members during routine medical missions before entering into an agreement with two individuals claiming to be Tribal leaders.

In what's being called a shocking decision, the **Manitoba government** filed a SLAPP (Strategic lawsuit against public participation) **against the four First Nation communities that were flooded** in 2011. In its legal claim, the NDP-led government literally blamed the flood victims for being flooded--among them Lake St. Martin, whose population was relocated to an abandoned military base after their entire reserve became uninhabitable--asserting that the First Nations "constructed housing or infrastructure on its reserve that it knew or ought to have known was prone to flooding" and "failed to take adequate mitigation measures to protect its reserves."

Leaders and citizens of the Mapuche nation, as well as a pro-Mapuche Chilean Activist, approached the **Inter-American Court** in an effort to **stop the violence** stemming from Chile's implementation of the so-called "Anti-Terrorist Law." The Pinochet-era law has effectively criminalized Mapuche struggles, bringing wave after wave of injustice to the Mapuche, including raids, unjust imprisonment, attacks on women and children and an immeasurable loss of life. The injustice has also spread to the judicial system with several discriminatory policies that compound the problem.

A team of three **Foil Vedanta** activists visited Badapada, a Dalit village that lost its land to Vedanta when the company was establishing its Lanjigarh aluminum refinery located in India's Odisha state. As a result of Vedanta not adhering to any of its resettlement promises, the villagers registered an association called "Vedanta Land Loser's Association", to seek accountability from Vedanta and the state government. Just prior to the visit, **twelve women from the village were arrested** on false charges and kept in jail for one month and three days. What was most shocking, however, was that there were also two children, both two years of age, who were kept in prison along with their mothers. Foil Vedanta documented the women's experiences.

The **Council of Yukon First Nations** **declared their territories** to be "frack free" and prohibited all government fracking activity on their land. The resolution was passed with full consensus among council members from various First Nation governments and officially reads: "Be it resolved that the Council of First Nations calls on the Yukon Govt. to prohibit fracking in the Yukon and declares our traditional territories to be frack-free."

An alliance of Indigenous Peoples in the Cordillera region of the **Philippines** **condemned the government's decision** to lift its country-wide moratorium on large-scale mining. The moratorium was announced last February in response to a resolution by an Ifugao government representative that sought to end the mining industry's devastating impact on the country's communities and their ancestral land. The Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA) said that the plan reveals the government's true attitude towards mining.

IN BRIEF

JULY



PHOTO: PHYSICIANS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS - ISRAEL

COASTAL FIRST NATIONAL ALLIANCE PREPARES TO BAN BEAR
HUNTING FOR SPORT; MANITOBA FIRST NATIONS ISSUE STOP WORK
ORDERS TO MINING COMPANIES; INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY
POURS ON THE SUPPORT FOR BEDOUIN PEOPLES

After years of community opposition, the **controversial plan** to ship radioactive waste across the Lakes and the Atlantic Ocean to Sweden was **officially cancelled** by the Swedish company, **Studsvik**. In a rare show of unity, opponents to the plan included City mayors, U.S. senators, environmental and nuclear groups, indigenous communities and other civil society groups.

Twenty West Papuan women **jumped into a police truck** as Indonesia's police forces prepared to take three men and six women to jail at a pro-independence rally in **Jayapura**. A witness told **West Papua Media** that "the police were confused" by the women's spontaneous response and immediately released the seven detained activists.

The **Coastal First National Alliance** in British Colombia, made up of 10 First Nation groups of the north and central coast, **announced their intent to enforce a ban** on hunting bears for sport. The Kitasoo instated the original ban in 2012, despite the province's claim that hunting fell under government jurisdiction.

Hundreds of Indigenous Peoples **gathered at an oil palm plantation in Malaysia** to protest against a recent Federal Court decision to dismiss a disappointing ruling by the Court of Appeal (CA). The CA ruled that the communities of Long Teran Kanan, Tinjar have no **Native Customary Rights (NCR)** over lands that were given to a Malaysian company for the development of an oil palm plantation. A similar demonstration was carried out days later by **another group of affected villagers**.

Ben Emmerson, United Nations Special Rapporteur on human rights and counter-terrorism, **challenged the Chilean Government** to curb its use of an anti-terrorism law against Mapuche Indigenous activists currently battling to reclaim ancestral territory. Citing the discriminatory nature of these actions, Emerson charges that applying the law in such a "confused and arbitrary fashion" is undermining activists' right to a fair trial and placing a stigma on the Mapuche people while de-legitimizing their claim to their homeland.

In Naivasha, Kenya, over 200 youths believed to be members of the criminal organization Mungiki -- under the escort of heavily armed police -- descended on the **Maasai** community in Narasha, **burning and destroying more than 200 houses**. The arsonists, who were protected by the armed police, rendered 2,300 people homeless, killed over 20 calves and over 600 lambs. During the raid, two elderly Maasai men sustained bullet wounds as well as cuts from machetes; they are now recuperating in hospitals.

Nantonin and Ifugao Indigenous Peoples **demanding the eviction** of the Philippine Army's 54th Infantry Battalion from their community amid claims of improper and criminal behavior being exhibited by the soldiers. An official petition was submitted to the **National Commission on Indigenous People (NCIP)**. One local resident claims that she has effectively been prevented from tending to her field because of ongoing threats and intimidation practices.

Mongolian herders utilized the EBRD's (**European Bank for Reconstruction and Development**) Project Complaint Mechanism with the intent to initiate an evaluation process **concerning the public health impact** of two of the mining projects it is financing. With their livelihoods hanging in the balance, the group has thus formalized resistance to the projects, despite previous spin that presented the activities as positive steps toward raising standards of living in the area.

The majority of charges levied on activists protesting seismic testing by **SWN Resources Canada** were **dropped** amid reports from a meeting of Elsipogtog chiefs that the company would be allowed to detonate a limited number of unexploded shot holes under the observation of a delegation of tribal scouts, to include three Grandmothers and two Peacekeepers. Unfortunately, activists who have already begun court proceedings will not have their charges dismissed at this time. Activity on this front is likely to resume in September.

The Belize Court of Appeal **re-affirmed the Maya people's rights to collective land ownership** throughout southern Belize. This decision came just days after the Government gave US Capital Energy permission to conduct oil drilling inside the **Sarstoon Temash National Park**, the entirety of which is Maya ancestral land. The government of Belize is now being urged to end its persistent denial of the Maya's land rights and to implement the court decisions.

The **Matsés** Peoples, in order to protect the medicines from bio-prospectors decided **not to translate their Traditional Medicine Encyclopedia** to English or Spanish. The Matsés are writing the Encyclopedia in order to preserve and propagate their traditional systems of medicine for future generations--of Matsés.

The US Defense Department agreed to fund the latest **Bowman Expedition** led by the American Geographical Society and the University of Kansas Geography Department. Like the first -- and controversial -- Bowman expedition to Mexico, **this latest venture will target dozens of indigenous communities throughout Central America**. Indeed, the Expeditions are little more than intelligence gathering efforts carried out by civilian professors and their graduate students.

In a precedent-setting ruling that has national and international implications, **Ontario Superior Court Justice Carole Brown ruled** that a group of lawsuits against the Canadian mining company **HudBay Minerals** can proceed to trial even though the plaintiffs are from another country. "As a result of this ruling, Canadian mining corporations can no longer hide behind their legal corporate structure to abdicate responsibility for human rights abuses that take place at foreign mines under their control at various locations throughout the world," said Murray Klippenstein, of Toronto's Klippensteins, Barristers & Solicitors, who's representing the 13 Maya Qeqchi plaintiffs from El Estor, Izabal, Guatemala.

The BriBri community of **Alto Cuen** in Costa Rica reported that a group of people dressed in army fatigues touched down in an unidentified black helicopter, toured their land for several days and then simply left. **According to the Bribri**, the group, who spent most of their time touring the area, claimed to be "evangelist missionaries." They were carrying sophisticated mountain gear, GPS, cameras, weapons, land surveying materials and metal detectors.

Indigenous Bolivians are **joining efforts to save** South America's second largest wilderness area, **Gran Chaco**, from constant threats related to narcotraffickers, and unsustainable farming and ranching practices. Though the portion of Gran Chaco nestled within the Bolivian border is lauded as the best preserved, the biodiverse region has been impacted by a gas pipeline and drug war activity in the region.

Longhorn Mountain, the most sacred of all sites to the Kiowa people of Oklahoma, is under threat. Much of the western half of the mountain

has been leased to Stewart Stone of Cushing, Oklahoma, a rock crushing company that intends to strip mine the mountain, turning it into the gravel that would be used to pave highways in the United States. The loss of the mountain would be an act of cultural genocide perpetrated against the Kiowa people.

The Honduran Army opened fire on members of the Lenca community of Rio Blanco as they prepared to mark 106 days of resistance to the building of Agua Zarca hydroelectric dam. **Tomas Garcia**, a Lenca leader and member of the National Council of the Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH), was killed during the attack; his son was also seriously injured. Berta Caceres, leader of COPINH, described the act as “a desperate and criminal reaction”. She also explained that the community has decided to continue occupying access to the dam.

Yaqui Traditional Authorities initiated a roadblock on international Highway 15 near the community of Vicam, in Sonora, Mexico. The action was in response to the state government’s refusal to stop the operation of the **Independence Aqueduct**, which began to illegally extract water from the Yaqui River in March. The Yaqui are heavily dependent on the water from the Yaqui River, a fact that was identified in a Supreme Court (SCJN) resolution that ratified protection for the tribe pending an Environmental Impact Assessment (MIA), which is required to legally begin taking the water.

After a collusive meeting with corporate counsel, the Iron County Forest Committee in Wisconsin voted to press criminal and civil charges against the **Lac Courte Oreilles Treaty Harvest and Education camp** under the accusations that their continued presence was in violation of county ordinances and state law. Previously, the committee had expressed official approval to waiver the 14-day county camping ordinance in order to allow the group to maintain their camp for one year (ending in December, 2013). At that juncture, the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa had received a related permit to gather raw materials such as plants and firewood on the land.

Meanwhile, a heavily-armed private security force was found patrolling GTac’s iron mine site about a mile away from the Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe Treaty Harvest and Education Camp in **Wisconsin**. After being approached and questioned (and filmed) by Paul DeMain, Editor of **Indian Country TV**, one of the security guards refused to identify his employers. In the days that followed the discovery, news reports revealed that GTac hired **Arizona-based Bulletproof Securities**, a company that, it turns out, was working in Wisconsin illegally. GTac eventually cancelled its contract with Bulletproof and hired another security firm to patrol the mine site which has been host to various acts of civil disobedience and resistance from activists concerned about the mine’s long term environmental impact.

In Mexico, Wixarika leaders filed an injunction to stop the illegal exploration for gold and silver in their ancestral sacred lands of **Wirikuta**. The injunction was prompted by the Mexican government’s refusal to even so much as acknowledge the Wixarika Regional Council for the Defense of Wirikuta, which has been petitioning for government intervention since early March. The Council says that drilling and excavation is occurring on a wide and destructive scale, even though permits have not been issued.

Villagers in Natonin, a municipality in Mountain Province, Philippines, called on the National Commission on Indigenous People (NCIP) to notify the **Phil-**

ippine Army’s 54th Infantry Battalion to pull out from their territory. The residents say that a massive military operation is violating their indigenous and human rights. According to the villagers, soldiers are entering homes, stealing medicines, and destroying property. Some villagers, dreading a confrontation, are refusing to even leave their homes to tend to their fields.

Indigenous Chileans scored a major victory when a local appeals court sided with them against the world’s largest gold mining company, **Barrick Gold**. Indigenous Peoples had accused the mining giant of water contamination and other potential future disruptions of livelihood. This is a step farther even than their last victory when a Chilean environmental watchdog group had imposed a temporary moratorium on mining activity there.

O’odham Voice Against the Wall turned to the international community for support in dealing with what they called “profoundly offensive and repeated violations occurring to the O’odham by the United States Government Department of Homeland Security Border Patrols.” In a press statement, the O’odham organization explained that the US government is continuously surveilling the entirety of O’odham lands, restricting free movement, carrying out abuses and violent attacks on O’odham citizens, driving through fenced-in areas at high speeds, and, among several other offenses, stopping and restricting the O’odham from conducting ceremonies.

Representatives of Indigenous and Creole community groups in Nicaragua called on the country’s Supreme Court to repeal a controversial law permitting the construction of The **Inter-Oceanic Nicaragua Canal**. The law in part granted the Hong Kong company HKND the right to determine on its own the technical, economic and environmental viability of the US\$40 billion project, which dwarfs the Panama Canal. The Indigenous and creole community groups argue that they were not sufficiently involved in the decision-making process.

Countrywide rallies are expected to take place across **Canada** demanding access to files that detail highly controversial nutritional experiments performed on Indigenous children, commissioned by none other than the federal government. Amid reports of flagrant human rights abuses inherent to the ‘experiments’, which include taking advantage of malnourished kids to ‘test’ the effects of various supplements (rather than supply them with adequate nutrition in general), groups from across the nation have converged to demand answers.

The international community finally took notice of Israel’s plan to evict 40,000 Bedouin citizens from their ancestral land in the Negev desert. The sudden leap of awareness came after the Israeli Knesset (legislature) held its first reading for the controversial “Bill on the Arrangement of Bedouin Settlement in the Negev,” a piece of legislation that outlines the framework for implementing the equally controversial **Prawer-Begin plan**. During the Knesset reading, some Arab ministers tore up copies of the proposed bill to demonstrate their opposition. Since then, global opposition to both the Begin Plan and the new Bill has grown exponentially.

Amid growing unrest in Colombia, with a pending large scale agricultural strike and mobilizations of mining resistance, the leftist rebel group **FARC** has attempted to throw their weight behind various peoples’ protests emerging across the country. Though likely an attempt to leverage gains and state concessions perceived from participation in the peace talks with the Colombian

government in Havana, Cuba, FARC's activity has been criticized for 'polluting' legitimate peoples' movements.

A delegation from **Red Sucker Lake First Nation** delivered a **stop work order** to **Mega Precious Metals Inc.** in Northern Manitoba. The First Nation says that the company is operating illegally in its traditional territory. **Mathias Colomb First Nation** (MCCN) issued a **similar order** to Hudbay Mining and Smelting Co., Ltd., also in Manitoba.

The Lakota Group **Defenders of the Black Hills** have written legislation that would establish a **moratorium on any new licenses for uranium exploration or mining** until all abandoned mines across the United States have been cleaned up. The legislation is largely in response to the 2,885 abandoned open-pit uranium mines located within the area of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty and the 1,200 abandoned uranium mines in the Navajo Nation.

Canada's top spy agency **was called out for recruiting** individuals at the **Grand River Pow-wow** last year; and not everyone is happy about it. Three individuals approached the booth to protest what they saw as an increased attempt by the agency to infiltrate and spy on the Indigenous community. The company shows no intent of retreating and communities are organizing further resistance.

A controversial carbon taxing scheme between Chiapas, Mexico and California was **axed amid fears** that it would endanger Indigenous livelihoods and not sufficiently address the root causes of deforestation. Though part of a locally annexed initiative, it represents another failure for the UN's **REDD** model and the overarching agenda to commercialize nature.

The Maori People of **Aotearoa** (New Zealand) are fighting back and **putting their own spin** on an item codified by treaty in 1840. As part of the pact, the government signed over the rights to "taonga", which loosely translates to 'treasure' in English. The Maori are making the case that this includes the entire radio spectrum in protest of the government's auctioning it off at will in the name of upgrades.

Derek Nepinak, Manitoba Grand Chief, **set forth an official objection** to the Assembly of First Nations treaty dealings with the Harper government in Canada. Chief Nepinak has also heavily promoted a new First Nations alliance, citing ongoing inefficiency on the part of AFN. Nepinak maintains that AFN is not authorized to negotiate with the government on behalf of treaty holders, claiming that they too should be at the negotiation table in accordance with historical protocols.

Cambodian farmers are in a struggle to **hold onto their rightful land** (and livelihoods) in the face of the encroaching reach of the sugarcane industry. The sugar ultimately ends up being marketed in the EU by 'big sugar' company, **Tate and Lyle**, and there have been claims that the suppliers have been complicit in further human rights violations related to child labor practices and violence inflicted upon the communities.

The Vancouver-based company **Curis Resources** received a permit from the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) **authorizing the construction and operation** of its controversial Florence in-situ leach copper mine, just outside the O'odham Gila River Indian community (GRIC). Seriously Endangering GRIC's water resources, the mining company would -- over

the course of 20 years -- pump more than 10 billion pounds of toxic sulfuric acid into the ground, contaminating if not completely devastating the local water table. The flow of water in the region moves from the mine site **towards GRIC's eastern boundary**. The project, which has been endorsed by Arizona Governor Jan Brewer, would also desecrate sacred sites in the same area.

The Hopi **reclaimed a sacred object** that was set to be auctioned off in **Paris** earlier this year. Despite formal and informal channels previously deployed to prevent such a tragedy, dozens of related objects were still sold there in April of 2013. LeRoy N. Shingoitewa, Hopi tribal chairman, called the ongoing dispute a "shameful saga."

The national army of Brazil is **positioning itself to protect** the vulnerable Indigenous **Awa** tribe that faces constant threat from illegal logging groups and related practices. Deploying tanks, helicopters, and hundreds of boots on the ground, there are reports that at least eight logging operations have been shut down since June.

Dozens of Kanien'kehà:ka (Mohawk) from the community of Kanehsatà:ke **gathered at Oka National Park**, to both commemorate the 23rd anniversary of the Oka standoff and mark what organizers called the start of a new battle against unauthorized development on Mohawk land. "Today we see the exploitation, appropriation of our lands, by companies like Enbridge, who already have their pipes in the park, by Gazoduc who fracked without our knowledge," said the Kanien'kehà:ka activist Ellen Gabriel. "And so it's really important that today, this be the beginning of many kinds of demonstrations from our people."

Indigenous Nepalis **filed an official complaint** with the **World Bank** over a pending high voltage transmission line project set to displace or marginalize over 100,000 community residents in the surrounding area. Indigenous communities are set to shoulder a significant burden of the destructive activity. An Indigenous representative claims there is an alternative "unpopulated route" that could have easily been negotiated if their mandated right to consultation had originally been respected.

An Ontario Superior Court judge **ordered** Aamjiwnaang First Nation activist **Ron Plain** to pay more than \$16,000 to CN Rail for a 13-day blockade that was set up in support of Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence during her winter hunger strike. The only person in Canada to be charged and fined as a result of Idle No More related actions, Ron Plain said that he could now lose his home and even face the possibility of indefinite detention.

IN BRIEF

AUGUST



PHOTO: EL VECINO DE CASI TODOS

DONGRIA KONDH OVERWHELMINGLY REJECT PLANS TO MINE
ON SACRED MOUNTAIN; ESCUELITA ZAPATISTA WELCOMES MORE
THAN 1600 STUDENTS; MURRAWARRI PEOPLES TAKE FIRST STEPS
TOWARD BECOMING AN INDEPENDENT REPUBLIC

An indefinite road blockade, according to Naso protesters, was **created to stop workers from entering** the construction site of the **Boynic hydroelectric project** in Naso territory, Bocas del Toro province, Panama. The protesters were demanding the government ratify an agreement that calls for Naso King Alexis Santana to renounce the throne, new elections to be held, and the revocation of compensation agreements made with Empresas Públicas de Medellín (EPM), the Colombian company constructing the project. According to UN Special Rapporteur, James Anaya, who visited Panama in July “of particular concern is the territorial insecurity of the Bribri and Naso whose territories do not have comarcal (semi-autonomous) recognition.”

Two Maya Q’eqchi children from Monte Olivo community, in Alta Verapaz department, Guatemala, **died from bullet injuries** after being shot by a “hitman” that was reportedly hired by the company **Hidro Santa Rita SA**. According to **Real World Radio**, the two children -- David Eduardo Pacay Maas and Hageo Isaac Guitz, aged 11 and 13 -- were shot during the attempted murder of David Chen, leader of the resistance to the company’s hydroelectric project. Thus far, no one has been arrested for the murder of the two children.

The **Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation** reached an **unprecedented**, out-of-court settlement with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) regarding a 2011 federal task force raid of Yakama Reservation trust lands. The U.S. agreed in the settlement to honor the law enforcement protocols set forth in the Yakama Treaty of 1855, assuring that, from now on the FBI will communicate with Tribal Police before they enter Yakama Indian Country.

Three Indigenous **Tolupan** from Yoro district in Honduras, were **murdered while carrying out peaceful actions** to prevent illegal forest clearing and exploitation of natural resources in their territory. According to The Broad Movement for Dignity and Justice (Movimiento Amplio por la Dignidad y Justicia, MADJ), the Tolupan had been receiving death threats from individuals who were brazenly walking around the community fully armed, provoking fear in the community. The National Preventive Police Force and various government officials, despite being warned of the threats, failed to take any kind of action to protect the Tolupan.

The year-long education and advocacy focused **Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign** came to a close with a symbolic **ten day canoe journey** down the Hudson River from Albany to New York City. Hosting a series of educational events along the way, the small flotilla of indigenous and non-indigenous paddlers, travelled in two parallel lines for the entire trip. Upon reaching their destination on August 9, the group marched on to the United Nations to commemorate the International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples.

A Saskatoon court granted the **Thunderchild First Nation** a temporary restraining order against some of its own citizens who occupied a ceremonial site in opposition to seismic exploration that was taking place in the area. The exploration involves setting off explosive charges 15 meters underground, which protester Marilyn Wapass says is disturbing the sacred ground. **The unsympathetic Court of Queen’s Bench** prohibited anyone from blockading or preventing Tonare Energy from detonating the remaining charges.

Adoption lawyers in the US are unashamedly **marketing and selling Indigenous children** and often making anywhere from \$25,000 to \$100,000

in legal fees. Exploiting the complicated and conflicting interstate laws and procedures, adoption attorneys are able to circumvent not only mainstream adoption law, but the federal laws involving the Indian Child Welfare Act, as well, which has led to chaos and confusion for judges, attorneys, birth parents and adoptive couples who may be located in multiple jurisdictions. Like the case of **Adoptive Couple v. Baby Girl**, many cases of the trafficking of Indigenous babies are happening in South Carolina, a safe haven for quickie private adoptions.

Equally shocking news, an American researcher told reporters that First Nations women and children from Thunder Bay, Ontario, are being **sold on ships** in the harbour at Duluth, Minnesota. **Christine Stark**, a masters student at the University of Minnesota Duluth, said she has anecdotal reports of women, teenage girls and boys, as well as babies being sold or exchanged “for alcohol, a place to stay, drugs, money and so forth [...] It’s quite shocking.” The Ontario Native Women’s Association (ONWA) said it also has anecdotal reports of women being trafficked across borders, or provincial boundaries, into the sex trade. “We know that it’s happening between Winnipeg and Thunder Bay, and there have been reports of it happening in southern Ontario across the U.S. border,” said Kezia Picard, the director of policy and research with ONWA.

Barrick Gold, owner of the Pascua Lama mine that spans the Chile-Argentina border, has admitted that **it violated environmental regulations**. The admission from Barrick comes four months after a successful court case, won by a group of Diaguita communities, that effectively shut down the operations of Barrick. The Diaguita communities argue that Barrick Gold’s license should be revoked for its failure to comply with the regulations.

India’s **Dongria Kondh** tribe **overwhelmingly rejected** plans by British mining giant Vedanta Resources for an open-pit bauxite mine on their sacred lands. A total of twelve Kondh villages unanimously voted against Vedanta’s mine during the consultation process that was ordered by India’s Supreme Court last April. The results of the consultations will now be considered by India’s Ministry of Environment and Forests, who will have the final say on the mine—but few still believe the project will be given the green light.

In British Columbia, Canada, members of the well-known **Klabona Keepers** served Fortune Minerals Limited with a “24-hour eviction notice” informing the company that it must **vacate the Tahltan’s unceded traditional territory**. Fortune Minerals ignored the deadline, leading the Tahltan activists to block the road leading to the site of the company’s proposed open pit coal mine. The protesters then proceeded to **occupy some of the company’s drills**.

Israeli authorities destroyed the Bedouin village of **Al-Araqib** for the **54th time in three years**, continuing its effort to relocate nomadic Bedouins in the Negev desert to various settlements. The Bedouins, however, refuse to be relocated, saying that they purchased their land in the Negev desert before the establishment of the state of Israel.

The Blackfeet Tribal Business Council **unexpectedly cancelled** proposed oil and gas developments near **Chief Mountain**. The mountain, located near the Canadian border on the boundary between the Blackfeet Indian Reservation and Glacier National Park, is considered sacred by many of the Blackfeet people; however, some members of the Blackfeet business community (like **Ron Crossguns of the Blackfeet Oil and Gas Department**), have derisively

dismissed anything sacred about the Mountain.

Bengali settlers wielding sharp knives and machetes attacked 5 **Jumma** villages in Matiranga Upozila, a sub district of Khagrachari in south-eastern Bangladesh. At least 50 Jumma were wounded and 6 were reported missing, while more than 1,500 men, women and children from the Chakma and Tripuri tribes fled to the India-Bangladesh border. The settlers claimed that 'indigenous miscreants' had kidnapped a Bengali man named Kamal Hossain, however, in the days that followed the attack, it was confirmed that the supposed kidnapping was completely staged. Prothom Alo, a leading Bangladesh Newspaper, quoted the Assistant Police Superintendent of Ramgarh Circle as saying, "This was not kidnapping, the whole thing was a staged drama."

An application by the **Hupacasath First Nation** to postpone the Canada-China investment treaty until First Nations have been consulted, was dismissed by the Federal Court. Brenda Sayers, a member of the Hupacasath First Nations told **CBC News** that the federal government had agreed to "hold off on the ratification until due process took place in court." The Federal Court ruled that any potential adverse impacts are non-appreciable and speculative in nature, adding that the Hupacasath had not demonstrated a causal link between the Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection treaty with China and the alleged impacts.

Traditional Indigenous leaders from West Papua warned that one of Indonesia's largest consumer goods companies, **PT Mayora**, forced them to sign away their lands under threat of being branded as "separatists" by the Indonesian police. Given the fact that such an accusation comes with a heavy cost (The accused become potential military targets) the Indigenous leaders decided to give in to the company's demands in order to protect their people. However, the affected villages themselves -- who previously erected markers on their land to prohibit the presence of PT Mayora -- decided on an altogether different tact: They occupied the company's offices, sending a clear message that PT Mayora is not welcome.

Indigenous communities in **Sarawak**, Malaysia, whose lands were flooded two years ago by the controversial Bakun Dam -- forcing some communities to live on newly-created **archipelagos** -- are facing yet another daunting challenge. The Malaysian government wants to convert the remaining Indigenous lands into a new national park. An announcement by the Sarawak government warns that all Native Customary Rights (NCR) will be ignored in order to make the park a reality.

A controversial gold mining plan in the Tranquil Valley in Clayoquot Sound took another step forward after a Senior Mines Inspector from the British Columbia Minister of Energy and Mines recommended approval for an exploration permit at the long-abandoned Pandora mine site. Opposed to mining on their territory, The **Tla-o-qui-aht** expressed deep dissatisfaction with move, stating in a press release that Vancouver-based Selkirk Metals (owned by Imperial Metals Corporation) and the BC government have so far failed to adequately consult them. The Tla-o-qui-aht have declared Tranquil Valley a Tribal Park, and have been working to attract investors in a conservation model, and aspire to build a salmon hatchery and other sustainable projects. "We're not anti-development; we're pro-sustainable development," said Saya Masso, Tla-o-qui-aht Natural Resource Manager and councilor. "As a First Nation working hard for a resilient homeland and sustainable economies, it's

upsetting to be disregarded by the consultation process that the government is using to approve projects like this."

Commemorating World Indigenous Day, the President of Sri Lanka, **Mahinda Rajapakse**, stated that the only way to safeguard the rights of the indigenous community is to **not** turn them into exhibits and by allowing them to live in freedom. The President used examples of Indigenous Peoples safeguarding their cultural heritage while using modern technology. Uruwarige Wannila Aththo, leader of the indigenous community in Sri Lanka, also spoke during the ceremony.

A team from Sarstoon/Temash Institute for Indigenous Management (**SATIIM**) was confronted by a pair of police officers when patrolling their lands. The cops reportedly demanded identification cards from each of the men before attempting to execute a search of their vessel. SATIIM is an Indigenous organization with co-management agreements with the government of Belize over the Sarstoon/Temash National Park. Earlier, the government had canceled the co-management agreement with SATIIM, however, the communities recognize that managing the area, in an effort to reduce incursion and other illegal activities, is in their best interest.

Three Indigenous councils north of Queensland's western Cape York in **Australia**, have come together in a joint effort to protect endangered and vulnerable turtles. The Northern Peninsula, Mapoon and Pormpuraaw councils say they will combine their resources and expertise to better coordinate turtle conservation programs.

The **Oglala Lakota** passed a resolution opposing the proposed Otter Creek coal mine and Tongue River Railroad in their historical homelands of south-eastern Montana. The Oglala Lakota have thus far been excluded from any consultations despite the fact that the proposed mine site is an area of great cultural and historical significance containing countless burial sites, human remains, battle sites, stone features and artifacts. In addition to calling for proper consultation, the Oglala Lakota have called on all Tribal Nations who signed the Fort Laramie Treaty to stand with them in opposing the mine and railroad.

The **Indigenous Peoples' Front of Tripura** (IPFT) renewed its demand for recognition of India's Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District as an independent state. Justifying the demand, IPFT general secretary Aghore Debbarma said in an interview with **Times of India** that, without an autonomous state, the Tripura Peoples will continue to be deprived because of the government's continuous withholding of funds for tribal areas. Budhu Debbarma, a senior tribal leader, also said that, the government is failing under Schedule 6 of the Constitution to safeguard the culture, tradition, language and lands of the indigenous people.

Following the shameful decision by the **Canadian Museum for Human Rights** not to use the word "genocide" when discussing the Canadian government's laws, policies and actions towards Indigenous Peoples, word got out that the Harper government is paying for targeted research in order to back up the government's propaganda as it relates to murdered, missing and traded Indigenous women. According to Pam Palmater, the government is essentially trying to "blame Indigenous Peoples for their own victimization and oppression".

The Zapatista opened their communities to more than 1600 students from around to attend the **Escuelita Zapatista** (the Little Zapatista School) a refreshing and innovative week long event that was, in the Zapatista's own words, devoted to "shar[ing] the little we have learned about the struggle for freedom" so "[the students] can see what is useful or not for their own struggles." Some of the lessons imparted at the Escuelita came in the form of textbook readings and presentations. But some the most important lessons were imparted as the students shared lodging, meals, work, life and conversations with the Zapatista families that everyone stayed with during their time on Maya traditional territory in Chiapas, Mexico.

Bangalee settlers and Indigenous communities have agreed to work towards improving mutual relations with each other and addressing the causes of distrust and discontent that exist between them. A reconciliation meeting between the Indigenous people and the Bangalee settlers was held after the recent Taindong attack in Khagrachhari, Bangladesh, in which Bangalee settlers burned and ransacked 34 houses and two temples of the Indigenous People in Taindong. As a result of the attack, thousands of Indigenous villagers took shelter in the border of neighboring India.

The **Buffalo River Dene Nation** is moving forward with a plan to reclaim a vast area of traditional land that was seized by the Canadian government in 1953. As reported by *the Dominion*, the area -- Spanning 11,700 square kilometres along the Alberta-Saskatchewan border -- has been used for the past 60 years as a tactical bombing range; however, it is now being opened up to oil and gas extraction activities and an Enbridge pipeline. The Buffalo River Dene, who were evicted from the area, have simply had enough.

Namibia's Indigenous peoples, the semi nomadic **Himba**, reached out to Earth Peoples to help them stop and condemn the German RTL TV Reality show "Wild Girls". The Himba say that RTL promised they could use the TV show to inform viewers about the human rights problems that the Himba are facing in Namibia, as well as to sensitize the world about their unique culture. The Himba, who don't speak any German, were shocked to find out from tourists that they were portrayed on the show as "funny wild savages". In a letter to RTL, Himba Chief H. Kapika and his community demanded compensation so they "can clean our names and image". He also demanded that they stop showing the DVD, finding the portrayal to be a "Really serious violation of our human rights".

The Nahua Peoples in the Peruvian Amazon announced that they will refuse to allow a gas consortium led by **Pluspetrol** to operate in their territory. In a letter that was delivered to the Ministry of Culture in Lima, the Nahua stated that, "Given the repeated broken promises by the company Pluspetrol, our people have decided to prohibit it from operating in our ancestral territory in the headwaters of the River Serjali." Pluspetrol is currently waiting for government permission from the Ministry of Energy and Mines to explore for deposits by drilling 18 wells and conducting intensive seismic tests in the headwaters region of the River Serjali, which the Nahua consider to be their territory.

In **Sapmi** -- the traditional territory of the Saami Peoples -- a group of indigenous and non-indigenous activists set up a roadblock to stop the UK-based mining company, Beowulf, from carrying out another drilling program in Kallak (Saami: Gállok), an area of great spiritual and cultural importance to the Saami. The blockade has been dismantled on several occasions; however,

that hasn't deterred the activists from continuing to defend the territory.

According to documents obtained by *Earth Island Journal*, investigators from the Bryan County Sheriff's Department had been spying on a **Great Plains Tar Sands Resistance training camp** which brought together local landowners, Indigenous communities, and environmental groups opposed to the pipeline. At least two law enforcement officers infiltrated the group and drafted a detailed report about an upcoming protest, which included the group's internal strategy and even character profiles on individual protesters. On the morning of a plan to block the gates of TransCanada's reserve oil in Cushing, Oklahoma, the protesters were confronted by police officers. Ron Seifert, an organizer with the affiliated group Tar Sands Blockade said, "For a small sleepy Oklahoma town to be saturated with police officers on a pre-dawn weekday leaves only one reasonable conclusion, they were there on purpose, expecting something to happen."

Doubling the size of the largest national park in Colombia, the government announced that it will be expanding the **Chiribiquete National Park** from 12,990 to 27,808 square kilometers. The expansion is partly to include areas at high risk of oil exploration and mining that are thought to be inhabited by Indigenous Peoples living in voluntary isolation (otherwise known as "uncontacted" tribes).

Kenya president Uhuru Kenyatta and Vice President William Ruto forestalled the escalation of a long-running **Maasai-Kikuyu** conflict that was ignited after a July raid left 250 Maasai houses burnt and over 2000 families homeless in Naivasha County, Rift Valley Province, Kenya. Following the attempted eviction, the Maasai issued a list of demands and a strongly-worded warning that their demands must be met, otherwise the country should brace for an all-out exodus of Kikuyus from any part of Maasailand in Kenya. Both the President and Vice President quickly intervened by offering the victims compensation and setting up a committee to look into the conflict.

With hands tied behind their backs and their mouths covered with masking tape, Bolivia's Indigenous Peoples in the Amazonian department of Beni demonstrated against President Evo Morales' proposed construction of a highway through the **TIPNIS** indigenous territory and national park. Tensions were heightened at the time, the government having laid criminal charges on three Indigenous leaders for their part in a public community whiplashing of another leader who supports the road. The government's consultation process concerning TIPNIS failed to reach consensus, intensifying the conflict between pro- and anti-highway sectors within the TIPNIS.

The **Murrawarri** Peoples took their first steps toward becoming an independent republic on their traditional unceded lands in northern New South Wales and Queensland, Australia. After issuing a formal declaration, The Murrawarri established an interim government in preparation for a parliament that will consist of 54 representatives appointed by their respective ancestral family groups. The Murrawarri Nation's act of self-determination has caught the attention of at least 27 other Indigenous Nations in Australia who have requested Murrawarri's declarations and constitution to use as templates for their own independence movements.

The southern Mexican town of **Xaltianguis** in Guerrero has seen over 100 women take up arms to protect their community from organized crime groups. Community self-defense force commander Miguel Angel Jimenez

told reporters, “Women were among the biggest supporters when the community self-defense forces were being formed, telling men that either you join or I join”. Controlling access to communities, as well as policing them, the self-defense groups fight crime often blamed on drug traffickers and other organized crime groups. “Women are brave and we are capable of defending our town,” Silvia Hipolito, a mother of two who joined the self-defense group, said.

After weeks of testimony, Canada’s Panel Hearings for Taseko’s so-called “New Prosperity” Mine finally **came to a close** in British Columbia. Throughout the various technical sessions that were held by federal and provincial departments including Environment Canada, Natural Resources Canada, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and the Ministry of Energy and Mines—all presenting conclusions that Taseko’s mine would have adverse effects on the environment—Tsilhqot’in elders and youth alike commented on the importance of keeping **Texstan Biny** (Fish Lake) intact. Not only does the region offer prime hunting and trapping grounds and a gathering area for powerful medicines and foods, they explained, it is a cultural school, a site for community gatherings, and a place for cultural and spiritual ceremonies. The Panel is expected to take up to 70 days to review the presentations and issue their Final Environmental Report.

In a written argument filed ahead of the final day of hearings for the “**New Prosperity**” Mine, **Taseko’s lawyer lashed out**, claiming, “Taseko believes that opponents to the mine in aboriginal communities have used culture and heritage inappropriately as a weapon by exaggerating the value of the areas that will be impacted by the mine and their use of those particular lands and resources for cultural purposes.”

The Government of New Zealand pushed through its bill expanding the powers of the **Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB)**. **Discussing the expansion**, Greens co-leader Metiria Turei, warned that the Maori are already at risk of wrongful surveillance, commenting, “I think we saw that with Tūhoe, that it’s so obvious that the racist filters that exist in the system here mean that those powers are more likely to be used against our own people, even though they are designed to assist the US with its surveillance measures”. She also said that while the majority of the GCSB’s work is a part of a global spying network, its capacities can now be turned on New Zealanders with this new bill.

A federal judge in Phoenix, Arizona heard oral arguments from the Havasupai Tribe, the Grand Canyon Trust and Sierra Club about why the uranium mining at **Canyon Mine should be stopped**. Matthew Pudesoy, Havasupai Vice Chairman, said “Our origin stories come from here, from right near where they are placing the shaft”. This hearing will only lead the judge to determine whether a preliminary injunction should be issued to stop the mine until the court hears a bigger lawsuit in the fall. Roger Clark, spokesman for the Grand Canyon Trust, said there are two main issues. The first question is whether the U.S. Forest Service allowed the mine to go forward without consulting the Havasupai, which considers the land sacred. The second question is whether the U.S. Forest Service failed to update the 1986 Environmental Impact Statement because new information has come to light since that time.

The Indigenous **Embera** community in Northwest Colombia, suffering from aerial-spraying of illegal coca crops, is insisting that the government respect their rights, land and lives. While The Embera do not oppose the eradication

of coca — they have approached the government asking for help to eliminate it — they express a **total rejection of aerial-spraying**. In July, the Colombian Air Force began a process of spraying the coca crops, used to make cocaine, in Alto Guayabal, in Chocó region, north-western Colombia. However, the aircraft sprayed herbicide indiscriminately, into areas where there were no illegal crops but only food crops. ‘The local Embera community has reported that the spraying has contaminated their water and crops and is causing community members, including children, to fall sick,’ says Thomas Mortensen, of Christian Aid in Colombia.

Despite a recent Botswana High Court order prohibiting the forced eviction of San Peoples from their land — and central government assurances that no evictions would take place — **Survival International** obtained detailed plans for the forced relocation of the Bushmen by a local council in western Botswana. The ‘Ranyane relocation phase II’ report outlines the **plans to forcibly remove the Bushmen off their land**. These plans include starving the Bushmen, stopping the provision of services such as basic rations, pensions and health services; cutting off their water supply; and destroying sanitation and health facilities. In addition, The British lawyer representing the Bushmen has been barred from re-entering Botswana since the High Court’s ruling.

IN BRIEF

SEPTEMBER



WIXARIKA PEOPLE CELEBRATE SUSPENSION OF MINING IN WIRIKUTA;
HAUDENOSAUNEE AND DUTCH HONOUR TWO ROW WAMPUM'S
400TH ANNIVERSARY; MISKITO GAIN RIGHTS TO
OVER A MILLION HECTARES

Maasai people in Tanzania celebrated the Prime Minister's decision to **scrap a controversial plan** to take 1,500 square mile of land from them in the name of conservation. The area, known as **Loliendo**, will instead remain with the Maasai, who the Prime Minister acknowledged for taking 'good care of the area' since 'time immemorial'.

The newly formed **Montes Azules Rebellion Movement** in Chiapas, Mexico, **reported seeing an un-manned aerial vehicle (UAV)**, known as a drone, fly over their territory about 20km north of the town of La Realidad. After reaching out to their EZLN compañeros, Zapatista Comandante Tacho reported that similar "military planes" were sighted going over five Zapatista carcoles, the very locations where the EZLN's Escuelita (Little School) were taking place. Further, the settlement Benito Juárez Miramar also reported the discovery of two cameras hidden in the trees inside the Montes Azules Biosphere Reserve.

The Guarani community of **Apyka'i** together with The Aty Guasu Council of the Kaiowá **reclaimed traditional lands** in the municipality of Dourados, in Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil. The Apyka'i community—having already waited two decades for the government to demarcate the land in question—finally decided that enough was enough. For the past 14 years, The Apyka'i community has been living and dying at the edge of a road—federal highway BR-463. Since retaking the land, the community has received several death threats. A group of men also reportedly "threw a liquid poison in the water" and then promised they will attack and evict the Guarani.

The Tahltan Central Council celebrated a decision by Fortune Minerals' to **halt mineral exploration activities on Klappan Mountain** inside the Sacred Headwaters region of Northern British Columbia, Canada. The decision came after several bold actions led by the Klabona Keepers including the delivery of an eviction notice, a blockade and the take over of a drilling site. However, Fortune Minerals added that they have no intention to leaving Mount Klappan for good; rather they are trying to diffuse tensions by pulling out of the area for several months.

Police from the state of Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil's southeastern region arrested two leaders of a sex trafficking ring that sent adolescent girls and transvestites, some as young as 16, to prostitute themselves to the workers building the **Belo Monte Dam** in the state of Pará. **Another ugly layer** to one of the most controversial developments projects in South America, the prostitution ring was uncovered earlier this year, when the youngest girl escaped from captivity to describe the horrendous situation to local police.

Basin Electric Power Cooperative is reportedly **trying to run a new transmission line** through the painfully historic **Tahca Wakutepi** massacre site in North Dakota. In 1864, Union Brigadier General Alfred Sully and his troops engaged in the wholesale slaughter of Lakota and Dakota men, women, children, elders and warriors. Not satisfied with the massacre of human bodies, they destroyed the people's crops, supplies, and lodges, as well. Now, it seems, Basin Electric is picking up where Sully left off.

After struggling for more than 20 years to protect the **Suling-Selaan forest** from logging companies in the Malaysian state of Sarawak, several Penan communities were abruptly given **60 days to abandon their homes** so the government could convert the forest into an unpopulated national park. The shocking move follows a strong round of opposition from the Penan, who

erected blockades to stop a logging company from raiding the forest of its natural bounty. The Penan protests convinced the company to walk away, surrendering the timber extraction license that the government had previously issued them.

Elsewhere in Sarawak, another group of Penan communities reinstated a **blockade against the controversial Murum Dam**. The blockade began soon after the Penan village of Long Wat -- who would be the first to face the waters of the Murum reservoir -- reached an agreement with the government for their voluntary resettlement, an agreement that other villages found to be wholly inadequate. With the village of Long Wat seemingly out-of-the-way, and the renewed blockade in full force, Sarawak Energy started filling in the reservoir without giving notice to any of the affected villages.

Over 30 people, including citizens of the Winnemem Wintu and Hoopa Valley Tribes, **protested government plans** to raise **the Shasta Dam**. The protest was held as part of a series of events to counter the Bureau of Reclamation's 75th anniversary celebration of the Shasta Dam. Tribal leaders say that raising the dam would inundate many sacred sites not already covered by the waters of Shasta Lake. They also oppose the dam raise because it has been designed in conjunction with Governor Jerry Brown's Bay Delta Conservation Plan, a project that would hasten the extinction of Central Valley salmon and steelhead, Delta smelt, longfin smelt, green sturgeon and other species.

The **RCMP** began to **aggressively confront** the Mi'kmaq Warriors Society and other anti-fracking activists, who set up a makeshift protest camp to rally against SWN Resources Canada's plans to carry out seismic testing on Mi'kmaq lands, without Mi'kmaq consent. Soon after the camp went up, the RCMP blocked outside access to the camp with a police blockade, to which the Mi'kmaq Warriors Society responded with a blockade of their own. Tensions flared momentarily after a police officer struck an Elsipogtog woman with his car. Later that same day, the RCMP stopped, injured and arrested a Canadian who was trying to bring water to the protesters. Another Mi'kmaq youth was subsequently arrested for simply leaning on a police cruiser.

San Jose Nacahuil, a small village near Guatemala City with a majority of Maya -- Kaqchikel inhabitants, made international headlines after a group of gunmen **killed 11 people and wounded 28 more** in a frenzy of unrequited violence. The Media reported that corrupt officers or gangs were the main suspects in the killings, however, Kaqchikel traditional authorities strongly denounced the claim. Since March 2012, the village has maintained a blockade against American mining company Kappes Cassidy and Associates (KCA's), enduring "violent and systematic repression organized by the mining company, pro-mining community members and the government."

The Lutsel K'e Dene, Yellow Knives Dene and Tlicho First Nations **issued a final plea** to the Canadian government to stop the oncoming **Gahcho Kue** diamond mine project, citing concerns over water quality, caribou migrations, the traditional use of the land and general pollution concerns. The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Review Board (MVEIRB), saying little about Indigenous rights, admitted that the project would "Likely [cause] significant adverse environmental impacts", however, it still decided that the economic gains would outweigh any such impacts. The project is expected to commence some time between 2014-2015.

A delegation of Haudenosaunee leaders **traveled to the Netherlands** on

Haudenosaunee passports to participate in a ceremony honoring the 400th anniversary of the Kaswentha or **Two Row** Wampum Treaty originally signed between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and The Netherlands in 1613. During the ceremony, Onondaga Faithkeeper Oren Lyons presented a replica of the Treaty to Lionel Veer, the Ambassador for Human Rights of the Netherlands. Ambassador Lionel Veer gratefully accepted the wampum, and said that it represents what is possible between two nations. "It is important to be reminded of peace at this time. It requires hard work. Not only by world leaders, but in particular by the common people. Because peace is in their hands."

After twenty years of negotiation, the remains of 26 **Kamilaroi** ancestors were **finally returned to their descendants** at a ceremony in Brisbane, in the Australian state of Queensland. Kamilaroi man Bob Weatherall, who was instrumental in the repatriation process, said that the way their remains had been kept was barbaric, but now they would finally be free, to smell the gum trees and the ti-trees. "They're going to take them home now and lay them to rest in their homeland where they can be at peace," he said.

The **Wixarika** People **celebrated a major legal victory** with a federal court's decision to suspend work on all mining projects in the territory, including the projects of Canada's Revolution Resources and Frisco Mining Group, owned by Mexican tycoon, Carlos Slim. Under the court ruling, no further mining-related work may take place in the Wirikuta Natural Protected Area in San Luis Potosi until the legal case requesting an injunction against the concessions is resolved.

Word got out that a network of white supremacist groups were joining forces to purchase properties in the small town of **Leith**, North Dakota, in order to "disintegrate" the town into an all-white enclave. News of the plan brought a wide variety of Indigenous and non-Indigenous activists **together to send a message** that "they have no chance of taking over Leith." Documenting the protest, Michael Pugliese commented that, while the police stood by casually protecting Neo-Nazis, the "anti-racist resistance made it quite clear that the attempted nazi takeover of Leith will be a total failure."

Evading the Indonesian navy, two tiny boats met near the Australia-Indonesia border to **ceremonially reconnect** the Indigenous Peoples of Australia and West Papua. The ceremony was the pinnacle of a 5000km **West Papua Freedom Flotilla** journey. The cultural exchange of Indigenous elders was held in secret, due to threats made by Indonesian government ministers and military officials who had stated that the navy and air-force would "take measures" against the peaceful meeting.

The Ethiopian government **vowed to continue with its massive villagization program** despite continued human rights complaints. Already more than a hundred thousand **Anuak** and other Indigenous Peoples have been forcibly relocated to settlements in order to free up their land for the transnational agro-industry. Many of the new settlements are located on infertile land and lack access to even the most basic services. The villagization program is made possible with generous contributions from the World Bank, the U.K. Department for International Development (DFID) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), formed "to learn the truth about what happened" in Canada's residential schools, was called out by a Squamish community organizer for **accepting funds from Kinder Morgan**,

a US-based company that wants to build a new Tar Sands pipeline from Calgary to Vancouver. According to Khelsilem Rivers, the TRC isn't the only one to get funds from Big Oil. An organization called 'Reconciliation Canada' is also getting funds from one of the biggest tar sands pushers around: TransCanada. "To accept and use money from these companies is outrageous," said Rivers. "It is an obvious contradiction: How can the organizers promote reconciliation while giving Big Oil companies a pass when those same companies are directly involved in damaging Indigenous ways of life? This was the exact purpose of Residential Schools."

BriBri communities **rejected a new government proposal** to permit U.S. military incursions onto their lands in the remote area of Alto Telire in the county of Talamanca, Costa Rica. A Bribri leader condemned the proposal, arguing that such an action would threaten public safety and serve to militarize Bribri territory. According to the proposal, SOUTHCOM would enter and move throughout Bribri lands without prior consultation or consent in order to provide various Costa Rican agencies with direct access to communities in the region. Based in Miami, Florida, SOUTHCOM is the arm of the U.S. Department of Defense responsible for all U.S. military activities throughout Central and South America and the Caribbean.

One-hundred and fifty years after a treaty with England granted the **Miskito** people rights over their land—a treaty which was never fully respected—the government of Honduras **officially handed over nearly a million hectares** of tropical forest along the Caribbean Coast to the Indigenous Peoples. "This is an unprecedented and historic moment for our peoples," said Norvin Goff, chairman of Miskitu Asla Takanka (MASTA), a Honduras group representing the tribes. "The entire region is at risk from illegal hunting, logging and clearing of land to graze cattle. The Miskito people can protect it, but only if we have title to those lands."

University of Alaska Professor Richard Steiner strongly criticized a "flawed" report that the **International Union for Conservation of Nature** (IUCN) wrote for its partner, Shell Petroleum Development Company Ltd of Nigeria (SPDC). According to Steiner, **IUCN attempted to greenwash Shell** by criminalizing the Ogoni people, blaming them for repeated oil spills on their land in the Niger Delta, even going so far as to assert that the Ogoni are suffering from what they termed a "quick money syndrome" by stealing and illegal refining oil on their ancestral lands. Steiner goes on to examine a series of factual errors in the report, concluding that IUCN gave Shell precisely what it wanted so it can continue making billions.

Meanwhile, the **Bodo Community** in Ogoniland **rejected a settlement package** that was offered to them by the Royal Dutch Shell for damages they have suffered as a result of several oil pipeline spills on their land. Leigh Day, the British law firm representing the Ogoni villagers, said the company's compensation offer amounted to approximately 1,100 pounds (\$1,700) per individual impacted, without giving the number of people it says were affected—approximately 15,000. "The settlement figures are totally derisory and insulting to these villagers," he added.

The Canadian government rejected a series of resolutions from the **UN Human Rights Council** calling on Canada to **undertake a full investigation** into the disappearance, murder and sexual abuse of Indigenous women across the country. The resolutions came as part of the Council's Universal Periodic Review of Canada's rights record, which is conducted every four years. Com-

menting on the wholesale rejection, Canada's ambassador to the UN, Elissa Goldberg, proclaimed, "Canada is proud of its human-rights record, and our peaceful and diverse society."

A respected B'laan "bong fulong" (tribal elder) was **killed by government troops** at the Tampakan Copper-Gold Project on the southern Philippine island of Mindanao. According to various reports, **Anteng Freay**, head claimant of the Ancestral Domain territory of the Atbol B'laan territory, was killed a few meters away from his house during a government raid. 134 empty shells were found around Anteng Freay's house. One other person, who went to bong fulong Freay's aid, was also shot and killed.

Some 200 indigenous Mapuche **blocked the entrance to a facility** of Argentina's state-controlled **Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales** (YPF) oil company to protest the burning of five of their buildings. The residents blamed YPF security guards for the fires, which destroyed four homes and the meeting place for their community. The first of the houses set on fire were just 100 meters from a new plant that YPF is constructing.

Members of the Gila River Alliance for a Clean Environment (GRACE) **filed a civil rights complaint against** the Arizona Department of Transportation for proposing and promoting construction of the **South Mountain Loop 202 Freeway**. If built, the freeway would have devastating negative cultural, spiritual and religious impacts on the Akimel O'odham (Pima) and the Pee Posh (Maricopa) Peoples of the Gila River Indian Community.

The **Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil** (APIB) initiated **a week-long national mobilization** to protest against the widespread attack on the territorial rights of Indigenous Peoples in Brazil by the government, the agribusiness caucus in Congress and the lobby for mining and energy companies. According to APIB, hundreds of projects are being pushed through Congress to restrict the rights of Indigenous Peoples, quilombolas and other traditional populations.

Environmentalists joined the **Nez Perce** in an effort to **stop further shipments** of General Electric's massive oil-field equipment that would pass through the Nez Perce Tribe's reservation on its way to the Alberta Tar Sands. The Nez Perce and environmentalists from Idaho Rivers United told a federal judge that letting GE proceed with its next shipment could cause irreparable harm to the rights of the Nez Perce people and damage the environment. A lawyer for General Electric proceeded to 'inform' the judge that the courts had no authority to interfere with the shipment.

The **Yerisiam** Peoples issued a call for support and advocacy over an ongoing threat to their customary land in West Papua. Simon Petrus Hanebora, the head of the Yerisiam, explained in a press release that two oil palm companies -- PT Nabire Baru and PT Sariwana Unggal Mandiri -- **are clearing Yerisiam land** without the necessary permissions while the local government turns a blind eye. Areas that have been logged thus far include sacred sites and sago groves (an instrumental source of food for Indigenous Peoples in West Papua).

The **Colville Tribal Council** **voted to allow marriage equality** in the tribe, bringing the number of tribal jurisdictions in the U.S. that allow same-sex marriages to six. Commenting on the decision, Council Chairman Michael Finley said tribes have always known that Two Spirits have a special place in

their society. "They've always been accepted," he said. Now, tribal law will also treat them equally and with respect, he said.

Berta Caceres is once again **heading to court** along with Tomás Gomez and Aureliano Molina, leaders of the indigenous Lenca organization Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH). The charges they must face include usurpation of land, coercion, and causing more than \$3 million in damages to DESA after the people of Rio Blanco began physically blocking construction of the company's dam earlier this year. Berta, meanwhile, continues to face the separate charges of illegally carrying arms "to the danger of the internal security of Honduras."

As a result of the on-going mining exploitation throughout Sápmi (the traditional territory of the Sami Peoples) the **Sami Parliament of Sweden** issued **a statement demanding that the Swedish State** put a stop to all prospecting, exploration permits, work plans and concession applications until such time that Sweden "live[s] up to international rights of Indigenous Peoples, particularly the principles of Free Prior and Informed Consent that must be implemented for all questions concerning [the Sami]." The Sami Parliament -- the representative body for people of Sami heritage -- further demanded that legislation be changed to satisfy the Sami people's needs and that "a sustainable living environment throughout is granted priority."

Chinese Authorities in **Inner Mongolia** detained 52 people in connection to a series of online posts that were **reportedly encouraging ethnic tensions** between traditional Mongol herders and Chinese mining companies exploiting their land. According to **Radio Free Asia**, most of the individuals were charged with spreading "Internet rumors and false reports of disaster, epidemic, and police emergencies," while China's news agency **Xinhua**, accused them of "sensationalizing conflicts that occurred during the development process in Inner Mongolia". Last month, Chinese authorities "punished" at least 13 ethnic Mongolian Internet users for similarly "spreading rumors" about the resettlement to Inner Mongolia of hundreds of thousands of Han Chinese left homeless by a 2008 earthquake.

Minority Rights Group International **released a report** urging **US Capital Energy Belize** to "suspend its oil exploration in [Toledo District, Belize] and resume activities only if the Belizean government obtains the FPIC of the Maya and Garifuna peoples who live in the area". According to interviews with Maya and Garifuna residents in the report, US Capital Energy Belize, Ltd has campaigned aggressively to build its popularity in Toledo, while the government has sat back and watched, failing to fulfill its duty to protect and safeguard the constitutional rights of the Maya and Garifuna.

IN BRIEF

OCTOBER



INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN WEST PAPUA FORBID
UN-PERMITTED ENTRY TO THEIR LANDS; LUMMI CARVERS HEAD
OUT ON A JOURNEY TO INSPIRE; 120,000 INDIGENOUS
PEOPLES MOBILIZE IN COLOMBIA

140 Indigenous youths who were locked up in a West Australia adult prison earlier this year [started being transferred back](#) to the now-repaired **Banksia Hill** juvenile detention centre. The government reportedly spent more than \$3 million repairing and improving the facility after a scathing report by the Inspector of Custodial Services, Neil Morgan, who pointed to “staff shortages” and “lockdowns” as the principle cause of the riot. The guards’ union said tensions had been mounting for at least 18 months; however, Corrective Services ministers ignored their warnings. A second juvenile facility is also reportedly in the works.

Indigenous women in Ecuador -- representing the Shuar, Quechua, Sápara, and Huaorani -- [walked for five full days](#), passing over a mountain range, in order to deliver a manifesto protesting mining and oil extraction activities that the government is allowing on their territories. In the manifesto, the women asserted that the activities break the government’s agreement, signified by its ratification of **ILO 169**, to obtain FPIC from Indigenous Peoples before making policy decisions that will affect their territories.

Okimaw Wallace Fox of Onion Lake Cree Nation along with Chief Craig Maki-naw of Ermineskin Cree Nation [responded](#) to a report from the **Independent Expert at the United Nations** concerning the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order. Applauding the Independent Expert’s recommendations, Okimaw Fox stated, “The [Canadian] state violates the Charter, violates our treaties and thumbs its nose at the world. Indigenous Nations want a process that is respectful of our rights. As outlined in the report of the Independent Expert: the General Assembly should consider ‘peoples under occupation have a genuine opportunity to participate in decision-making processes’. We are ready -- is Canada ready?”

Riot police and members of the Group of Special Operations (an elite, special unit of the Chilean Police force), [evicted](#) the Mapuche Community of **Temu-cuicui** from their ancestral lands in the Araucania Region of Southern Chile. More than two years ago, the self-denominated “autonomous” community returned to the lands, from which they were previously dispossessed. Despite the police burning their homes, running over a flock of sheep and assaulting at least two people, the families of Temu-cuicui re-entered the lands without fear of another eviction.

Continuing their blockade against the **Murum dam** in the Malaysian state of Sarawak, [the Penan gave Sarawak Energy “three days”](#) to remove its machinery from their traditional lands. Speaking from the protest, Lugang Usang, Secretary of the Peleiran Murum Penan Affairs Committee (PEMUPA) said, “It is not true that we Penan do not want change or to improve ourselves. But don’t impose development on us. Our customary land, our ancestral burial grounds, our rivers and forest were taken away from us and now the government denies and intimidates us. These are criminal acts of the government that make our lives miserable.”

In several centers across West Papua, Indonesian police and the army once again [cracked down on peaceful political demonstrations](#) held by the West Papua National Committee (KNPB), resulting in the injuries of several participants, with unconfirmed reports of police opening fire in related incidents against KNPB members in Kaimana. The demonstration was dedicated to commemorating the fifth anniversary of the founding of the **International Parliamentarians for West Papua**.

The Brazilian Federal Regional Court of the 1st Region (TRF-1) [suspended an installation license](#) that authorized construction of the **Belo Monte Dam** Complex in 2011. The Court also ruled that BNDES (Brazilian National Development Bank) should not transfer any further resources to Norte Energia, the company responsible for building the dam complex, before the 40 conditions of the preliminary license are met. “This lawsuit is proof that Belo Monte is not only unviable, but also illegal,” said Antonia Melo, coordinator for Movimento Xingu Vivo para Sempre, adding, “[it] demonstrates that social movements have been telling the truth all along.[...] We reaffirm that we will keep up the fight for justice.”

Meanwhile, Brazil’s Supreme Court [upheld an important 2009 ruling](#) that led to the removal of non-indigenous rice farmers who were illegally occupying the indigenous territory of **Raposa Serra do Sol**. Prior to the 2009 ruling, the farmers [viciously resisted](#) their eviction by attacking indigenous people, destroying bridges, setting up roadblocks, throwing homemade bombs into homes and threatening to massacre any number of Makuxi, Wapixana, Ingariko, Patamona, and Taurepang -- the Indigenous Peoples of Raposa Serra do Sol. In upholding the original ruling, the Court maintained the entire set of original conditions including the restriction of Raposa Serra do Sol to Indigenous Peoples.

The **Abegweit First Nation** officially launched a new community project aimed to help [replenish trout and salmon populations](#) in and around Prince Edward Island. Through its Biodiversity Enhancement Hatchery, the First Nation plans to raise and release 40,000 speckled trout and 100,000 Atlantic salmon in its first year with plans for expansion in the future. Chief Brian Francis said the initiative is positive for the Mi’kmaq community and was a natural choice for the First Nation, which has long promoted sustainable watershed projects.

The National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC) decried an [excessive police response](#) to a peaceful protest that left 19 people wounded. The protesters had been casually marching in the Pacific coastal city of Buenaventura as part of a massive national mobilization involving as many as 120,000 Indigenous Peoples. The mobilization or **Minga** was initiated by ONIC to establish a dialogue with the government in order to address ongoing economic injustices and human rights abuses in the country. During the march, the protesters were “stopped and threatened” by the riot police and then subsequently fired upon.

In the days following the police attack in Buenaventura, the right-wing paramilitary group **Rastrojos** called for “social cleansing” of various Indigenous leaders and groups involved in the Colombia-wide mobilization. [According to Amnesty International](#), the paramilitary group told the protesters to return to their homes within 24 hours or they would be considered military targets and be singled out for “social cleansing” killings (limpieza social). The paramilitaries claimed the indigenous protesters were being used as “cannon fodder” by the FARC.

Although tensions continued to flare in Colombia, Rastrojos never carried out its genocidal threat. What’s more, **ONIC** finally sat down with the government of President Juan Manuel Santos, calling off the Minga to hammer out what has been described as [an “historic” 25-point agreement](#) over territorial and human rights, granting Colombia’s Indigenous communities increased judicial, administrative and political autonomy, among other terms.

Indigenous media makers from various countries in Latin America gathered in the chilly town of Santa Maria Tlahuitoltepec, in the Sierra Norte of Oaxaca, Mexico, for the **Second Continental Summit of Indigenous Communication**. While providing a key space to build the Indigenous Multimedia Communication Platform for Abya Yala articulated during the first Summit, **this year's event** was met with some concern and condemnation because of the organizing committee's decision to accept funds from the Secretary of Communications and Transport, an institution that actively persecutes community radios in Mexico.

A **Global day of action** was carried out by Indigenous Peoples and allies to mark the 250th anniversary of the British Royal Proclamation of 1763, an historic document that many say mandated Canada to recognize Indigenous land rights. The day of action, popularly identified as **#Oct7Proclaim**, coincided with the first day that UN Special Rapporteur James Anaya was in Canada to investigate the situation of Indigenous Peoples. As part of the day of action, which was called on by Idle No more and Defenders of the Land, more than 70 actions and events were carried out around the world.

Local police from the Sukma district in Chhattisgarh, India, reportedly forced **Madvi Nanda** -- an indigenous farmer from the village of Burkapal -- to **dig out and defuse a land mine** near his village. The land mine exploded while Nanda was defusing it, without any safety gear, resulting in severe injuries to his face and eyes. Immediately after Nanda was found laying on the ground, security officials airlifted him to a hospital and then promptly took off.

Business as usual for the US judiciary, the Supreme Court **dismissed an appeal** from the **Onondaga Nation** concerning their long-standing claim that New York illegally took 4,000 square miles of land through treaties signed in 1784, 1789 and 1794. In announcing the dismissal, the Supreme Court stated that the Onondagas waited too long "between a historical injustice and the present day" to file the claim and said a ruling favoring the Onondaga would be "disruptive."

The world's second largest ferronickel mine operation was **shut down** by the Zenu Peoples in the northern department of Cordoba, Colombia. **BHP Billiton**, the owner of the Cerro Matoso mine project, previously displaced the population of 6,000 Zenu, leaving them without a land-base. Still landless, the Zenu say that the mine is now affecting local soil and waterways leading to a rise in cancer within the community. In response to the protest, The Mining and Energy Ministry offered to set up a new indigenous reserve and to carry out health studies on possible environmental impacts of the mining operation.

In a preemptive assertion of their rights, Indigenous communities in the remote Tubang District of West Papua began erecting traditional '**sasih**' markers on their lands, forbidding any kind of un-permitted entry or passage. The villagers -- who also agreed unanimously that no one should give up their land, **under pain of death** -- are responding to the Indonesian government's Merauke Integrated Food and Energy Estate (MIFEE) which purportedly aims to "feed Indonesia, then feed the world" with vast oil palm, sugar cane and industrial forestry plantations. In several instances, the government has worked hand in glove with various companies to manipulate or force villagers to give up their lands for the project. The communities in Tubang District say that will have no part of it.

Offering solidarity to Indigenous Nations, five Carvers from the **Lummi Nation** set out on a journey up the Pacific North West Coast hoping to send a **message** of Kwel'Hoy, or 'We Draw The Line' to the resource extraction industry. With them, lain carefully on a flat bed, the Lummi carried a beautifully-carved 22-foot cedar totem pole for Indigenous communities to bless along the way. Their journey gained international attention as a pilgrimage of hope, healing and determination for the embattled Indigenous Nations they visited.

Australia's Prime Minister **declared** that West Papua is "better off" under Indonesian Rule. Following an incident in Bali where three West Papuan students occupied the Australian consulate to protest conditions in West Papua, PM **Tony Abbott** told reporters in Bali that "the people of West Papua are much better off as part of a strong, dynamic and increasingly prosperous Indonesia". Since Indonesia occupied West Papua (the western half of the island of New Guinea) as many as 500,000 indigenous men, women and children have been killed.

Just two days after UN Special Rapporteur James Anaya's Canadian tour concluded, hundreds of RCMP officers raided the peaceful Mik'maq protest camp near Rexton, N.B. The RCMP were **enforcing a court injunction** for SWN Resources Canada can proceed with its exploratory drilling on Elsipogtog First Nation lands. Despite the heavy presence of children, women and elders, the RCMP went on to shoot tear gas, plastic bullets, and pepper spray at the unarmed protesters, and arrest more than four dozen people, including journalists who were on the scene.

Moroccan security forces began attacking Pro-independence **Sahrawi** protesters who demanded an end to the occupation of Western Sahara. The confrontation began just as Christopher Ross, special envoy of the UN Secretary General, was **visiting the territory** - which has been occupied by Morocco for more than 30 years. Saharawi coordinator with the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) Mohamed Jadad said that Ross's visit was part of "an effort to reach a solution that guarantees the Saharawi people their right to self-determination". According to Jadad, "Ross is seeking to advance the negotiations."

The relatively unknown occupation of Ontario's **Springwater Provincial Park** entered its **7th straight month**. In April of this year, after Ontario Parks took down its flag and changed the park's status to non-operational -- due to low visitation and funding -- a small group of people from several Indigenous nations set up a camp inside the park land, exercising Article 26 of the United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Peoples, concerning the right to lands and resources that were once traditionally occupied. It is the group's goal to see Springwater as an educational and spiritual centre. So far, they've held full moon and drumming ceremonies, children's programming and feasts.

The **National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA)** **agreed to resume peace talks** with the Malian Government after walking away some weeks earlier in response to the government's rigid refusal to work towards an equitable solution for the conflict in which the MNLA sought to establish an independent territory spanning the northern half of Mali. No longer seeking independence, the MNLA is now attempting to establish self-government for Northern Mali; an aspiration the Malian Government has rejected. Despite this, however, the MNLA decided to come back to the table in order to "create a reciprocal climate of trust" with the government.

The **Committee for Future Generations** along with individual members of English River First Nation and Lac La Ronge Indian Band **attended Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) hearings** to oppose a set of license renewals for uranium mining and milling projects in northern Saskatchewan. Under existing contracts, it is illegal for the First Nations to formally oppose such licenses at the hearings. Nevertheless, the risk of continued mining is too great to be ignored by the group of intervenors.

Nearly 1,500 Indigenous Peoples from across **Brazil** occupied a central government road in the federal capital in response to **a new legislative assault** that threatens to severely undermine or extinguish Indigenous rights in the country. The action -- part of a national mobilization -- was a swift follow-up to an attempt by the diverse group of protesters to enter the National Congress, where they were met with pepper spray. Seeking a more reasoned approach (which may very well turn out to be little more than a distraction), the government opened talks with the representatives.

The government of Zimbabwe began a blanket campaign targeting all Indigenous San communities outside **Hwange National Park** after more than 100 elephants died of cyanide poisoning. Christopher Dube, a vocal member of the San community, says that what is happening is a clear violation of human rights -- a violation that **no one seems to care** about. According to Dube, who was himself accused of helping poachers carry out the slaughter, some community members have started hiding in the bush out of fear of facing further victimization. "We started living in this area long before the National Park was established and we have never poisoned animals," said Dube. "We are hunters by nature and we can co-exist with wild animals. But all of a sudden every San person is now a suspect. Are we that bad as a people?"

Not Speaking Spanish, according to a new report by Mexico's **National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples (CDI)**, is **the most common reason that Indigenous men and women are sent to jail in Mexico**. CDI says that in 2012 alone, 8,502 Indigenous people were unjustly imprisoned for only knowing the words "sí" or "no" in Spanish.

Dozens of Indigenous Lumads and farmers from the Philippines province of **Bukidnon** demonstrated outside the National Commission on Indigenous People (NCIP) regional office in Cagayan de Oro City to **demand the recognition of their land rights**. According to Datu Santiano Agdahan Jr., chairperson of Tindoga (Tribal Indigenous Association), who led the March, the government is refusing to issue certificates of ancestral domain title (CADT) thereby confirming the right of possession and ownership over ancestral lands. The government, it seems, is getting caught up scrutinizing Lumad genealogy to determine whether or not the land claims are legitimate.

Oxfam called out Coca-Cola and PepsiCo for **buying sugar from companies that have been caught** driving Indigenous Peoples and small farmers off of their lands. A Spokesperson from Coca-Cola straight-up denied the allegations while the PepsiCo counterpart assured that "We have reached out to the suppliers; they have assured us they are in compliance with applicable laws." Oxfam identified several land conflict cases in Cambodia and Brazil, the latter involving the complete destruction of a village by hired thugs.

The Pimicikamak Executive Council spoke out against Manitoba Hydro's decision to continuing cutting power to homes on the **Cross Lake** reserve, exposing **a thick layer of hypocrisy** in the process. According to the Executive

Council, Manitoba Hydro is legally not allowed to disconnect its natural gas and electricity customers between October 1 and May 14 each year, when it comes to the people of Cross Lake. What's more, the Cree community has to deal with some of the highest hydro bills in the province despite the fact that are literally within arm's reach of the company's hydro dam. "We have many big issues to deal with," said David Muswaggon, a member of the Pimicikamak Executive Council.

The Spanish National Court agreed to hear charges of genocide in Tibet against former Chinese president **Hu Jintao**, drawing praise from human rights groups and allies of the Tibetan people around the world. The ruling came **in response to an appeal** against an earlier decision to shelve the lawsuit against Hu. In reversing its earlier ruling, the court said that one of the plaintiffs in the case, Thubten Wangchen, an ethnic Tibetan, is also a Spanish citizen and that Chinese authorities had not carried out its own investigation into the allegations. The Spanish court further pointed to a "series of coordinated actions" by Chinese leaders "aimed at eliminating the specific characteristics and existence of the country of Tibet by imposing martial law, carrying out forced transfers and mass sterilization campaigns, [and] torturing dissidents."

State supervisory organizations in Peru informed The Federation of the Native Communities of the Tigre River (FECONAT) of an alarming environmental situation on the **Tigres River Basin** in the Peruvian Amazon. **After evaluating the current state of the basin**, an area that's home to thousands of Quechua people and overlapped by an oil concession known as "Block 1AB", the organizations OEFA, ANA, OSINERGMIN, and DIGESA reported finding oil spills that were never declared by Pluspetrol North, inoperative oil installations that do not have proper closure plans, ducts and pipes in poor condition, and water bodies with the presence of heavy metals and total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH) above permitted levels. An action plan to address the situation has not been announced; however, OSINERGMIN, the Supervisory Organization for Energy and Mining Investment in Peru, stated that they have begun a sanctioning procedure against the company.

A group of Indigenous Peoples from Brazil re-occupied the historic **Museum of the Indian** in a last-ditch effort to make their voices heard **before the building is sacrificed** for the 2014 World Cup. The protesters say the museum has long been connected to indigenous culture dating all the way back to 1875 when it became an indigenous research center. Now the protesters want to use the building for an indigenous university. The government, however, wants to destroy the building so it can make a new parking lot for the Maracana stadium, where the 2014 World Cup final is to be held.

The Union of Ontario Indians, a political advocate for 39 Anishinabek communities across the province of Ontario, **condemned the Harper government's proposed First Nations Education Act**, saying that the new legislation would repeat mistakes of the past. "The proposed (FNEA) is about control and false accountability," said Grand Council Chief Patrick Madahbee. "It is a colonial document and makes no attempt to close the gap on inequality in education."

IN BRIEF

NOVEMBER



PHOTO: OSSIE MICHELIN / APTN

MAORI WOMEN SPEAK OUT AGAINST TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP
AGREEMENT; INDIGENOUS LEADERS HOLD A CLIMATE
SUMMIT OF THEIR OWN; MI'KMAQ-LED ANTI-FRACKING EFFORT
SHOWS NO SIGNS OF BACKING DOWN

Te Wharepora Hou, a group of Maori women primarily concerned with Maori wellbeing, spoke out against an alarming threat posed by the oncoming **Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement** (TPP/TPPA), a trade agreement that is being negotiated between several States including Australia, Chile, Canada, Japan, Mexico and New Zealand. According to Te Wharepora Hou, the TPP would allow foreign companies to trademark any kind of indigenous intellectual property including place names and traditional medicinal practices. The group comments, "As wahine Maori, our long and deeply-held traditional values and understandings of collectivity, of manaakitanga, of kaitiakitanga (Caring for Earth Mother), for Tangaroa (god of the sea) and for their children, is in direct opposition to what is being proposed in the TPPA."

A series of ongoing attacks on the **Q'eqchi** community of Saquimo Setaña, Cobán, Guatemala, were reported by The Guatemala Solidarity Project. The criminal acts -- including arson, physical attacks on community members and the arrest of community leaders under false charges -- were allegedly ordered by a person who claims to be the rightful heir of Saquimo Setaña's land. The woman in question was also able to get an eviction order issued against the community.

In Alberta, Canada, the **Lubicon Lake Nation** peacefully occupied an access road leading to Penn West Petroleum's oil lease site on the Lubicon's traditional unceded territory. The Lubicon Nation explained in a press statement that Penn West began working in the area without consulting them. Initially, Penn West agreed to halt the work and attend a meeting; however, the company turned around -- after some early posturing -- and presented a hardline position: They would not engage with the Lubicon Lake Nation government nor would they cease their operations. Lubicon citizens and representatives have said they will remain at the location until Penn West ceases operations and takes their requests seriously.

Yanomami activist **Luis Shatiwe** told Tierramérica that Indigenous labourers were found on the Venezuelan side of the Orinoco Basin "with numbers branded on their arms by miners who use them as property, making them work in exchange for almost nothing: a bit of food, rum, a machete. [Artisanal gold miners] use them as beasts of burden, and they use the women to service them." The local indigenous people also complain that members of the FARC are traversing the border, setting up camp, stocking up on supplies, and even imposing their own laws on Indigenous lands. "The gold and the guerrillas are wreaking havoc," the governor of Amazonas, Liborio Guarulla, told reporters.

Several Tibetan organizations hailed a decision by Spain's Audiencia Nacional (National Court) to issue an arrest warrant against five Chinese leaders over genocide charges in **Tibet**. The leaders include former President Jiang Zemin and former Prime Minister Li Peng. This ground-breaking development follows last month's indictment of Hu Jintao for acts of genocide in Tibet. In a separate legal ruling, the Spanish National Court also ordered that former leader Hu Jintao is informed of his indictment and sent questions about his policies in Tibet via the Chinese embassy. Legal experts in Spain believe this could be as significant as the arrest of Pinochet in London in 1998 after a group of Spanish lawyers put together a lawsuit against the Chilean dictator.

Two Indigenous communities from northern Saskatchewan were finally dropped from the Nuclear Waste Management Organization's nuclear waste dump shortlist. After several years of grassroots resistance spearheaded by

the **Committee for Future Generations** and supported by other organizations, it was announced that both communities were to be henceforth considered 'unsuitable' for further study.

Vast areas of Botswana's **Central Kalahari Game Reserve** (CKGR) have been opened up to international companies for fracking, creating yet another dangerous point of conflict for Indigenous Peoples in region. The San or Bushmen said they had no idea their land had been earmarked for drilling until they were shown a map during the making of a new documentary film, *The High Cost Of Cheap Gas*, revealing that half the game reserve was allocated to multinationals.

U.S. Representative Dan Maffei (D-Syracuse) took many people by surprise when took the House floor and started talking about the long-standing controversy surrounding the name of the NFL sports team, The **Washington Redskins**. At the outset of his speech, Maffei acknowledged that he represents "Central New York, home of the Six Nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy." Then, after spending some time discussing the name of the team as "a deeply personal reminder of a legacy of racism and generations of pain", Maffei presented a replica of the Kaswentha, a founding legal document more commonly known as the Two Row wampum, commenting, "Wouldn't it be great if, in the 400th anniversary of this groundbreaking treaty, we could right the wrong [of history], and change this NFL team's name?"

Raglan Maori began asserting their rights over their customary fishing waters, as Texas-based oil company **Anadarko** began drilling off the west coast of New Zealand. According to a prominent Maori political rights campaigner, the Maori were never informed of Anadarko's ultra-deep sea oil drilling plans; the first drift of news came through an article in *the Waikato Times*. The project is an environmental disaster waiting to happen.

Arrests and injuries have continued in New Brunswick as anti-shale gas rallies have pressed on in opposition to **SWN Resources Canada**. Despite physical violence on part of the RCMP and legal attacks on part of SWN, the Mi'kmaq-led anti-fracking effort -- which highlights Canada's entrenched refusal to fulfill its firmly established obligation to consult First Nations in matters that could impact their rights -- shows no signs of backing down.

A group of **Maidu** succeeded in their ten-year effort to be named the official owner of **Humbug Valley**, a 2,325-acre area in Plumas County, California, that is the last remnant of their once vast homeland still in relatively pristine condition. "I thought this day would never come," said Lorena Gorbet, secretary of the Maidu Summit, a non-profit composed of representatives from nine Mountain Maidu groups. The Maidu will work now with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to develop a comprehensive land management plan that includes restoration of forest and meadow habitat.

Hundreds of people walked out of the latest round of UN climate talks, the **19th Conference of the Parties** (COP) in Warsaw, Poland, in protest against the developed countries' lack of action and after several warnings made by scientists that we are heading towards catastrophic climate change. "Polluters and corporations dominated this conference with their empty talk, so we walk away from it in protest. Polluters talk, we walk," said the chair of Friends of the Earth International (FOEI), Jagoda Munic.

On the other side of the globe, Indigenous leaders from across North

America came together for a climate summit of their own. Organized by the Bozeman, Mont.-based **American Indian Institute**, the three-day gathering drew about 65 people who spent their time talking about environmental woes and, among other matters, the need for a new direction in an increasingly unsustainable world.

Mapuche communities living around the town of Temuco mobilized against the construction of the new **Araucania airport** in central Chile. Erecting barricades, the Mapuche protesters said that the construction of the airport has led to the excavation of a cemetery the violation of sacred lands. The Chilean Government counters with the argument that the construction of the new airport is necessary because the existing airport is just too small.

Chief and council of the **Michikanibikok Inik** (Algonquins of Barriere Lake) sent a letter to the government of Quebec condemning ongoing logging activities on their traditional territory. The government has issued logging permits to three forestry corporations, however, in doing so, it failed to carry out any kind of prior consultation process. What's more, the government has gone out of its way to make sure that logging operations can continue unabated, going so far as to issue a permanent injunction that threatens Barriere Lake Algonquins with imprisonment if they try to physically block Resolute Forest Products activities. Regardless of the threat, "We will use all our means, limited as they are, to protect our territory and our cultural sites. If it again means the [Quebec Police's] strong arm tactics, so be it, and we are ready to once again face the consequences," the letter concludes.

Despite being found guilty for genocide and crimes against humanity -- a verdict hailed around the world as a striking blow against the impunity of elites in Guatemala -- former dictator **José Efraín Ríos Montt** appears likely to live out his days in the comfort of his home. The trial against Montt was originally scheduled to resume in April 2014, however it was again postponed; this time, until January 2015. Nevertheless, the survivors and their attorneys, who continue to weather threats and harassment, remain as determined as ever to ensure the former dictator is held accountable for his actions.

Indigenous Peoples of the Upper Siang district in Arunachal Pradesh, India, stepped forward to oppose 3 mega power projects that would submerge their land and threaten their existence. According to **India Times**, the Indigenous Peoples, joined under the banner of **Siang Indigenous Farmers' Forum** (SIFF), have threatened to launch an agitation if the state government fails to meet its demands, stating that no amount of compensation or mitigation measures could replace the ancestral land of the Indigenous Peoples of the area.

A second French auction house announced that it will be selling off sacred Hopi objects to the highest bidder, setting the stage for another court battle aimed at stopping the reprehensible sale of cultural patrimony. According to Survival International, who's attempting to stop the auction, the Auctioneers **EVE** wants to sell around 24 katsinam masks, the public display of which the Hopi find to be extremely offensive. "It's a matter of enormous regret that another auction house seems prepared to defy public opinion and the feelings of the Hopi, who are these objects' rightful owners," Survival International director Stephen Corry said in a statement.

A bittersweet victory, the **Musqueam** finally managed to bring a certain end to the months-long struggle to stop a condominium development atop the

ancient village of cusnaum. The Musqueam recently worked out a deal to buy and preserve the site, also known as Marpole Midden, in Vancouver, British Columbia. After 18 months of talks, community members announced plans to place permanent educational signage on the archaeological site, and likely commission several carved poles to honor the more than 4,000-year-old village.

In western Ontario, the **Oshkimaadiziig Unity Camp** entered its 19th month of occupying Awenda Provincial Park, an action that began, says camp spokesperson Kai Kai Kons, "as a result of the illegal surrenders of our inherent rights and traditional territories along with the policies and laws enforced upon our people where the Chippewa Tri Council and Canada are in breach of the 1764 Niagara Covenant Chain Belt." The group, part of a growing movement called ACTION — Anishinabek Confederacy To Invoke Our Nationhood, says that Awenda Provincial Park is situated on one of five traditional embassies known as Council Rock which is interwoven in the inter-tribal treaty between the Anishinabek and Haudenosaunee.

The Polisario Front, a Sahrawi liberation movement that's working for Western Sahara independence, spoke out against a partnership deal between the Moroccan company OCP and Canadian firm Agrium, asserting that the agreement is illegal and will help to prop up Morocco's control of the region. Under the arrangement, OCP will ship phosphate from Western Sahara's Bou Craa mine to Canada, at which point Agrium will purchase it. "The Sahrawi people emphatically do not consent to the development and export of their natural resources from the occupied part of their territory," said representatives. "We do not have the benefit of those resources, the revenues from which go to sustain the occupation."

Sacred Sites Protection & Rights of Indigenous Tribes (SSP&RIT) applauded a unanimous vote by the **Vallejo Unified School District Board of Education** (VCUSD) to remove/change the offensive Vallejo High School "Apache" Mascot. SSP&RIT had previously advised VCUSD that, "The use of Native Americans as symbols and mascots is incongruous with promoting respect for inclusiveness and diversity. Native mascots perpetuate the myth that Native America is purely historical and devoid of any contemporary relevance". SSP&RIT observed that it is a matter of civil rights, not simply "political correctness," an observation shared by The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights which found that the use of Native American images and nicknames in schools should be avoided.

Some 1,000 people representing 26 Bukar villages staged a peaceful demonstration to protest the encroachment of their sacred ancestral home of **Mount Sadong** in Sarawak, Malaysia. Shouting their battle-cry 'Hidup Bibukar' ('Long Live The Bukar People'), they carried placards and banners expressing their concern and worry, and called on relevant authorities to revoke a license issued to extract timber from the mountain.

A group of protesters from the **Secwepemc** Nation stood up to a Trans-Canada Highway expansion project near Kamloops, BC. According to the protesters, who held a ceremonial four-day "sacred fire" that the media was subsequently prohibited from viewing, the highway cuts through an historic village area that needs to be protected. The Ministry of Transportation, unphased by the protest, sent work crews elsewhere along the 7.5 kilometre-long work site; meanwhile, a regional director for the ministry assured people that the government understands the heritage and cultural significance of

the area, pointing to an agreement that was signed with the Neskoniith Band of the Secwepemc concerning remains found in 2009.

Australia's high court **confirmed Indigenous Peoples' inherent right to fish** for traditional purposes from waterways and oceans, stating unequivocally in its ruling that native title takes precedent over state fishery laws. The court case began in 2009, when a **Narrunga** father and son caught 24 undersized abalone at Cape Elizabeth on the Yorke Peninsula, becoming embroiled in a legal fight with South Australia's Labor government.

Reuters revealed that Thailand -- the supposed "land of a thousand smiles" -- is **secretly selling Rohingya refugees into human trafficking rings** under the guise of deportation. The story went on to be covered by the Globe and Mail, CNN, The Nation and many others. In turn, the UN called for a probe and a few Nation States added their 1.5627 cents, but that's basically where it ends. Few NGOs have commented on the shocking revelation; awareness campaigns aren't being organized, protests aren't being coordinated. The **Rohingya** are simply being ignored.

According to company documents obtained by **EarthFix**, three years ago, Pacific International Terminals drilled 37 boreholes at **Cherry Point** -- the proposed site of the controversial Gateway Pacific Terminal -- **before obtaining the environmental permits it needed** to carry out the work **and** before consulting with the Lummi and Nooksack Nations, who hold Cherry Point sacred. As a direct consequence, the company disturbed an archaeological site, a fact to which government regulators and tribal officials were unaware until a local resident saw the activity, and reported it. Pacific International Terminals, which further failed to follow procedures required by the Army Corps of Engineers under the National Historic Preservation Act, says it was an accident.

Peru's Ministry of the Environment **declared an environmental emergency** in the **Tigre River basin**, approving an immediate and short term action plan in response to the situation. According to the government, "the objective of declaring an environmental emergency is to ensure the sustainable management of the affected areas, undertaking appropriate remediation and recovery to mitigate environmental contamination". The environmental crisis in the Tigre, which has been repeatedly denounced FECONAT, severely affects the health and safety of Quechua communities in the region. The emergency declaration, covering a period of 90 days, will address problems in 10 communities in the zone.

Tsilhqot'in community members **appeared in Canada's Supreme Court** to assert their title to traditional lands in central British Columbia. The hearing comes more than 20 years after a lawsuit was filed against the government of British Columbia over commercial logging on lands the Tsilhqot'in claim as traditionally theirs. As the first of its kind to reach Canada's highest court, it is believed the case will determine the future of Indigenous land claims across the country.

A group of **Amazigh** rebels **blocked** one of Libya's largest gas and crude oil plants, issuing an ultimatum that "Oil tankers won't get crude from this port until Tripoli finally meets our demands." Organized in shifts of 30 men, the Amazigh are concerned about the committee in charge of writing the Libya's post-Gaddafi constitution. Most importantly, the Amazigh want their language to be co-official, and they want all Amazigh to be able to decide

on key issues concerning the country. One Amazigh rebel had this to say: "All this started as a move to get language recognition, but today we also want to tell all those interested in setting foot on Amazigh soil that they will have to take us into account from now on."

A Northern Territory Indigenous leader **called on Aboriginal communities** to reject bids by **Australia** to secure 99-year leases over parts of their land. Reverend Doctor Djinyini Gondarra issued a statement saying there is no evidence of general consultation with the communities concerned. "A lease that takes control of the land means we are giving away our law and our identity," the statement said. "We will have nothing to live for. We will become fringe dwellers. Our land can never simply be exchanged for monetary gain."

The **Diaguita** are taking **new legal action** against Goldcorp's El Morro copper and gold mine in northern Chile. According to **Reuters**, "the \$3.9 billion mine was given the green light again last month, after Chile's Supreme Court froze its environmental permit last year until the company fully consulted the local Diaguita community". The Diaguita, however, say that the consultation wasn't properly conducted. The Diaguita involved in the case are deeply concerned that the mine would be stationed on sacred lands and fear the mine could pollute a local river.

Colonialism Reparation (CR) issued a statement **in support of the request for reparations** for the genocide of Indigenous Peoples and slavery presented to the United Nations General Assembly by the members of **CARICOM**, an organization of 15 Caribbean nations and dependencies. Calling on 'former' colonizers (United Kingdom, France, The Netherlands, etc.) "To apologize and pay compensation for the colonial period", CR comments, "This decision will help create a climate of friendship and cooperation among peoples and set an extremely positive precedent in international relations, promoting the supremacy of the 'force of law' on the 'law of force'.

Grassy Narrows Chief and Council **rejected Ontario's plan** for another decade of clear-cut logging on Grassy Narrows Territory, stating that it will "further erode the Aboriginal, Treaty Rights and the ability of the community to sustain their families and to practice their culture through fishing, hunting, trapping, medicine harvesting, ceremony and healing for all generations." If approved, the plan would schedule to clear-cut much of what little mature forest remains on Grassy Narrows Territory after decades of large scale industrial logging.

The Penan's protest of the **Murum dam** entered its third month, **despite the early November arrest** of eight Penan, including a child about 13 years of age ,who were taken into police custody at the dam site. Two other Penan were arrested when they later attempted to visit their relatives at the police station. All ten were held for three days, before being released.

Bedouin, Palestinian and Israeli activists staged a 'Day of Rage' against the **Prawer Plan**, holding **rallies and protests throughout Israel and Palestine**, with international solidarity protests taking place in cities across the world. The central protest took place outside the Bedouin town of Hura in the Negev desert, where more than 1,000 Arab and Jewish protesters gathered to call on the government to abandon the Prawer Plan.

IN BRIEF

DECEMBER



PHOTO: CIMI ARCHIVE / RUY SPOSATI

WIYOT PEOPLES ANNOUNCE PLAN TO HOLD FIRST 'WORLD
RENEWAL CEREMONY' IN 150 YEARS; CARCROSS TAGISH FIRST
NATION BANS FRACKING ON TRADITIONAL TERRITORY; GUARANI
WARN THAT "DEMARICATION IS NOW WAR"

Following a decision by UNESCO to not include the sacred pilgrimage area known as **Wirikuta** on its List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding in 2013, the Wixárika urged the Mexican government to mobilize all levels of government, civil society organizations and the Wixárika themselves to develop a precise plan to safeguard the region against the threat of mining. As the Wixárika [explained in a statement](#), while the Committee recognized the foundational role that Wirikuta plays in Wixárika culture, “[it] decided not to approve the registration [...] because the government has not established that it included all of the Huichol communities in a process of FPIC. The Wirikuta Defense Front went on to conclude that UNESCO’s decision stands as “proof of the need to create a comprehensive solution that considers the rights of the Wixaritari and residents of the region in both the national and international contexts.”

Albert Gerow, who stunned his community earlier this year after calling in the RCMP to clear out a group of protesters who had occupied the Burns Lake Indian Band Council Office, officially announced his resignation as Chief. According to **Burns Lake District News**, [Gerow decided to leave his post](#) to accept a job with TransCanada Pipelines Limited.

The government of **Bolivia** implemented a [new law designed to instill harsh penalties](#) on any entity found to be endangering the livelihood and preservation of Bolivia’s Indigenous Peoples. Offenses cited in the law include ‘cultural genocide’, which carries a sentence of 15-20 years in prison; ‘cultural disruption’, which carries a sentence of 6-10 years; ‘financing of cultural disruption’, 8-12 years; and ‘environmental damage’, also 8-12 years. The new legal move also gives birth to a new government agency known as DISEPIO, translated to English as “The General Directorate of Indigenous Nations and Peoples at Risk of Extinction, in Voluntary Isolation or Without Contact”.

The Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA) declared its [support for the boycott of Israeli academic institutions](#). Standing up to the infringement of the academic freedom of Palestinian academics and intellectuals in the Occupied Territories “who are denied fundamental freedoms of movement, expression, and assembly, which we uphold”, NAISA comments, “As the elected council of an international community of Indigenous and allied non-Indigenous scholars, students, and public intellectuals who have studied and resisted the colonization and domination of Indigenous lands via settler state structures throughout the world, we strongly protest the illegal occupation of Palestinian lands and the legal structures of the Israeli state that systematically discriminate against Palestinians and other Indigenous Peoples.” NAISA’s declaration followed just days after the American Studies Association (ASA) overwhelmingly endorsed the boycott in a referendum.

The corporate elite in **Wallmapu** began strongly criticizing the government of Chile [for the failure of repressive policies](#) against the Mapuche Peoples’ movement. This is after three sabotage attacks against the Chilean occupation of Mapuche territory occurred in a week including the arson of a private get-away cottage in Lleu-Lleu; a corporate management house in Vilcun; and a logging encampment in Lumaco. The government’s reaction was to use surveillance technology, including the use of at least two spy planes to assure the “peace”. These spy planes are thought to be of Israeli origin, acquired recently by the Chilean government, the same drones Israel uses to repress the Palestinian People.

Seventeen traditional herders from the Urad Middle Banner of Inner **Mongolia** were expelled from Beijing and confined to their communities [for continuing to protest](#) against the occupation of their grazing lands by local officials, the military, and Han Chinese miners. All seventeen are now believed to be under “strict” surveillance. Nevertheless, one of the traditional herders, who has been jailed multiple times in recent years for organizing protests, told the Southern Mongolian Human Rights Information Center that the group would not let up on their protests. “We have been protesting for more than seven years in order to defend our grazing lands from the illegal occupations and expropriations by the Chinese, [...] We are still continuing our protests.”

A group of Maori film students headed to **Taiwan** as part of the [Tap Root Cultural Exchange Program](#), organized by Atayal-American filmmaker Tony Coolidge. During the exchange, the Maori students spent their time visiting various universities and indigenous cultural sites to learn more about the cultural similarities and differences between the Maori and the Indigenous Peoples of Taiwan. They will work together with people in Taiwan to develop indigenous media cooperation. A film project is now being developed that will explore an historical relationship between the Indigenous Peoples of Aotearoa and Taiwan.

Quebec’s Ministry of Natural Resources [agreed to respect a previously negotiated process](#) to harmonize forestry operations with Barriere Lake First Nation’s traditional activities. This agreement came after community members established a land protection camp to protest clear-cut logging on sensitive areas of their land. This recent decision provides time for the **Algonquins of Barriere Lake** to conduct field visits to proposed logging sites scheduled for the 2013-14 operating year and identify buffer zones around sites of cultural and ecological importance to the Algonquin Peoples.

About 150 Indigenous people have [returned to their reserve](#) after they were camped out with an army battalion in Humaitá, Amazonas, Brazil. The group, which mostly consisted of **Tenharim** women and children, approached the federal forces for protection after being threatened by local non-indigenous residents. Tensions in the region have been on the rise since the National Indigenous Foundation (Funai) office was burned to the ground. According to police, a cacique (leader) was also killed after being run over by a vehicle. The Indigenous Missionary Council is calling for an investigation into the death.

A controversial plan to bury nuclear waste a half mile from Lake Huron’s shoreline in Ontario is sparking [opposition from Indigenous Peoples and U.S. politicians alike](#). The Saugeen Ojibwe is one of several First Nations opposing the application of **Ontario Power Generation** for a license to store the nuclear waste. Saugeen Ojibwe Nation Chief Randall Kahgee told Indian Country Today, “We have a long list of fears, legitimate fears in our community about these facilities, interaction with our rights, our interests and our way of life,” adding, “Our people should not have to shoulder the burden for the industry forever. That is something that is not contemplated in our treaties.”

The mostly Muslim **Uyghurs** in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of China, which has seen a string of violent incidents in recent years, are supposed to be exempt from Beijing’s one-child policy aimed largely at the majority Han Chinese. However, four Uyghur women have been [forced by authorities to undergo abortions](#)—one of them nine months into her pregnancy. Rights group, Women’s Rights Without Frontiers, has said “In reality, they [the Uyghurs] are subject to strict population control,” “If they live in the

countryside, Uyghurs are allowed three children; in the city, they are allowed two," the group said. "Uyghurs who exceed this limit are subject to forced abortion, forced sterilization, and other coercive measures."

A group of **Wiyot Peoples** have planned to return to Indian Island in Humboldt Bay for the first 'world renewal ceremony' on the island in over 150 years. The last ceremony in 1860 was the scene of brutal massacre when a gang of white settlers sneaked through the darkness and murdered more than 50 women and children, and nearby settlers carried out two more massacres that night, killing an additional 90 people, most of them Wiyot. In addition, the Wiyot were forbidden from speaking their language and were stripped of tribal status in 1958. Seemingly a destroyed people, the Wiyot have slowly begun to recover. They regained tribal status in 1990 and have been working on cleaning up Indian Island for their return. "We need to complete the ceremony of 1860 for the ones who were lost," said Ted Hernandez, chairman of the 645-member tribe.

A disturbing "agricultural auction" was held in the Brazilian state of **Mato Grosso do Sul**, to finance what participants referred to as "resistance" to the activities of Indigenous Peoples occupying and reclaiming their ancestral lands. The auction -- which involved several mayors as well as state and federal representatives -- was temporarily suspended by a judge who argued that ranchers "intend to replace the State" in order to deal with ongoing conflict between the ruralist class and Indigenous Peoples, a goal that "collides with the constitutional rights to life, security, and physical integrity." The ruling was overturned in just three hours, after lobbyists managed to replace the judge with one more sympathetic to their cause. The auction went on to raise approx. \$425,000 US.

The long-standing blockade against the controversial Murum Dam came to an unfortunate end, with Sarawak Energy officials bribing and blackmailing the **Penan** to give up their protest. In an exclusive interview with **Radio Free Sarawak**, two Penan protesters admitted that they agreed to give up their roadside protest after Sarawak Energy officials promised them a handful of cash, once they relocated to a barely built resettlement area. A couple weeks prior to the miserable offer, the company threatened to destroy all the bridges leading to their now-former homes, which would have denied them the chance to collect their belongings before everything is submerged by water. Despite giving in, desperate and exhausted, the Penan say they are continuing their struggle now to get a fair settlement.

Elsewhere in **Sarawak**, Forty Penan families set up a blockade of their own to stop the **Shin Yang logging and oil palm plantation company** from trespassing on their ancestral lands. A recent victory in court saw the Penan from Long Jaik win against Shin Yang for converting their land into an oil palm plantation. The court recognized the Penan's rights over the land, a victory that the Penan saw as a major victory, nevertheless, they fear that the ruling will be ignored and business will continue as usual.

Caleen Sisk, Chief and Spiritual Leader of Winnemem Wintu Tribe, denounced the California Government's so-called Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP), calling it "a death sentence for salmon and a violation of indigenous rights." The BDCP proposes to construct three new intakes in the north Delta and two 35-mile long tunnels to carry water underground to existing pumping plants in an effort to restore regional ecosystem and secure water supply reliability. Sisk, however, says the proposed tunnels, with a conservatively

estimated price tag of \$54.1 billion, will undoubtedly kill the sensitive Delta, a delicate mix of salt and freshwater, that is vital to the life cycle of California salmon as well as other fish and species. What's more, according to Sisk, the Natural Resources Agency Deputy Director "disclosed that the peripheral tunnels are connected to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's plan to raise the Shasta Dam by 18.5 feet. The dam raise would destroy or submerge nearly 40 Winnemem sacred sites and obliterate potential salmon spawning areas.

Ten Mundurukú chiefs and thirty warriors made the trek to the capital of **Brazil** to demand the demarcation of their territory and the right to prior consultation in order to block the **Tapajós hydroelectric dam**, which could flood several of their villages. "No one from the government has come to talk to us," Juarez Saw, the 45-year-old chief of Sawre Muybu, one of the affected Mundurukú villages, told **IPS News** by phone. "For us, the land is our mother. It is where we live and raise our kids and grandkids. We have nowhere to go if the government forces us off."

The Hawaii state Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) will soon issue its decision on the renewal of a long-term lease of **Mauna Kea** to the University of Hawaii, an important pre-condition to the construction of the controversial Thirty-Meter Telescope. A number of organizations, Hawaiian cultural practitioners, environmentalists and scientists oppose the telescope. They are concerned that the construction and activities around the telescopes already on the sacred summit have contributed, as a previous environmental review concluded, to "substantial, adverse and significant" impacts to the biological and cultural resources of the mountain's summit areas. The University of Hawaii, the applicant for the long-term lease, counter argued that because bad impacts have already occurred, there is no point in worrying about future impacts of a much-larger telescope.

The General Council of **Carcross Tagish First Nation** ratified a motion passed by its Executive Council banning fracking within its Traditional Territory, which includes 4000 square miles of un-surrendered land in Northern B.C. "It's our responsibility to protect our lands and water for future generations," said George Shepherd, member of the Executive Council, who moved the motion. "Not only is fracking a completely ineffective way to extract resources, it would cause a great deal of harm to the land we take such great pride in."

An Indigenous man from Messi village put up a "gorgor" at Nautilus Minerals' proposed **Solwara 1** experimental seabed mining project site in Papua New Guinea's New Ireland province. Essentially a traditional "no trespassing" sign, the "gorgor" forbids the company from sending any ships into the protected area. Under traditional law, if Nautilus now enters the area, the Indigenous Peoples have the right to destroy the vessels. Elders and villagers from adjoining villages have since cautioned the National Government to address the situation.

Despite the best efforts of Survival International and the Hopi People -- and the US embassy -- the Paris auctioneer house **EVE** proceeded with its sale of 24 Hopi masks and 3 Apache masks that were taken illegally from a reservation during the early 20th Century. An attorney representing the tribes attempted to withdraw the items from the auction, however the judge dismissed the appeal, ruling that the sacred objects were nothing more than merchandise. Fortunately, on the day of the auction, the US-based **Annenberg Foundation** stepped in, anonymously purchasing 24 of the 27 masks in order to return them to the Hopi and the San Carlos Apache. "These

are not trophies to have on one's mantel," commented Gregory Annenberg Weingarten, director of the charity. "They do not belong in auction houses or private collections."

The area south of Edmonton near Wetaskiwin has traditionally been called Maskwacis, which translated means Bear Hills. In 1891, however, the then-president of the Canadian Pacific Railway, Sir William Cornelius Van Horne, named a flag station in the area **Hobbema**, after a Dutch landscape painter he admired. Now, the Cree community will be officially **changing its name** back to Maskwacis. Samson Cree Nation welcomed the name change in a news release, saying it "signifies respect for our Cree way of life, our language and our authority over the traditional territories we have historically occupied."

An **unprecedented series of statewide demonstrations** were held in **Sarawak** to draw attention to the human rights violations against Indigenous Peoples in the Malaysian state. "Throughout the years, the natives NCR lands have been unjustly grabbed or destroyed via various development projects such as logging, oil palm and tree plantation estates, mega-dam construction, quarrying and construction of large polluting industries," commented Mark Bujang, press liaison officer for Gerakan Rakyat Seluruh Sarawak (Grass) which organized the event. Pointing out a key detail, he added that the government restricts Native Customary Rights (NCR) to Temuda (cleared cultivated land), even though the courts have stated NCR also extends to pulau galau (reserved forest areas) and pemakai menoa (communal territory). "The Sarawak state government continues to reject the court decision," he told reporters.

In Jambi Province, Sumatra, a total of 1,500 men **looted and demolished** at least 296 huts in four **Suku Anak Dalam** villages. According to media reports, the brutal eviction came in response to rising global demands for palm oil. Basron, a 41-year-old resident of Pinang Tingii settlement said "I heard men rattling my door". He then found himself confronted by an armed troop of soldiers, police officers, staff of the PT Asiatic Persada Palm Oil Company and hired thugs. "These houses are all slated for eviction and demolition today," one of the men said. Later, Basron watched as a bulldozer reduced his hut to splinters.

The Guarani of Yvy Katu and the Aty Guasu Council of the Kaiowá issued a **powerful statement** dismissing a Brazilian court's decision to suspend the repossession of 14 farms on the Guarani community's territory. The statement reads in part, "This changes nothing for us Guarani. For us these 14 farms do not exist. All this land is part of the same tekoha, a territory called **tekoha Yvy Katu** [...] We are ready to die. Demarcation is now war [...] Our prayer is hot like the sun. Our prayer comes from nature, and the ancestor of the dream. In dreams, we have seen the land fight against whites, the tree fight against whites [...] We Yvy Katu community and Council Guasu Aty, we demand that the Justice suspend all repossessions and the federal government finalize the demarcation of all our traditional land. Meanwhile, we will keep fighting, and bathing the earth with blood, if necessary."

A public referendum that was held in the municipality of Mataquescuintla, Guatemala, saw 96 per cent of the 10,375 inhabitants voting against Tahoe Resource's proposed **San Rafael Mine**. The Chamber of Industry and the Extractive Mining Trade Association attempted to prove that the local government had no right to seek approval from the community; however, the High

Court of Guatemala determined that **local governments do have the right to consult communities**, basing its decision on ILO Convention 169. Regarding this historic decision, Rafael Maldonado, lawyer of the Centro de Acción Legal Ambiental y Social -- CALAS (Center for Environmental and Social Legal Action) said that other communities confronted by similar projects may now call for their voices to be heard under law.

The refusal of the Federal Government of Nigeria to implement the recommendations set out in the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) report on **Ogoniland** has caused the Ogoni to initiate **peaceful and non-violent direct mass actions**. On December 10, International Human Rights Day, the Ogoni held a massive protest at Akpajo junction on east-west road, blocking all routes to major oil facilities in the area. This demonstration marked the beginning of the mass actions which aim to influence change on the part of government.

The **Kituwah Mound** property was **designated as a "sacred site"** by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Tribal Council. The Tribal Council bought the 309-acre site in 1996 from a family that farmed the land for 176 years. During an examination of the land after its purchase, the Cherokee found fifteen burial sites; however, it is thought that there could be as many as 100 more on the land. Discussing the importance of the Kituwah Mound, United Kettoowah Band Chief, George Wickliffe said "Keetowah Cherokee religion and our origin as a people are centered on the town site of Kituwah. All Cherokees originated from the Mother Town of Kituwah."

The Lubicon First Nation's obstruction of an access road into a prospective drilling site in Northern Alberta was taken down after a Calgary court injunction ordered its removal. The **Lubicon First Nation** had been blocking the road in **an effort to stop the company from fracking on territory** they consider sacred. Lubicon leadership has been meeting to decide what to do next.

After suffering from the activities of mining companies in their territory, the **Aeta**, an Indigenous People from the Luzon region of the Philippines, are **turning to the courts for support**. To date, mining activities have caused considerable damage to the land, food and water of the Aeta, disrupting local ecosystems, destroying forest, and threatening to change the Aeta traditional way of life permanently. They are now hoping to utilize the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of the Philippines, to take back the land that has been illegitimately taken from them.

The **Kuna** in Colombia **observed two armed helicopters** flying over their lands and opening fire in close proximity to fifteen of their traditional homes. A statement from the Kuna said that they were aware of police forces carrying out military operations in pursuit of armed groups in the Urabá region, but demanded compliance with International Humanitarian and Human Rights law. Notifying the people of Colombia and the international community of their commitment to peace and of the care of the earth, the Kuna said they are at risk of physical and cultural extermination exacerbated by actions like this.

An **Ontario appeals court** ruled that Indigenous and farmer communities in Ecuador have the right to pursue enforcement of a \$9.5 billion Ecuadorian court judgment against Chevron's assets in Canada. Humberto Piaguaje, a Secoya indigenous leader and director of the Assembly of Affected Communities, said: "This decision is momentous. It proves **Chevron cannot hide**

behind legal technicalities to avoid justice.” In anticipation of similar rulings in Colombia and Venezuela, Chevron has hired major law firms in those countries.

The Bushmen of Botswana held a press conference in Gaborone, the country’s capital, in order to [demand an end to government persecution](#) of the tribe. The Indigenous Peoples, who live in area now covered by the **Central Kalahari Game Reserve** (CKGR) have been forced from their homes in three waves of evictions from 1997 to 2005. Now, despite court rulings that the forced removal of Bushmen is unlawful, government authorities have continued to harass the Bushmen nationwide. Bushmen told Survival International, ‘Preventing our children from living freely with their parents inside the CKGR is against our human rights. We’re asking the government to meet with us face to face to finally discuss these issues that we cannot abide by anymore.’

Paraguay’s Environment Ministry (SEAM) violated national and international law by issuing an environmental license to ranching company **Yaguarete Pora S.A.** to [bulldoze a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve](#), which is also the last refuge of Ayoreo Peoples who live in voluntary isolation. Members of the tribe that have come out of the forest, now considered “contacted”, have been working determinedly to gain legal title to the land inhabited by their “un-contacted” relatives. The Ayoreo have said, “If the bulldozers start to make a lot of noise, our un-contacted relatives will be forced to hide where there isn’t any food and they will suffer. We want to continue using the forest, and for the ranchers to stop harassing our relatives who remain there”.

The Ontario government approved plans for another decade of clearcut logging in **Grassy Narrows** Territory [against the will of the Indigenous community](#). The Anishinaabek community -- otherwise known as Asubpeeschoseewagong First Nation -- has long maintained that it depends on the forest for their culture and livelihoods through fishing, hunting, trapping, medicine harvesting, ceremony and healing for all generations. Despite this, however, the government has continuously allowed companies to raid the territory within the bounds of the Whiskey Jack Forest. Grassy Narrows Chief Joseph Fobister commented, “My heart sinks because I know that clearcut logging has devastating consequences for our people. We cannot allow this.” Grassy Narrows is the site of the longest running indigenous logging blockade in Canadian history, recently celebrating its 11th anniversary.



“IN A MEDIA LANDSCAPE MADE UP OF LIES, FLASH, GIANT BLIND SPOTS AND CORPORATIZED SITES OF DISTRACTION, INTERCONTINENTAL CRY IS A TRUSTWORTHY PATHWAY TO THE TRUTH WHERE PEOPLE WHO ARE COMMITTED TO UNDERSTANDING INDIGENOUS REALITIES CAN GAIN INSIGHT AND INFORMATION TO ILLUMINATE AND ACTIVATE THEIR STRUGGLES.”

TAIAIAKE ALFRED

It has been said that media often plays a decisive role in the success or failure of any movement. In the case of Indigenous Peoples, that often spells the difference between life and death.

Not only does the absence of media help to maintain a climate of impunity for those would cause harm or seek to destroy Indigenous Peoples, it offers a platform of consent that perpetrators can use to justify or even accelerate their outrageous acts.

IC Magazine exists for this very reason; because the struggles of Indigenous Peoples are so often ignored by mainstream and alternative media. Without the dedicated mission of IC working to amplify the voices and strengthen the efforts of all Indigenous Peoples around the world,

with a careful and conscious effort to represent them honestly and respectfully, we have few alternatives.

News outlets and international forums for solidarity must emerge to occupy this space in coverage where there has historically been a vacuum; IC Magazine is poised on the leading edge of fulfilling this role.

As the collective pulse of the movement grows stronger, so will our efforts to remain a dependable source of authentic and independent media in service of the collective interests of Indigenous Peoples and Nations across the globe.

JOIN US: WWW.ICMAGAZINE.ORG

