Declaration of the Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon in Response to the Outcomes of COP30

Belém do Pará, Brazil – November 22, 2025

For more than two years, we, representatives of the Indigenous Peoples from the nine countries of the Amazon Basin, have been preparing for our participation in COP30 through our organizations: OPIAC, COIAB, OIS, FOAG, APA, ORPIA, CONFENIAE, AIDESEP, and CIDOB, all of which are affiliated with COICA.

This COP, the Amazonia COP, represented a historic opportunity for the rights, priorities, and solution proposals of Indigenous Peoples to be reflected in binding and ambitious decisions. Yet COP30 ends without the governments of the world, who repeatedly insist that this is a Party-driven process,[1] showing neither ambition nor genuine interest in answering the urgent call to action.

We leave Belém do Pará, the gateway to the Amazon, to continue our struggle for the survival of all who inhabit and depend on this biome for life and continuity. We present our assessment of COP30 and the essential elements that remain pending.

1. Recognition and Protection of All Indigenous Territories, Especially Territories of Indigenous Peoples in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact (PIACI), as Climate Policy and Climate Action

We celebrate the homologation of four Indigenous Territories in Brazil and the inclusion of an initial reference to territorial rights in the Global Mutirão text. However, these political signals are insufficient and fall far short of guaranteeing legal security and effective protection of our territories. We also regret that references to the protection of our rights were not included in the operative parts of the texts. This omission does not acknowledge our fundamental role in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

[1] United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

We welcome that the Sharm el-Sheikh Mitigation Ambition and Implementation Work Programme includes the importance of recognizing Indigenous rights over our lands and territories.[2] Yet recognition is not protection, and such recognition remains insufficient. Effective protection of territories—especially those inhabited by Indigenous Peoples in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact (PIACI)—must be an obligation and a core climate policy. We also stress that Indigenous rights are specific, and any attempt to dilute or ignore their distinct nature and our differentiated needs must be firmly rejected.

We reiterate that there can be no effective climate action without legal security, without territories free of threats, and without guarantees of protection and respect for the principle of non-contact for PIACI.

2. Direct, Flexible, and Culturally Appropriate Access to Climate Funding

We welcome that the Tropical Forests Forever Facility (TFFF) recognizes the need to operationalize direct access to finance for Indigenous Peoples and establishes a minimum allocation of 20% for Indigenous Peoples. However, this percentage remains disproportionately small given the central role we play in protecting forests. It is also necessary to establish robust social and environmental safeguards across all investments at the territorial implementation level, with specific protections for Indigenous Peoples' rights and the integration of Indigenous knowledge systems.

Regarding the Green Climate Fund (GCF), although the final decision was not as strong as our proposal, we welcome that it promotes direct access, including for Indigenous Peoples. While insufficient, this represents an important step. We expect the GCF Board to swiftly implement this decision, with the full and effective participation of Indigenous organizations, by operationalizing a specific, flexible, and culturally appropriate window or arrangement that allows Indigenous Peoples, our organizations, and our own financial mechanisms to receive funds directly.

Finally, we emphasize that financing for Indigenous Peoples must not be limited solely to our contribution to mitigation. We must be recognized as partners and actors in adaptation, and as populations affected by loss and damage. These funds must also develop and operationalize direct, flexible, and culturally appropriate access mechanisms to strengthen our self-governance systems and support the implementation of our strategies and actions, in the full exercise of our rights.

[2] 13.b. The vital role of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and the need to support them in the sustainable management and use of forests, as well as the importance of recognizing their land rights and traditional knowledge, including as a part of long-term mitigation policies.

3. Indigenous territories –especially PIACI Territories– free from extractivism, including oil, mining, monocultures, and other intensive or extensive activities

We recognize, as a historic advance, the explicit inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact in paragraph 12.i of the Just Transition Work Programme.[3] This recognition must be a starting point, not the ceiling of ambition. More than 180 PIACI live in the Amazon, and the COP30 decision marks a key step in acknowledging and protecting them.

However, we deeply regret that COP30 failed to establish Exclusion Zones free of oil, gas, mining, and monocultures, especially in PIACI territories. The expansion of these industries remains the greatest threat to our lives, our cultures, and global climate stability. The Amazon must be declared a zone free from all destructive extractivism as a minimum condition to prevent the biome from reaching its point of no return.

We welcome the initiatives announced, including the Belém Declaration on the Transition Away from Fossil Fuels proposed by Colombia and the call for a conference in Santa Marta in 2026, as well as Brazil's intention to lead a roadmap for a just energy transition and a fossil fuel phase-out. We call on both countries to ensure the full and effective participation and representation of Indigenous Peoples in these processes and to include specific measures to guarantee respect for Indigenous rights, including self-determination and free, prior, and informed consent, as well as safeguards for the survival of PIACI.

At the same time, we express deep concern about the complete removal of references to the social, environmental, and human rights risks associated with mining and transition minerals in the Just Transition Work Programme. This is a serious setback, particularly as these activities—carried out in the name of the energy transition—are already causing severe impacts in Indigenous territories. This omission disregards the findings of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the report of the UN Secretary-General's Panel on Critical Minerals for the Energy Transition.

Finally, we welcome Colombia's Declaration to establish the Amazon as a zone free of large-scale mining and hydrocarbons. Indigenous territories are the best-protected, conserved, and biodiverse

[3] 12.i. The importance of the rights of Indigenous Peoples and of obtaining their free, prior and informed consent in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the importance of ensuring that all just transition pathways respect and promote the internationally recognized collective and individual rights of Indigenous Peoples, including the rights to self-determination, and acknowledge the rights and protections for Indigenous Peoples in voluntary isolation and initial contact, in accordance with relevant international human rights instruments and principles;

areas. They must be shielded from all forms of extractivism, and we demand that the entire Amazon be declared an exclusion zone.

4. Full and Effective Participation and Representation

We acknowledge the logistical efforts of our organizations that made an unprecedented Indigenous presence at COP30 possible, with thousands of representatives arriving from across the Amazon. We welcome the support of Brazil's Ministry of Indigenous Peoples in receiving us, as well as the governments that included Indigenous representatives in their delegations, such as Colombia, Brazil, Panama, and others. However, we reaffirm that presence is not full and effective participation. As rights-holders and key actors in climate action, we require timely access to information, direct participation in negotiation spaces, recognition of our own governance structures, and the widespread inclusion of Indigenous negotiators in official delegations.

We regret that the COP30 Presidency did not guarantee substantive and continuous dialogue with our organizations, nor did it act as a strong advocate for our priorities and proposals, which were presented throughout all preparatory meetings.

5. Inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge Systems

We welcome references to Indigenous knowledge systems in various texts, including the Global Mutirão, the Just Transition Work Programme, and others. However, we emphasize that a lack of understanding persists between Indigenous knowledge systems and traditional knowledge—distinct concepts with distinct implications, including legal ones.

Indigenous knowledge systems encompass our relationship with land, territory, and water, our governance and spirituality, and all that sustains conservation and resilience. These systems must be recognized in their entirety, not fragmented or reduced to a technical component of adaptation.

6. Protection of Indigenous Human Rights Defenders

We welcome Brazil's proposal for a National Protection Plan for Human Rights Defenders, presented at COP30, directed at protecting defenders of human rights. Defending territories and defending life is a right, not a crime. Indigenous defenders require differentiated protection. This initial step must be followed by clear operational mechanisms guaranteeing the prevention of violence and criminalization of Indigenous defenders, their immediate protection, investigation,

and sanction of attackers, and direct support to Indigenous organizations leading this work in high-risk contexts.

The Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon Basin were present. Inside and outside the Blue Zone, we presented and shared actionable proposals to achieve the commitments that Parties and other actors so frequently cite, but for which there is still no real commitment to implementation. We know that we are the answer, and we demand coherence: climate action must recognize our role as essential actors in combating climate change and acknowledge that a living Amazon is a condition for planetary climate stability.

We leave Belém do Pará with strengthened unity among the Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon Basin, and we will continue this collective work beyond COP30. Our proposals and demands are clear and actionable, and we will bring them to every decision-making space.

The answer is us!