Political Statement by the Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon at the Close of COP31: Antalya Failed Indigenous Peoples and the Climate

COP31 ended without naming the primary cause of climate change: fossil fuels, without guarantees for the Indigenous Peoples who protect the Amazon, and with agreements that fall far short of what the crisis demands. Looking ahead to COP32, the Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon are committed to an alliance with the Global South.

Antalya, Türkiye – November 22, 2026. The 31st Conference of the Parties (COP31) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) ended without a comprehensive political agreement. After two weeks of negotiations and extraordinary sessions, governments failed to reach a decision commensurate with a crisis that is already affecting the lives of millions of people. Once again, economic and geopolitical interests took precedence over the responsibility to protect life and the planet.

We, the Indigenous Peoples of the Peruvian, Brazilian, Colombian, and Ecuadorian Amazon, participated in COP31 as rights holders and active participants in the negotiations. **We leave Antalya with one certainty: this COP falls short of what was achieved in Belém.**

Without Indigenous Peoples' rights, there is no climate action

The rights of Indigenous Peoples are recognized in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in the International Labor Organization Convention No. 169, and in the preamble to the Paris Agreement. Reaffirming them in climate decisions does not create new obligations: it reflects those that States have already assumed.

In every negotiating room where we were present, some Parties attempted to remove references to human rights by labeling them "prescriptive." We demand that the Parties not weaken the language on rights that has already been agreed upon.

The Amazon covers 847 million hectares and is vital for the stability of the planet's climate. Our full and effective participation is not a concession; it is a prerequisite for any climate action. Likewise, the recognition and protection of our rights is a necessary condition for climate action.

The transition will not be just if it comes at the expense of Indigenous Territories

The oil economy brought us to this crisis, and our territories have paid the price. In the Amazon, 31 million hectares overlap with oil and gas blocks. These projects were imposed without our Free, Prior, and Informed Consent. The transition cannot repeat that history. Fifty-four percent

of mining projects for the energy transition are located in or near Indigenous Territories. In the Amazon, 9.8 million hectares overlap with mining concessions. Decarbonization cannot mean sacrificing our territories or imposing technologies that violate our rights.

> *"Oil has left us with hundreds of spills, polluted rivers, and sick communities. That is the true face of the climate crisis. Yet our governments are pushing for new oil bidding rounds, such as the Southeast Round, just when it is most urgent to leave oil behind. For a COP to end without even mentioning fossil fuels is a disappointment." —* ***Efren Nango, President of CONFENIAE.***

In Belém, we secured paragraph 12(i) of the Just Transition Work Program, which recognizes our right to self-determination and to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent. It was also agreed to create a just transition mechanism, and we arrived in Antalya calling for our own seat at the table in its governance.

We regret that the mechanism left Antalya without operational functions or defined governance, and that its design has been postponed until 2027. We urge the Parties to endow the mechanism with real functions and resources, to guarantee a dedicated space for Indigenous Peoples within its governance, and to fully respect our rights in relation to any transition project.

Legal security for Indigenous Territories is an effective mitigation measure

Indigenous Peoples physically occupy 404 million hectares in Latin America. That is one-fifth of the region's total land area. Of the 404 million hectares, 237 million (nearly 60%) are in the Amazon basin: an area larger than that of Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Norway, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland combined. Between 2001 and 2021, Indigenous Territories in the Amazon absorbed a net total of 340 million metric tons of CO_2 per year.

That is why **ensuring the legal security of our territories is an effective mitigation policy, and we demand that the Work Program for Implementation and Mitigation Ambitions in Sharm el-Sheikh recognize it as such**. However, the first drafts of this program did not even mention Indigenous Peoples. Through our advocacy, and by calling for a reference to paragraph 12(i) of Decision 2/CMA.7 (Work Program on Just Transition), we succeeded in having our role recognized, albeit in general terms.

The Sharm el-Sheikh Work Program on Implementation and Mitigation Ambitions also highlighted the possibility of opening dialogues on transitioning away from fossil fuels, the energy transition, and the use of forests and lands. But COP31 ended without an agreement on this issue, mainly because some countries refused to discuss fossil fuels. The door was closed precisely where the root cause of the problem is being discussed. We regret this outcome and

demand the continuation of this Work Program, with the inclusion of the issues of transitioning away from fossil fuels, the energy transition, and the use of forests and lands, including, the legal security for our territories.

> *"Where there are recognized Indigenous territories, the Amazon remains alive: intact forests, clean rivers, and biodiversity. Guaranteeing our rights to land, territory, and resources is the most effective mitigation policy governments have."* — **Carlos Gaitán, Coordinator of Territory, Environment, and Climate Change at OPIAC**

Climate finance must reach those who are implementing effective mitigation and adaptation measures

Indigenous Peoples are halting deforestation and adapting to the crisis with very few resources. In 2023 and 2024, out of approximately $2.43 billion in international funding to conserve the Amazon, Indigenous organizations received just 0.7%; the rest went primarily through governments and other intermediaries. Throughout the past decade, direct funding to our organizations has remained close to zero.

When we arrived at COP31, we were encouraged to see that some drafts mentioned direct access and participation in decision-making, particularly regarding the Green Climate Fund, the Global Environment Facility, the Loss and Damage Fund, and related climate finance documents. However, in the latest versions, that language was watered down, and no decision was reached regarding the Global Environment Facility. Furthermore, the decision to triple funding for adaptation was deferred to the next COP.

Even so, nothing prevents these funds from taking the necessary steps to improve our direct access and participation. We recognize the role of the implementing agencies that currently channel these resources. **But for implementation to deliver results, funding must reach the territories, where climate action takes place, through direct access that recognizes our priorities.**

> *"With the Podáali Fund, we demonstrate that Indigenous Peoples manage resources transparently and that the money reaches where it is needed. We, the Indigenous Peoples, already manage resources in the most effective way; we need direct access to those resources."* — ***Inara Waty Sateré-Mawé, Deputy Coordinator of COIAB***

Adaptation goals cannot be measured without Indigenous Peoples

In 2023 and 2024, the Amazon experienced two consecutive extreme droughts. The Negro River reached its lowest level in 122 years, and entire communities were cut off, left without water or fish. The Amazon went from four major droughts in a century to four in less than 25 years.

In response, our peoples are adapting through their governance and knowledge systems. But when governments define how to measure whether the world is adapting, they barely acknowledge us: of the 59 indicators approved in Belém, only two groups mention Indigenous Peoples.

In Antalya, we secured a seat on the new Adaptation Task Force, which will evaluate the methodology and data for these indicators, as well as in the upcoming dialogues. However, there is no requirement to disaggregate the indicators or to collect specific data on Indigenous Peoples. Without that data, our reality will remain invisible; without funding to adapt, the promises will remain on paper.

> *"In the Peruvian Amazon, we are already experiencing the impacts of the climate crisis: our forests are being ravaged by fires, our rivers are drying up, and droughts are becoming increasingly prolonged, while our leaders face threats or are criminalized. In Antalya, we have made significant progress toward climate change adaptation: the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in the Task Force. We now hope that this forum will recognize that it is not possible to develop effective responses to climate change without our governance and knowledge systems. Indigenous Peoples are not merely affected by the climate crisis; we are key actors in developing solutions, and therefore these solutions must include recognition, support, and, above all, direct access to funding." — **Miguel Guimaraes, Vice President of AIDESEP***

Overall Assessment: Few agreements and little political will

Antalya failed for a political reason: governments could not agree on how to address the structural causes of the crisis. The latest drafts of the Cover Decision removed all mention of fossil fuels, promoted false solutions such as carbon capture, and did not include safeguards for human rights nor the rights of Indigenous Peoples, nor clear commitments to financing. We welcome the fact that this text was not adopted: it would have set a dangerous precedent: talking about climate without discussing oil, and solutions without discussing rights. No text is better than one that legitimizes inaction.

Belém made progress in recognizing our rights; Antalya failed to put them into practice. It is time to deliver. Every government must incorporate paragraph 12 of the Just Transition Work Program, especially subparagraphs (d), (h), (i), and (j), into their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and long-term strategies (LT-LEDS). Likewise, climate finance must reach those on the front lines of defense.

Meanwhile, our territories continue to face oil expansion, mining, deforestation, and illegal economies. With our knowledge and our own governments, we are the last line of defense against global warming. **It is time for the world to recognize our climate leadership and join our struggles. The planet cannot be saved by ignoring those who have always protected it.**

From Belém to Addis Ababa: The answers to the climate crisis will come from the Global South

Latin America and Africa share the tropical forests that sustain the planet's climate, and they also share a history: territories turned into sacrifice zones and peoples suffering a crisis they did not cause.

We leave Antalya with a question: **How long will the rhetoric continue, and when will action follow?** Recognizing our rights on paper is not enough if they do not translate into decisions, budgets, and actions. We will not accept a transition without an end to fossil fuels, conservation without legal security for our territories, or financial commitments without direct access for our organizations.

We will arrive at COP32 with the hope that the answers will come from the Global South, building bridges with the Indigenous Peoples of Africa. We believe in a form of multilateralism that responds to those of us on the front lines, and together we will demand that developed countries reduce their emissions, fulfill their promised financing, and respect our rights.

Signed by:
Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Rainforest (AIDESEP)
Coordination of Indigenous Organizations of the Brazilian Amazon (COIAB)
National Organization of Indigenous Peoples of the Colombian Amazon (OPIAC)
Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENIAE)