



CENTRO SHUAR WARINTS-YAWI-ASOCIACION NUNKUI FICSH
Acuerdo Ministerial N° 0089 Creado el 6 de abril de 1964
IRUNTRARIK KAKARMAITJI... "SOLO UNIDOS SOMOS FUERTES"

OPEN LETTER

To the citizens of Ecuador and the world.

In a Press Conference organized by the Shuar Arutam People's Association to report the alleged manipulation of Solaris Resources Inc. over the Shuar Centres Warints and Yawi, we denounce the following:

In the last few months, the Non Governmental Organizations, Amazon Watch and Mining Watch, American and Canadian respectively, governed by an antimining agenda with local operations, have led an aggressive harassment and bullying campaign targeting our communities, Warints and Yawi, and it is they who are directly responsible for the attempts to cause disunity amongst the Ecuadorian Shuar Peoples by motivating conflict and division.

The most recent action by these organizations involved a Press Conference, held on Wednesday September 30 that aimed to construct a "case of manipulation and violation of the rights of communities", subsequently delegitimizing our collective decision-making capacity and right to self determination.

We ask ourselves, if we are the alleged "victims of manipulation and rights violations", why were we not summoned to this press conference? Why weren't we allowed to speak and why don't they want to listen to us?

We, the leaders of the Shuar Centres of Warints and Yawi, raise our voices to say the following: we do not require any support from Non Governmental Organizations to carry out intercultural dialogues, participation processes, construction of community agendas and decision-making agreed with our people, in this case regarding topics such as the advancement of exploration activities and studies on our lands. We are fully empowered communities.

The vision of these NGO's is simplistic, comfortable and city-focussed because they – who claim to be "defending our livelihood and environment" – have not taken the effort to get to know us, listen to us, understand us and publish our version of the story. Representatives of Amazon Watch and Mining Watch, know that here, in the depths of the Ecuadorian jungle, exist two Shuar centres that stand firm and shout to the world that we do have a voice, we are not being manipulated and we are capable of understanding and discernment to make decisions about our present and future.

The damage caused that you refer to is not the responsibility of any mining company; rather, the damage has been caused by you, in your attempt to "come to our rescue" in a supposed fight for the rights of our people. If you understood and truly cared about our reality, you would know that the decisions we have made- in both Shuar centres- are supported by a general assembly where all of our community members are present: we will never turn our back on them, we always stand face to face, and always listen to each other.

The agenda and work carried out by these American and Canadian NGOs is funded by vast economic, public relations and social media network capacity, both domestically and internationally, aimed to cause deep division amongst our communities due to provoked criticism, speculation, and fake news, in an attempt to impose their version of the truth on public opinion, through the media and other actors employed to legitimize their narrative.



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We want citizens to know that it has been our free and voluntary decision to defend our right to know what exists in the subsoil of our lands and make an informed decision in the future. That is why we are part of the research and studies carried out by Solaris.

The process of reconciliation and dialogue in Warints and Yawi, has been based on the principles of legitimacy and representation, as well as respect for what is established in the Constitution of Ecuador, in so far as our ability to preserve and develop our own ways of coexistence, social organization and exercise of authority, all of which is on our legally recognized lands and ancestral communal territories.

We have the opportunity to learn, listen and engage in dialogue to share our story, not have our story manipulated and told for us by you. Our story is the capacity to engage in dialogue and decide about the present and future of our communities, setting a precedent so that no other Non Governmental Organization can use our reality and existence to provoke division and pain within our organization. Dialogue is now an inalienable part of the fabric that makes up the two Shuar Centres.

The communities of Warints y Yawi are resisting these attacks and incidents of harassment perpetrated by NGOs but we are faced with organizations that have significant amounts of power and financial resources. For this reason, we need our voices to be heard and the organizations to know that the campaign, "Shuar Arutam has decided- No to mining on our territories", has not been agreed by consensus between all Shuar Centres and therefore does not involve us.

The presence of the NGOs has caused serious internal conflict within PSHA due to the use of persuasion tactics, public relations, and divisive use of media to fabricate an alleged story of manipulation of the communities by a mining company. The NGOs have established direct relations with the leadership of the Shuar Arutam People's Organization to upset them about our alleged decision to ignore their authority and legitimacy. It is important to mention that on July 23 2019, a community general assembly for the Shuar Centres of Warints and Yawi was carried out to which Jaime Vargas, President of CONAIE, Marlon Vargas, President of CONFENIAE, Rubén Pidru, FICSH representative and PSHA's Josefina Tunki, were all present. Here, both our communities asked the four organizations to learn about and be observers to the development of the Strategic Alliance we were forming at the time. Their response, in return, was total abandonment as they turned their backs on us, their communities.

Since then, our attempts and calls to engage in dialogue in good faith with both our communities have continued; yet, their response is always negative, permanently rejecting the decisions of Warints and Yawi.

On September 8 of this year, PSHA's Governing Council was received in Warints by the communities, where they explained in detail the activities that were carried out, the project's timeline, the agreement, as well as the difference between mineral exploitation and exploration. On this occasion, PSHA was grateful for the explanation and agreements were signed to carry out coordinated efforts after the reconciliation.

So, what happened? What about PSHA's word and commitment?



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We demand that Amazon Watch and Mining Watch refrain from using our names. Their alleged struggles are the reason for the propagation of conflict and division within our communities. We demand that the NGOs refrain from speaking for us and we warn the international community that our rights are being violated in what is established by Art. 57 of the Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador, numbers 1, 2, 9 and 15; as well as the provision established in ILO Convention 169.

As children of the Shuar Arutam People, today we want to tell our mother organization that we have matured and that we make our own decisions, and we want them to know that we DO NOT accept the manipulative stepfather that the NGOs represent.

Sincerely,

CENTRE SHUAR WARINTS

CENTRE SHUAR YAWI