

**OPEN LETTER TO:**

Economist, Rafael Correa D.

PRESIDENT OF ECUADOR

Engineer, Jorge Glas E.

VICE PRESIDENT OF ECUADOR

Dr. Lorena Tapia

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT

Dr. Ledy Zúñiga R.

MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Dear Sirs & Madams,

We wish to express our profound concern with the Ministry of Environment's pending decision to license oil block 55, (commonly known as "Armadillo Country") an area which saw the deaths of both Hector España and Luis Castellanos in 2005 and 2008 respectively. The area is home to "Indigenous Peoples Living in Voluntary Isolation" whose presence in this region has been

documented by more than 5,000 reports and testimonials (many of them recent) including those by the Ministry of Environment and the government's own "Protective Measures Plan." Be warned that petroleum operations in this area of block 55 would be fatal both for the Indigenous Peoples living there in voluntary isolation as well as the credibility of your government and its recognition of the rights of the Tagaeri and Taromenane.

Remember that according to the "National Policy on Indigenous People living in Voluntary Isolation" the state must:

- □ Guarantee the ancestral ownership of the territories in which these people live and on which they depend for their subsistence and the sanctity of both.
- □ Guarantee their mobility according their own cultural patterns
- □ Understand that the presence of the Tagaeri, Taromenani, and others living in voluntary isolation, requires that vast areas of the Yasuní National Park must be preserved in good condition.
- □ Ensure that extractive activities in Amazonia will never lead to their extermination nor be justified as "inevitable collateral damage."

"Strategic Lines for Action" establish as an obligations: "To reinforce and strengthen the principle of inviolability" and mentions as a priority that: "In the future a new territorial design will be supported that will prevent fossil fuel operations within the zone of influence and territory occupied by Tagaeri and Taromenani"

In addition, the recommendations in the Inter-American Commission's 2013 Human Rights report about "Indigenous People in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact on America," declares in a section on Natural Resources that the state must "abstain from granting licenses or authorizations for activities related to natural resource's extraction, like mining, hydrocarbon activities, deforestation, farming, agroindustrials, and others, in areas with presence or transit of Indigenous People in Voluntary Isolation and initial contact, included buffer zones"

Obviously, the sensible, correct, lawful and Constitutional act would be the definitive closure of 55 Block (Armadillo), the cancellation of all concessions issued in this zone extending the Tagaeri Taromenane Intangible Zone into this block, and whatsmore, aim to define and achieve a territory that protects, forever, the integrity and fundamental human rights of Indigenous peoples living in Voluntary Isolation, preventing an imminent ethnocide.

“One more hole inside Yasuní, one less day for the existence of the Tagaeri and Taromenane”

[1] The Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Religious Affairs, was sent in April 2013 map ( <http://bit.ly/1LmSnht> ) where the location PIAV four groups identified, including "Armadillo Group".

[2] "National Policy for the Peoples in Voluntary Isolation"; Government of the Republic of Ecuador. Pp. 6, 7

[3] "Indigenous peoples in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact in the Americas" section on Natural Resources "; American Commission on Human Rights. Pp. 81

Sincerely,