

## 17th Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 2018

As the National Mayan Coordination and Convergence, “**Waqib, Kej**”, part of the original peoples of Guatemala, we extend our greetings to the Chair of the 17<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

The situation in Guatemala is currently facing uncontrolled land re-concentration and plundering of the ancestral territories of our original peoples, a situation reflecting a perverse economic model that promotes monoculture for the production of biofuels, petroleum, mining and hydroelectric projects promoted by national and transnational companies in alliance with the governments in power, **who invade and forcibly clear territories, break social fabrics, destroy ecosystems and contaminate the environment**. Even worse, dozens of leaders are criminalized, charged, incarcerated and assassinated; for example, during the violent expulsions last year in **Laguna Larga** in the department of Petén, the families of this community took refuge in Mexico—the communities of **Chab’il Ch’och in Izabal, Semuy and La Cumbre Sak’uxha** in the department of Alta Verapaz—where the State did not apply any human rights protocol. These communities were to benefit from preventative measures of the IACHR in the month of December of last year. To date, the Guatemalan State has not complied with these measures.

At the same time, the Governments in power have abandoned the peace agreements signed in 1996, such as the **Agreement on Social and Economic Aspects and the Agrarian Situation, and the Agreement on Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples**, which aim to resolve the deep inequality in land use, possession and ownership through laws and policies, and which were not followed, including the **Registry and Land Cadaster Law, and the Land Fund. The Law of Indigenous Peoples’ Lands, the agrarian code and agrarian procedural code, were not passed**. International treaties and agreements such as ILO Convention 169 have not been fulfilled, and have been broken. For example, the resolution of the CC on the OXEC I and II hydroelectric projects recognizes the non-consent of the communities, which must be **free, prior and informed**, as is obligatory, and endorses the company to continue operating. Worst of all, currently, the Government in power is aiming to regulate consent with the objective of controlling the process and dispelling the validity of over 100 completed consent processes in more than 100 municipalities, in order to give the green light to extractive projects and facilitate the looting of natural wealth and the destruction of Mother Nature.

- For this reason, we ask that this Forum make a statement as soon as possible before the State of Guatemala to prevent the violent clearing of lands, criminal persecution, criminalization and assassinations.
- We ask that the Permanent Forum call upon the State of Guatemala to listen to the people's outcry to **NOT** regulate processes of consent.
- We ask the Permanent Forum to recommend the fulfillment of the preventative measures granted by the IACHR.
- We ask that the Permanent Forum recommend the application of the impartiality of justice so that our brothers, **Abelino Chub Caal and Bernardo Caal Xol**, currently political prisoners among others from the Mayan and Xinca peoples, may be liberated.

**Never again a Guatemala, without the peoples, with all the peoples**

**"You will flourish, Guatemala"**

**National Mayan Coordination and Convergence Waqib, Kej.**