

## EVOLUTION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN PERU

Mrs. Chair:

My name is Tarcila Rivera Zea, I am from the Quecha People of the central sierra of Peru.

In the name of CHIRAPAQ, The Centre for Indian Cultures in Peru, we would like to thank the Voluntary Fund for its important help, making it possible for us to come here and participate.

We would like to sum up some of the most important aspects of the human rights situation of the Indigenous Peoples in Peru in order to have the Working Group communicate them to the peruvian government.

1)- We consider the widespread prejudices that exist a danger. For instance : "All Andinos, that means all indigenous people are terrorists". This leads to the abusive qualification that all of us who are defending our cultures and peoples, especially the indigenous people from the peruvian Andes, can be accused of being "subversive", with the negative effects to have no right to defense, according to the most recent laws on the anti-subversive war. We want to bring this to your attention, taking into account that in the next draft constitution to be proclaimed the death penalty for subversive actions and/or "Fatherland Treason" is being considered. We make this remark, Mrs Chair, because 30 years of political violence have costed 28.000 lives, of which 80% are indigenous people who have endured the cross-fire of armed groups and forces against the subversives.

2)- We observe that, contrary to the spirit of United Nations' Year for the Indigenous Peoples, we are stepping backward in respect to the rights that we historically obtained and that already are guaranteed in the 1979 constitution.

In the next draft Constitution that is to be approved by people whose majority are members of the governing party, the articles referring to the territorial rights of Indigenous Communities, (the so-called "comunidades campesinas y nativas"), the pluricultural and multilingual character of the Peruvian People as a whole is not recognized.

We ask for your attention, Mrs. Chair, because we are convinced that the changes in the legislation have to lead to socio-cultural, economic and political recognition of the people that live in the same geographical region. Existing legislation and power distribution could be re-shaped resulting in a more equitable distribution of the benefits of the resources that we, the Indigenous Peoples have preserved based on the philosophy of reciprocity and mutual respect between humanity and nature.

3)- In conclusion, we would like to recommend that the Peruvian Government considers as a priority to pay attention to the problems of the indian and non-indian youth, to promote their integral development and make plans for the middle and long term. 2,000 children of the Ashaninka People in the forest of the middle of the country and nearly 20,000 children of the Quechua

People are materially and morally abandoned as a result of the internal war. Today's children will be the citizens and governors of tomorrow, and if we do not realize that they are growing up in an atmosphere of violence this might result in a deterioration of the democratic community. We are aware of the fact that far away from the actions that are to be undertaken in our country, international adoption is promoted because of the poverty and abandonment in which our children live.

We, women who give life birth, are asking ourselves how children would feel themselves, when they were adopted by for example Canadian citizens, in the society that lets them feel their condition of adoptive children.

Thank you very much, mrs. Chair.

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