

March 30, 2004

Mr. Lucio Gutiérrez Borbúa
Constitutional President of Ecuador

CC. Sr. Leonidas Iza, President of CONAIE
Dra. Mariana Yépez de Velasco, General Prosecutor
Dr. Raúl Baca Carbo, Minister of Police and Government
Lic. Jorge Proveda Zúñiga, General Commander of the National Police
Ambassador Raúl Gangotena, Ambassador of Ecuador in the United States

Mr. President,

We want to express our concern and indignation at the attempted murder and the attack committed against Mr. Leonidas Iza, President of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities in Ecuador (CONAIE) and some of his family members, on February 1st, 2004.

In accordance with several international treaties ratified by Ecuador and with the Constitution of Ecuador, it is the responsibility of your government to respect and guarantee the human rights of all the people subject to your jurisdiction, including the fundamental right to life and physical integrity. Thus, any act that threatens life, state tolerance towards these acts; or the lack of adequate investigation and failure to sanction those responsible, amounts to a violation of the state duty to respect the human right to life and to physical integrity and to guarantee its free and full exercise.

Given this duty, we urge you to adopt all necessary means to guarantee the security of Mr. Leonidas Iza, his family as well as all members of CONAIE and prevent any further act of violence.

In addition, it is fundamental for your government to demonstrate in practice your commitment to eliminate impunity and to conclude without delay an exhaustive, impartial and independent investigation. This duty will prevail until the crimes committed against Mr. Iza are fully investigated and those responsible for them are sanctioned in accordance to law.

Finally, we consider that the democratic strengthening of the judiciary and the police is fundamental to guarantee human rights within all democratic states and to reestablish the confidence of civil society.

With this purpose we urge you to work with civil society as well as national and international intergovernmental and non governmental bodies to guarantee the respect of human rights of the members of CONAIE and, in general, of all citizens in Ecuador.

Sincerely,