

The impending threat of serious conflicts will continue, subsequently affecting human rights

The Awajún people have traditionally been warriors, extremely protective of their territorial integrity; they were pacific, hospitable and very friendly when respected, but could quite easily take up arms to defend themselves against attacks and injustices. These special anthropological and historical characteristics are well-known by officials¹. In 2007, INRENA notified different Ministers of the Executive Branch, as well as the Office of the Prime Minister, to inform them of the following:

“These indigenous groups have maintained their identity in spite of the different problems they have had to endure. They knew how to fiercely defend their land from invaders: the Incas, the Spanish, explorers and settlers. They have a strong identity and are proud of it.”

“The Awajún and Wampís peoples are able to easily establish alliances and come together as a people in the defence of their territory. Their land, their language and their world views are the binding elements that distinctly identify them, in addition to the knowledge they possess with regard to their natural surroundings.”

“One of the characteristics of the Jíbaro culture, especially adopted by the men, is their warlike attitude.”²

Although it is true, as the cited government report mentions, that *“these practices begin to disappear as a result of church bans and the intromission of western culture,”* the traditional characteristics of these peoples, in addition to the fact that most adult and young men have served with troops of the Peruvian Army, constitute a cause for concern, as they have received the corresponding training in the use and handling of weapons of war.

The Awajún and Wampís indigenous peoples actively participated as the largest military contingent during the wars between Peru and Ecuador in 1941, 1981 and 1992, which specifically took place in the Cordillera del Cóndor, thus increasing both their sense of belonging to the indigenous border zones, for which they fought and where they have lived for centuries, as well as their sense of belonging to Peru. Several analysts have noted that these two additional factors greatly influenced the elevated number of police and civilian casualties during the bloody events, which took place in June 2009 in Bagua, as a result of the poorly organized police operation to break the blockade on the highway to the aforementioned city.

¹ INRENA, currently known as SERNANP, a State entity responsible for protecting biodiversity and natural resources, under the Ministry of the Environment, has warned the Executive Branch about this aspect of the Awajún identity on many occasions, while issuing its opinions on the admissibility of allowing mining activities to be carried out in the area. As indicated in Official Letter 571-2007-INRENA-IANP, dated June 26, 2007, *“support is requested to prevent the control post [of the Peruvian Army] from being burnt down in the Alto Santiago sector, Department of Amazonas”*, act of indigenous protest against what they considered to be military support in favour of mining activities in the Cordillera del Cóndor.

² Draft Supreme Executive Order classifying the Ichigkat Muja National Park, Page 47.

The mining companies that own the concessions have publicly expressed their will to recommence exploration works (suspended due to the rainy season). The company, Afrodita, announced its desire to continue with its exploration works in Letter 018-2009/CMA, dated May 19, 2009, pursuant to the mining legislation that ignores and minimizes the right to consultation established in ILO Convention 169 and the philosophy of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. The Canadian company, Dorato Resources Inc., has expressed similar intentions in a number of press releases ***(see Exhibit 12)***.