

Press Release:

April 15, 2018

Indigenous Leaders From Ecuador United To Confront Oil Giant Chevron In Ontario Court

OTTAWA, TORONTO – On April 17th and 18th the Court of Appeals of Ontario, will be the setting in which Ecuadorian plaintiffs will demonstrate that Chevron Canada is wholly owned by Chevron Corporation, which would allow the indigenous and peasant people of Ecuador to enforce the judgement of more than 9.5 million dollars, issued by the Courts of Justice in Ecuador.

The communities' lawsuit for justice and reparation has been advancing through the courts for nearly 24 years. This trial has become an emblematic demonstration of impunity that allows transnational corporations to violate Indigenous and human rights, without consequences.

A delegation of the Union of the affected people of Chevron -Texco (UDAPT) will attend the hearing. It will be composed by Guillermo Grefa, Indigenous Kichwa leader and the son-in-law of Maria Aguinda (the first signatory of the lawsuit), Jaime Vargas, President of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities in Ecuador (CONAIE) and Ecuadorian attorney Julio Prieto.

"The progress made in Canadian courts represents a new hope for the Indigenous people of Ecuador undertaking this battle. Canadian courts have the opportunity to break the structure of corporate impunity for affected peoples worldwide," said Guillermo Grefa.

Prior to coming to Canada in a historic meeting and show of support in Ecuador, the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENIAE) and the Confederation of the Indigenous Nationalities of Sucumbíos (CONASE) ratified their support for UDAPT in this struggle to achieve justice.

"With the support of the CONAIE and CONFENIAE we, Siona, Siekopai, `I Cofan, Kichwa, Shuar y Waorani, represented in the UDAPT, call on all peoples in Canada to unite with us in this emblematic struggle for justice, to defend the planet, and humanity", said Humberto Piaguaje, leader of the Siekopai nation.

The UDAPT, is a grassroots organization made up of over 30.000 Indigenous people and small farmers, who were impacted by Texaco (acquired by Chevron) and its irresponsible activities in the Ecuadorian Amazon. The oil giant polluted more than 450.000 hectares of virgin rain forest, dumped crude, toxic waters and polluting gases that damaged ecosystems, impacted health, indigenous cultures, poisoned land, water and forest as well as their means of sustenance. In Canada, the UDAPT is represented by its lawyer Alan Lenczner.

"Canadian courts have an important role to play to ensure Ecuadorian communities have access to justice and remedy," said Doug Olthuis, Executive Director, Steelworkers Humanity Fund.

While in Toronto the Ecuadorian delegation will participate in the following public event

- Tues April 17th, 7-9 p.m., 252 Bloor St. west, OISE University of Toronto OISE, 2nd floor, Rm. 212

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For more information see <http://texacotoxico.net/en>