
Ecuador: The President will fight "trench by trench" ... against ecologists

In the last issue of the WRM bulletin we included an article written by Acción Ecológica on an oil pipeline project in Ecuador, which would cross the country from east to west, carrying oil from the Yasuní National Park in Amazonia and affecting indigenous peoples and ecosystems throughout the country.

The government's reaction --which is usually very slow to react to the Ecuadorian peoples' demands-- has been extremely swift to protect this project against its opponents. President Gustavo Noboa himself, publicly threatened Acción Ecológica (Friends of the Earth-Ecuador) during a press conference held on May 17 in the city of Guayaquil. He accused this organization of being hypocritical and said: "In the past we knew who they were; we knew they were the radical left; now they call themselves greens, ecologists..."

He shouted that he would declare war on the ecologists, that he would fight them "trench by trench" and that he would not allow "four clowns to fuck the country", in reference to the organizations and local communities opposing the pipeline.

Given the great importance that the government is giving to the implementation of this project, Acción Ecológica fears that their lives might be endangered and particularly that of Yvonne Ramos, whom the President specifically mentioned.

Acción Ecológica is one of the organizations that lodged an appeal demanding the suspension of the contract between the government and the OCP consortium, integrated by AGIP (Italy), Alberta Energy (Canada), Kerr Mc Gee and Occidental (USA), Repsol/YPF (Spain), Perez Companc and Techint (Argentina). The appeal was also signed by the main organizations and social movements of Ecuador, including CEDHU, APDH, CONAIE, FENOCIN, Seguro Social Campesino, among others.

Acción Ecológica is requesting everyone concerned about this to send letters to President Noboa, asking him to respect the opinion and work of those who protect nature and life in the country, making him responsible for any attack on the physical security of Acción Ecológica's members. They add that "More than ever we need to join forces and achieve international support to show that there are hundreds of organizations throughout the world that support ecologists in Ecuador and who oppose the OCP pipeline due to the social and environmental impacts it will entail". Please send letters to (a sample letter is available on WRM's web site at <http://www.wrm.org.uy/pedidos/Ecuador2105.html>):

Señor Doctor Gustavo Noboa, Presidente, República del Ecuador, Fax No. (593 2) 580 735 / Quito – Ecuador

Please copy to: Acción Ecológica, Fax: 593 2 547516, Quito - Ecuador.

