

# URGENT ACTION

## AMAZON COMMUNITIES THREATENED BY LOGGERS

Rural leaders and farmers in a remote area of Amazonas state, northern Brazil, are facing death threats and attacks from illegal loggers and land-grabbers (grileiros) encroaching upon their lands. There remains no police presence in the area and no investigations into the illegal activities reportedly taking place. Those living in the region are in danger.

Illegal loggers and land-grabbers are targeting small communities who live off the land in legally-recognized reserves in Lábrea municipality in the south-east of Amazonas state. The leaders of these communities have suffered beatings, threats, arson attacks and theft of property, in an attempt to force them off their land. Many have fled the region in fear for their lives. After speaking out, Dinhana Nink was shot dead in front of her son in a town in neighbouring Rondonia state, where she had moved to after her home in Lábrea was burned down. Her friend Nilcilene Miguel de Lima, a community leader who had spoken out about the encroachment of illegal loggers onto the reserves, has been beaten and threatened at gunpoint, and her house was burned down while she was away.

Since October 2011, Nilcilene Miguel de Lima has been provided with armed protection by federal authorities. She has continued to receive threats. In March 2012, she received a message relayed by community members, saying "your bullet-proof vest can protect your body but not your head" ("*o colete a prova de balas pode proteger seu corpo mas sua cabeça não*"). In early April she was forced to leave Lábrea, with help of the federal government, following evidence that there was a plot to kill her and her police guards in an ambush. She is one of only two people in Lábrea who have been given protection by armed officers, provided for periods of three months by the federal government. However, with no local police presence in the area, NGOs report that few if any investigations are taking place into the illegal activities of these criminal gangs. At least six people have been killed in the region since 2007, while the Pastoral Land Commission (CPT) reports receiving reports of at least eight people receiving death threats in 2011.

### Please write immediately in Portuguese or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to take immediate steps to ensure the safety of all those living on reserves in Lábrea municipality, including providing them with a permanent public security presence;
- Urging them to investigate the threats and harassment of those living on these reserves, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- Calling on them urgently to address the systematic illegal activities of logging and land-grabbing in the region, to reaffirm the legal status of the extractivist communities and guarantee the safety of the residents.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 5 JUNE 2012 TO:

#### Amazon State Governor

Exmo. Sr. Omar José Abdel Aziz  
Av. Brasil, s/nº Compensa 2  
69.036-110 – Manaus/AM  
BRASIL  
Fax: 011 55 92 3303 8447  
Salutation: Exmo Sr Governador

#### Federal Minister of Justice

Exmo. Sr. José Eduardo Martins  
Cardozo, Esplanada dos Ministérios, Bloco  
"T", 4º andar,  
70.712-902 - Brasília/DF, BRASIL  
Fax: 011 55 61 2025 7803  
Salutation: Exmo. Sr. Ministro

#### And copies to:

#### Local NGO

CPT Amazonas  
Rua Silva Ramos, 555  
Centro,  
69025-030, Manaus/AM  
BRASIL

#### Also send copies to:

Ambassador Mauro Vieira  
Embassy of Brazil  
3006 Massachusetts Ave. NW  
Washington DC 20008  
Phone: 1 202 238 2805 | Fax: 1 202 238 2827 | Email: [ambassador@brasilemb.org](mailto:ambassador@brasilemb.org)

Please check with the AIUSA Urgent Action Office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Lábrea region is so remote that there is an almost complete lack of state services in the area, including policing, healthcare and schools. The police station that serves the region is hundreds of kilometres to the north, and only accessible by plane.

Threats against Nilcilene Miguel de Lima began in 2009 when she became president of the Deus Proverá Association of small-holders and began denouncing the encroachment of illegal loggers. In June 2010 Nilcilene Miguel de Lima was reportedly severely beaten in front of an employee of the federal government land reform agency, Incra. Eight days' later she was threatened by a gunman at her house and was forced to flee. On her return she found her house had been burnt down. In May 2010, after a visit from the federal government environment agency, Ibama, during which three chainsaws were confiscated, threats intensified. In October Nilcilene Miguel de Lima began receiving protection from nine armed guards from the Força Nacional, an elite unit made up by state military police officers and deployed by the federal government in emergency situations. Protection is reviewed every three months and was up for renewal at the end of April. Even with protection, the threats continued. In March 2012, Nilcilene Miguel de Lima's dog was shot through the head. Nilcilene Miguel de Lima's situation has now become so unsafe that she been since removed for the region. Another community leader, Pastor Antonio Vasconcelos de Souza, is also under federal protection.

In an open letter two local associations representing communities living on the reserves said: "We are extremely worried and frightened about what could happen; we have seen that they have already killed another one of our friends in the south of Lábrea so we fear for our lives. We don't know who will be next..." (*Estamos apreensivos e com medo do que possa acontecer vimos que já mataram mais uma companheira nossa no sul de Lábrea então tememos por nossa vida. Não sabemos que será o próximo...*)"

**Name(s):** Dinhana Nink, Nilcilene Miguel de Lima and those living in Lábrea municipality (m/f)

**Issue(s):** Fear for safety

**UA:** 115/12

**Issue Date:** 24 April 2012

**Country:** Brazil