



Declaration of Indigenous Communities Affected by Lithium Mining in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile and Peru

(El Moreno, Jujuy Province, Argentina - January 19, 2025)

Indigenous peoples in Argentina (Salinas Grandes Basin and Guayatayoc Lagoon), Bolivia (Salar de Uyuni), Chile (Salar Puna de Atacama) and Peru (Inambari and Urubamba Basins, Salar de Azangaro, Salar de Pampa Canahuas, San Juan Tarucari and Ipokate Cordillera Chain, Kolkerami), who are being affected and/or potentially affected by lithium mining on indigenous lands, represented by more than two hundred authorities, have gathered in El Moreno, Province of Jujuy, Argentina, on January 17-19, 2025, on the occasion of the Andean Intercultural Summit of Communities Affected by Lithium Mining, which allowed us to know and learn not only about the different situations in which our communities are facing lithium mining, but also about the adverse environmental, social and cultural impacts of lithium extraction in our lands and territories.

1. We note that the global energy sector's shift from fossil fuel-based energy production and consumption systems (oil, natural gas and coal) to renewable energy sources (wind, solar and lithium batteries) has accelerated rapidly, and that as a result, mining companies around the world are intensively pursuing lithium exploration and exploitation on lands under the possession of our communities and countries where such mineral resources exist and are adopting measures to the detriment of indigenous peoples to ensure that such mining activity takes place at any price on our lands, including amending constitutions without any consultation with our peoples, repealing laws that protect our communities' special relationship with our lands from forced evictions, and adopting laws that encourage at-any-price large investment in the extraction of mineral resources that lie within our territories, especially lithium and rare earth minerals.

2. Concerned about the serious threat that lithium mining, strongly driven by global agreements in favor of energy transition and the notorious collusion between countries and lithium mining companies, poses to the physical and cultural survival of indigenous peoples, we have come together to identify actions to be taken for the protection of our communities, lands, territories and resources, in full exercise of our collective rights as distinct legal, political and social entities in the countries where we are located.

3. Concerned also about the strategy pursued by the countries in not recognizing collective property rights in favor of our communities and the rights of nature, in order to facilitate the entry of mining companies in our territories; This strategy has taken various forms, which include, but are not limited to, the paralyzing of all administrative procedures for the titling of indigenous lands, the initiation of the alteration of the original measurements of the lands under our possession in order to expand the areas of mining projects and decrease the extension of our territories, and the obstruction of access to existing files in government agencies where there is information regarding the survey of the lands of our communities.

4. We strongly repudiate the adverse environmental impacts that lithium mining in lands and territories under the possession of our communities is generating, which mainly include the scarcity of water resources due to the excessive use of water by the companies, without any control by the governments, and the displacement of local fauna due to the infrastructure and noise generated by the installations and generators of the mining companies in our territories.

5. We also categorically repudiate the adverse social and cultural impacts, which include but are not limited to, the rupture of the existing social cohesion in our peoples as a result of inadequate and corrupt consultation processes, the permanent threat and coercion against our representatives and spokespersons, in order to silence them and prevent them from informing public opinion and the international community about the serious situation our communities are facing.

6. We highlight the irrefutable obligation of countries to carry out processes of prior consultation with our communities, including communities located in areas of direct and indirect impact, in the framework of the procedures of the applications for mining exploration and exploitation licenses and the evaluation of environmental and social impacts of mining projects in our lands and territories; as well as to use the prior consultation protocols elaborated by our communities themselves in full exercise of our rights to self-determination and self-government, and to ensure the free, prior and informed consent of our communities, which are widely protected by international law instruments and socio-environmental policies of multilateral development banks.

7. We reaffirm our firm commitment to defend the existing social cohesion of our peoples, as well as the special relationship that our communities have with our Mother Earth Pachamama and the resources under her possession, which are strongly protected by instruments of international law, such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization.

WE DECLARE:

1. That, we indigenous peoples, in full exercise of our collective rights to self-determination and collective ownership of the lands under the possession of our communities, have absolute power to decide on all activities that affect, in one way or another, our communities, lands, territories and natural resources.
2. That, we identify ourselves as a single Andean people, without any division established by border limits and/or direct or indirect affectation of lithium mining projects, we share the same problems caused by mining and racism, and we will take joint actions for the protection of our Mother Earth Pachamama.
3. That, indigenous peoples do not want to be part of an energy transition, whereby, countries and lithium mining companies violate our collective rights and affect our spiritual relationship with our Mother Earth Pachamama.

WE DEMAND:

1. to the countries where we are located: the immediate titling of the lands under possession of our communities, the dismissal of actions aimed at altering the original measurements of the lands under possession of our communities, the realization of binding prior consultation processes with our communities before the issuance of mining licenses, the use of consultation protocols developed by our communities themselves when they exist, and respect for the self-determination of our peoples consisting of our self-government and original autonomy, territorial domain and the recognition of our own institutions and cultures.
2. To the countries and lithium mining companies interested in the extraction of lithium in our lands and territories: strict compliance with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the policies on indigenous peoples of the World Bank Group and the Inter-American Development Bank, as well as the abstention from adopting actions that contribute to the violation of our collective rights to self-determination and collective ownership of our lands, territories and resources;
3. To the international community focused on the energy transition: the energetic repudiation and absolute rejection of all lithium mining that, with the acquiescence of the governments of the countries, contributes to the violation of the collective rights of indigenous communities over their lands, territories and resources; as well as the elaboration of an instrument of international law that, with the participation of indigenous peoples, details the obligations of countries to adopt specific measures to protect the rights of indigenous peoples in the framework of all mining and social and environmental impact assessment procedures.