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**Urgent call from civil society organizations to the Peruvian State to guarantee the safety of indigenous and rural women human rights defenders.**

- **The State must respect, protect and guarantee the right to participate in the cultural life of Quechua-speaking indigenous and rural women defenders, as well as refrain from adopting measures or decisions that continue to preserve the structural discrimination in which they find themselves.**

The undersigned organizations express our concern regarding the situation faced by the human rights defenders of the Regional Academy of Quechua Language of Cajamarca (ARIQC, Spanish acronym) due to the eviction of their facilities, given that the Provincial Municipality of Cajamarca, in a biased way and with no legal basis, decided to refrain from renewing the agreement for the use of the property, failing to take into consideration the improvements carried out to the facilities by ARIQC.

The ARIQC was founded by activists and Quechua-speakers 33 years ago, as a non-profit organization, with the objective of promoting, disseminating and preserving the Quechua language. For over more than three decades, it has established itself as an academic benchmark in the region, as well as being the only educational center in the town that teaches the Quechua language and that provides legal advice and support to women that are victims of violence in their language.

In 2017, the Council of the Provincial Municipality of Cajamarca approved Agreement No. 260-2017 by which it authorized the enter into of the concession contract for the use of the property, with the purpose of granting them possession of the property for academic activities. However, in the last few days, by unofficial means and without justified cause, the Municipality determined to terminate the contract. On November 10 of this year, the president of the ARIQC María Elena Yparraguirre Alegría and the secretary Nélide Ayay Chilón, went to the Municipality to meet with the mayor, however, the public official received them with hostility, indicating that he had other matters that attend.

At the meeting, the municipal authority confirmed the decision to terminate the contract, offering them an alternative space to continue working. The representatives of the academy refused to accept it, since they argued that the termination of the contract lacked proper justification and motivation, in addition to not having been given due notice of this termination or granted any type of legal certainty with that space and therefore, they expressed that they would reveal to the public said conversation. In response to this, the mayor behaved violently towards Maria Elena and Nélide Ayay, particularly against Nélide Ayay Chilón.

Nélide is a lawyer, indigenous and rural, quechua native-speaker and a well-known defender of the territory and environment in Cajamarca, Perú. Since 2012, she took upon a process of defense of the environment against of the Project “Conga” of the mining company Yanacocha, owned by the US enterprise Newmont. Her work led her to the defense of the hill Quilish, considered holy territory. In 2015, her story of defense was projected worldwide through the award-winning documentary “La Hija de la Laguna”. Her work as a defender of the environment led her to go to law school, ever since, her work as a defender of human rights has put her in the spot of numerous threats and intimidations.

The response from the municipality public officers has caused great concern to the members of the ARIQC that this may cause retaliations against the organization and that support from other spaces may be withdrawn, for which they, for several years, have had to fight to have the minimum conditions to carry out their work in the promotion of cultural rights as a result of gaps from the State's ability to guarantee public policies for the

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preservation and dissemination of native languages. The latter, in addition to the challenges they face to preserve their identity through language and fight against discrimination, despite the fact that, according to official information, it is the second most widely spoken language only after Spanish and is even recognized as official language by the Political Constitution of Peru.

Likewise, these constitute acts that put at risk the collective rights of the Cajamarca community, such as the right to participate in the cultural life of their community, the right to education to the transmission and preservation of their values, customs and languages under conditions of equality, as well as the right of self-determination of the peoples, which are recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Furthermore, Convention 169 of the ILO (International Labor Organization) on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, recognizes the right of peoples to maintain and strengthen their identities through the teaching of their languages.

This determination is added to the practices of structural discrimination against rural women and native language speakers, through the exclusion of collective subjects who share an ethnic-racial worldview through their language. It is imperative to mention that the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of race, ethnic origin, gender or of any other nature is a principle and a category protected by the International Human Rights Law, specifically by the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, by the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and by article 2 of the Constitution of Peru.

Also, these practices deepen the structural inequality in which indigenous and rural women find themselves, by reasons of ethnicity, race, class and gender, and base don these have suffered various forms of discrimination and institutional violence over time.

Likewise, we express our solidarity and support to the fellow colleagues of the ARIQC and make a special call to the State to address the risk situation in which our colleagues Nélide Ayay Chilón find themselves, in the context of practices that restrict their work in defense and promotion of human rights in Peru.

Therefore, we call upon the Peruvian authorities within the framework of their respective competencies for the following:

- Publicly acknowledge the work of the human rights defenders Nélide and María Elena, as well as make visible the work of preservation of the Quechua language that they have been carrying out through the Regional Academy of the Quechua Language of Cajamarca.
- Adopt the necessary measures to guarantee the security, as well as physical and psychological integrity of the defender Nélide Ayay Chilón.
- Comply with their obligations to respect, protect and guarantee the right of everyone to participate in cultural life under the principles of availability, accessibility, acceptability, adaptability, as established in article 15, paragraph 1 a), of the International Covenant on Economic Rights, Social and Cultures, an international document ratified by the Peruvian State.

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- Recommend and adopt inclusive measures and public policies that promote the participation of indigenous, rural, and Quechua-speaking women, as well as refrain from adopting measures or decisions that continue to maintain structural discrimination against indigenous women in Peru.
- Initiate any investigation aimed at supervising that the authorities respect and guarantee at all times the human rights of the ARIQC fellow colleagues as defenders of cultural rights.

Sincerely,

## Signatory organizations:

1. Proyecto de Derechos Económicos, Sociales y Culturales, A.C., Mexico
2. Movement Law Lab, United States
3. Global Network of Movement Lawyers, United States
4. Iniciativa Mesoamericana de Defensoras de Derechos Humanos, Mexico
5. Academia Quechua de Chota, Peru
6. Academia Regional del Idioma Quechua Cajamarca, Peru
7. Acción Internacional para la Salud, Peru
8. AFEP, Peru
9. Aldeas Infantiles, Peru
10. Aleida Yamalí González Acosta, Peru
11. Alicia Monserrath Islas Gurrola, Mexico
12. AMAS Marianistas, Peru
13. Andrea Vela Alarcón, Canada
14. Angel Chilon Cuevas, Peru
15. APY Solidaridad en Acción, Spain
16. Asamblea Plaza de los Pueblos, Spain
17. Asociación Amar C, Peru
18. Asociación de Mujeres Sindicalistas, El Salvador
19. Asociación de Organizaciones de Mujeres Tejedoras de Vida del Putumayo, Colombia
20. Asociación de Personas con Discapacidad de Locomoción, Peru
21. Asociación de Productores Agropecuario Distrito de Chetilla, Peru
22. Asociación Desarrollo Comunitario Intercultural, Spain
23. Asociación Mujeres Ambientalistas de El Salvador, El Salvador
24. Asociación Promoción y Desarrollo de la Mujer PRODEMU, Peru
25. Aynikusun e.V., Germany
26. Bartolomé Pisco González, Peru
27. CAJAR, Colombia
28. Cantonal de Cotacachi, Ecuador
29. Carmen Molina, Mexico
30. Center for Constitutional Rights, United States
31. Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS), Argentina
32. Centro de Estudios para Equidad y Gobernanza en Sistemas de Salud, Guatemala
33. Centro de la Mujer Flora Tristán, Peru
34. Círculo de Mujeres de Lambayeque, Peru
35. Ciudadanía Activa, Peru
36. Coalición de Inmigrantes de la Florida FLIC, United States

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37. Coalición de Tendencias Clasistas, Venezuela
38. Colectiva 8 de Marzo, Peru
39. Colectiva Hijas de Eva, Ecuador
40. Colectivo Casa, Bolivia
41. Colectivo Claudia Cortés, Mexico
42. Colectivo Peruanxs en Madrid, Spain
43. Colectivo por la Igualdad de Género, Peru
44. Colectivo Sonqo Warmi Cusco, Peru
45. Comité Socioambiental Feminista, Chile
46. Community Resource Centre Foundation, Thailand
47. CONAMOVIDI, Peru
48. Congreso de la República, Peru
49. Corporación Akubadaura, Colombia
50. CPM Micaela Bastidas, Peru
51. Decidir Nos Hace Libres, Peru
52. Decoin Intag, Ecuador
53. Edelmira Elizabeth Soto Raico, Peru
54. EDUCO, Spain
55. Enrique Salazar Sánchez, Peru
56. Entrepueblos, Spain
57. EQUAL, United States
58. Escuela de Agroecología Germinar, Chile
59. Escuela Feminista Tupanakuy, Peru
60. Estefani Milagros Huaman Osorio, Peru
61. Estrella Zarai Altamirano Carranza, Peru
62. Fany Yaneth Huatay Roncal, Peru
63. Farmworker Association of Florida, United States
64. Flatela Attorneys Inc, South Africa
65. Florida Immigrant Coalition, United States
66. Franklin Valdivia Díaz, Cajamarca, Peru
67. Gerardo Pérez Muñoz, México
68. GIMCC, Peru
69. Graham Richards, Ecuador
70. Grassroots Global Justice Durham, United States
71. Grufides, Peru
72. Grupo-Trabajo Peruanxs Madrid, Spain
73. Guarango Cine y Video, Peru
74. Hard Knocks Strategies, United States
75. Huerto Roma Verde, Mexico
76. Hugo Robalino Fernández, Ecuador
77. Hugo Uriarte Guerra, Peru
78. Intipachamama, Nicaragua
79. Jimena, Peru
80. José Ramiro Llatas Pérez, Peru
81. Juntos por el Perú, Peru
82. Katherine Luz Paucar Quispe, Peru
83. Katia Rodríguez Bocanegra, Peru

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84. KILLA, Peru
85. Kindertagespflege, Germany
86. Kira Sol Dioses Zevallos, Peru
87. La Brújula de la Nación, Mexico
88. La Cosecha Comunicación Participativa, Spain
89. Las Milpas/MaquiWarmi, Spain
90. Las Vanders, Mexico
91. MamaKiya e.V., Germany
92. Marco Zavala, Czech Republic
93. María de los Ángeles Sánchez López , Mexico
94. María Elena Rojas Rivera, Mexico
95. Maria jose Rosales, Guatemala
96. María Paola Viteri Dávila, Ecuador
97. Mariangela Gómez, Sierra, Argentina
98. Marita Isabel Vigo Barrios, Peru
99. Mauricio Castro Villanueva, Peru
100. Mavi Sharón Guevara Reyes, Peru
101. Micaela Loredó Canchucaja, Peru
102. Miguel Angel Alcaraz Ceballos, Mexico
103. Miguel Ruiz Díaz-Reixa, Spain
104. Mirna Ticona, Sweden
105. Mouvman 18 novanm, Haiti
106. Movice Asomudem, Colombia
107. Movimiento Manuela Ramos, Peru
108. Mujeres Indígenas en Defensa de la Vida, Mexico
109. Municipalidad Provincial de Cajamarca, Peru
110. Namati Freetown, Sierra Leone
111. Natalia Ancheita Pagaza, Mexico
112. National Lawyers Guild, United States
113. Ni una menos Lambayeque, Peru
114. Nikki Thanos, Independiente, United States
115. Nomzamo Zondo Socio Economic Rights Institute, South Africa
116. Nuevo Perú, Peru
117. NUM, Peru
118. Observatorio Feminista Catamarca, Argentina
119. Ofelia Sánchez Ilatoma, Peru
120. Ofelia Vargas Cerna, Peru
121. Organika, Peru
122. Otras Veces por la Tierra, Uruguay
123. PAH, Spain
124. Pathways Institute, South Africa
125. Pensamiento y Acción Social PAS, Colombia
126. Plataforma de Recursos Naturales y Desarrollo Sostenible RENADES, Peru
127. PUCP, Peru
128. Recaredo Sanchez Romero, Spain
129. Red de Mujeres Interamericanas, Peru
130. Red Departamental de Mujeres Chocoanas, Colombia

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- 131.Red Latinoamericana de Mujeres por los Derechos Sociales y Ambientales, Argentina
- 132.Red Regional Agua Desarrollo y Democracia, Peru
- 133.REMTE, Peru
- 134.Ricardo Chilón Cueva, Peru
- 135.Rita Catalina Puyen Condor, Peru
- 136.Rocío Bazalar, Peru
- 137.Rocio Llatas Vásquez, Peru
- 138.Rosa Elvira Acuña Muñoz, Peru
- 139.Sarita Mantilla Cotrina, Peru
- 140.Socio Economic Rights Institute South Africa, South Africa
- 141.Terra de Direitos, Brasil
- 142.Todas somos Micaelas, Peru
- 143.Transnational Institute, Netherlands
- 144.Trawunche Madrid, Spain
- 145.Universidad ECCI, Colombia
- 146.Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Colombia
- 147.Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Brasil
- 148.UNMSM, Peru
- 149.USPS, United States
- 150.Uyool Luum, Mexico
- 151.VIVAT Internacional, Chile
- 152.Yngre Eliana Matamoro Ramírez, Peru