

CNI/EZLN: May the Earth Tremble at Its Core

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To the people of the world:

To the free media:

To the National and International Sixth:

Convened for the commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the National Indigenous Congress and the living resistance of the originary peoples, nations, and tribes of this country called Mexico, of the languages of Amuzgo, Binni-zaá, Chinanteco, Chol, Chontal de Oaxaca, Coca, Náyeri, Cuicateco, Kumiai, Lacandón, Matlazinca, Maya, Mayo, Mazahua, Mazateco, Mixe, Mixteco, Nahuatl, Nahuatl, Nahuatl, Popoluca, Purépecha, Rarámuri,

Tlapaneco, Tojolabal, Totonaco, Triqui, Tzeltal, Tsotsil, Wixárika, Yaqui, Zoque, Chontal de Tabasco, as well as our Aymara, Catalán, Mam, Nasa, Quiché and Tacaná brothers and sisters, we firmly pronounce that our struggle is below and to the left, that we are anticapitalist and that the time of the people has come—the time to make this country pulse with the ancestral heartbeat of our mother earth.

It is in this spirit that we met to celebrate life in the Fifth National Indigenous Congress, which took place on October 9-14, 2016, in CIDECI-UNITIERRA, Chiapas. There we once again recognized the intensification of the dispossession and repression that have not stopped in the 524 years since the powerful began a war aimed at exterminating those who are of the earth; as their children we have not allowed for their destruction and death, meant to serve capitalist ambition which knows no end other than destruction itself. That resistance, the struggle to continue constructing life, today takes the form of words, learning, and agreements. On a daily basis we build ourselves and our communities in resistance in order to stave off the storm and the capitalist attack which never lets up. It becomes more aggressive everyday such that today it has become a civilizational threat, not only for indigenous peoples and *campesinos* but also for the people of the cities who themselves must create dignified and rebellious forms of resistance in order to avoid murder, dispossession, contamination, sickness, slavery, kidnapping or disappearance. Within our community assemblies we have decided, exercised, and constructed our destiny since time immemorial. Our forms of organization and the defense of our collective life is only possible through rebellion against the bad government, their businesses, and their organized crime.

We denounce the following:

1. In Pueblo Coca, Jalisco, the businessman Guillermo Moreno Ibarra invaded 12 hectares of forest in the area known as El Pandillo, working in cahoots with the agrarian institutions there to criminalize those who struggle, resulting in 10 community members being subjected to trials that went on for four years. The bad government is invading the island of Mexcala, which is sacred communal land, and at the same time refusing to recognize the Coca people in state indigenous legislation, in an effort to erase them from history.
2. The Otomí N̄hañu, N̄athö, Hui hú, and Matlatzinca peoples from México State and Michoacán are being attacked via the imposition of a megaproject to build the private Toluca-Naucalpan Highway and an inter-city train. The project is destroying homes and sacred sites, buying people off and manipulating communal assemblies through police presence. This is in addition to fraudulent community censuses that supplant the voice of an entire people, as well as the privatization and the dispossession of water and territory around the Xinantécatl volcano, known as the Nevado de Toluca. There the bad governments are doing away with the protections that they themselves granted, all in

order to hand the area over to the tourism industry. We know that all of these projects are driven by interest in appropriating the water and life of the entire region. In the Michoacán zone they deny the identity of the Otomí people, and a group of police patrols have come to the region to monitor the hills, prohibiting indigenous people there from going to the hills to cut wood.

3. The originary peoples who live in Mexico City are being dispossessed of the territories that they have won in order to be able to work for a living; in the process they are robbed of their goods and subjected to police violence. They are scorned and repressed for using their traditional clothing and language, and criminalized through accusations of selling drugs.
4. The territory of the Chontal Peoples of Oaxaca is being invaded by mining concessions that are dismantling communal land organization, affecting the people and natural resources of five communities.
5. The Mayan Peninsular People of Campeche, Yucatán, and Quintana Roo are suffering land dispossession as a result of the planting of genetically modified soy and African palm, the contamination of their aquifers by agrochemicals, the construction of wind farms and solar farms, the development of ecotourism, and the activities of real estate developers. Their resistance against high electricity costs has been met with harassment and arrest warrants. In Calakmul, Campeche, five communities are being displaced by the imposition of 'environmental protection areas,' environmental service costs, and carbon capture plans. In Candelaria, Campeche, the struggle continues for secure land tenure. In all three states there is aggressive criminalization against those who defend territory and natural resources.
6. The Tzotzil, Tzeltal, Tojolabal, Chol and Lacandón Maya People of Chiapas continue to be displaced from their territories due to the privatization of natural resources. This has resulted in the imprisonment and murder of those who defend their right to remain in their territory, as they are constantly discriminated against and repressed whenever they defend themselves and organize to continue building their autonomy, leading to increasing rates of human rights violations by police forces. There are campaigns to fragment and divide their organizations, as well as the murders of *compañeros* who have defended their territory and natural resources in San Sebastián Bachajon. The bad governments continue trying to destroy the organization of the communities that are EZLN bases of support in order to cast a shadow on the hope and light that they provide to the entire world.
7. The Mazateco people of Oaxaca have been invaded by private property claims which exploit the territory and culture for tourism purposes. This includes naming Huautla de Jiménez as a "Pueblo Mágico" in order to legalize displacement and commercialize ancestral knowledge. This is in addition to mining concessions and foreign spelunking explorations in existing caves, all enforced by increased harassment by narcotraffickers and militarization of the territory. The bad governments are complicit in the increasing rates of femicide and rape in the region.

8. The Nahua and Totonaca peoples of Veracruz and Puebla are confronting aerial fumigation, which creates illnesses in the communities. Mining and hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation are carried out through fracking, and 8 watersheds are endangered by new projects that are contaminating the rivers.
9. The Nahua and Popoluca peoples from the south of Veracruz are under siege by organized crime and also risk territorial destruction and their disappearance as a people because of the threats brought by mining, wind farms, and above all, hydrocarbon exploitation through fracking.
10. The Nahua people, who live in the states of Puebla, Tlaxcala, Veracruz, Morelos, Mexico State, Jalisco, Guerrero, Michoacán, San Luis Potosí, and Mexico City, are in a constant struggle to stop the advance of the so-called *Proyecto Integral Morelos*, consisting of pipelines, aqueducts, and thermoelectric projects. The bad governments, seeking to stop the resistance and communication among the communities are trying to destroy the community radio of Amiltzingo, Morelos. Similarly, the construction of the new airport in Mexico City and the surrounding building projects threaten the territories around Texcoco lake and the Valle de México basin, namely Atenco, Texcoco, and Chimalhuacán. In Michoacán, the Nahua people face the plunder of their natural resources and minerals by *sicarios* [hitmen] who are accompanied by police or the army, and also the militarization and paramilitarization of their territories. The cost of trying to halt this war has been murder, persecution, imprisonment, and harassment of community leaders.
11. The Zoque People of Oaxaca and Chiapas face invasion by mining concessions and alleged private property claims on communal lands in the Chimalapas region, as well as three hydroelectric dams and hydrocarbon extraction through fracking. The implementation of cattle corridors is leading to excessive logging in the forests in order to create pastureland, and genetically modified seeds are also being cultivated there. At the same time, Zoque migrants to different states across the country are re-constituting their collective organization.
12. The Amuzgo people of Guerrero are facing the theft of water from the San Pedro River to supply residential areas in the city of Ometepec. Their community radio has also been subject to constant persecution and harassment.
13. The Rarámuri people of Chihuahua are losing their farmland to highway construction, to the Creel airport, and to the gas pipeline that runs from the United States to Chihuahua. They are also threatened by Japanese mining companies, dam projects, and tourism.
14. The Wixárika people of Jalisco, Nayarit, and Durango are facing the destruction and privatization of the sacred places they depend on to maintain their familial, social, and political fabric, and also the dispossession of their communal land in favor of large landowners who take advantage of the blurry boundaries between states of the Republic and campaigns orchestrated by the bad government to divide people.
15. The Kumiai People of Baja California continue struggling for the reconstitution of their ancestral territories, against invasion by private interests, the privatization of their

sacred sites, and the invasion of their territories by gas pipelines and highways.

16. The Purépecha people of Michoacán are experiencing deforestation, which occurs through complicity between the bad government and the narcoparamilitary groups who plunder the forests and woods. Community organization from below poses an obstacle to that theft.
17. For the Triqui people of Oaxaca, the presence of the political parties, the mining industry, paramilitaries, and the bad government foment the disintegration of the community fabric in the interest of plundering natural resources.
18. The Chinanteco people of Oaxaca are suffering the destruction of their forms of community organization through land reforms, the imposition of environmental services costs, carbon capture plans, and ecotourism. There are plans for a four-lane highway to cross and divide their territory. In the Cajono and Usila Rivers the bad governments are planning to build three dams that will affect the Chinanteco and Zapoteca people, and there are also mining concessions and oil well explorations.
19. The Náyeri People of Nayarit face the invasion and destruction of their sacred territories by the Las Cruces hydroelectric project in the site called Muxa Tena on the San Pedro River.
20. The Yaqui people of Sonora continue their sacred struggle against the gas pipeline that would cross their territory, and in defense of the water of the Yaqui River, which the bad governments want to use to supply the city of Hermosillo, Sonora. This goes against judicial orders and international appeals which have made clear the Yaqui peoples' legal and legitimate rights. The bad government has criminalized and harassed the authorities and spokespeople of the Yaqui tribe.
21. The Binizzá and Ikoot people organize to stop the advance of the mining, wind, hydroelectric, dam, and gas pipeline projects. This includes in particular the Special Economic Zone on the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and the infrastructure that threatens the territory and the autonomy of the people on the Isthmus of Tehuantepec who are classified as the "environmental Taliban" and the "indigenous rights Taliban," the precise words used by the Mexican Association of Energy to refer to the Popular Assembly of the Juchiteco People.
22. The Mixteco people of Oaxaca suffer the plunder of their agrarian territory, which also affects their traditional practices given the threats, deaths, and imprisonment that seek to quiet the dissident voices, with the bad government supporting armed paramilitary groups as in the case of San Juan Mixtepec, Oaxaca.
23. The Mixteco, Tlapaneco, and Nahuatl peoples from the mountains and coast of Guerrero face the imposition of mining megaprojects supported by narcotraffickers, their paramilitaries, and the bad governments, who fight over the territories of the originary peoples.
24. The Mexican bad government continues to lie, trying to hide its decomposition and total responsibility for the forced disappearance of the 43 students from the Raúl Isidro Burgos Rural Teachers College in Ayotzinapa, Guerrero.

25. The state continues to hold hostage: *compañeros* Pedro Sánchez Berriozábal, Rómulo Arias Míreles, Teófilo Pérez González, Dominga González Martínez, Lorenzo Sánchez Berriozábal, and Marco Antonio Pérez González from the Nahuatl community of San Pedro Tlanixco in Mexico State; Zapotec *compañero* Álvaro Sebastián from the Loxicha region; *compañeros* Emilio Jiménez Gómez and Esteban Gómez Jiménez, prisoners from the community of Bachajón, Chiapas; *compañeros* Pablo López Álvarez and the exiled Raul Gatica García and Juan Nicolás López from the Indigenous and Popular Council of Oaxaca Ricardo Flores Magón. Recently a judge handed down a 33-year prison sentence to *compañero* Luis Fernando Sotelo for demanding that the 43 disappeared students from Ayotzinapa be returned alive, and to the *compañeros* Samuel Ramírez Gálvez, Gonzalo Molina González and Arturo Campos Herrera from the Regional Coordination of Community Authorities - PC. They also hold hundreds of indigenous and non-indigenous people across the country prisoner for defending their territories and demanding justice.
26. The Mayo people's ancestral territory is threatened by highway projects meant to connect Topolobampo with the state of Texas in the United States. Ambitious tourism projects are also being created in Barranca del Cobre.
27. The Dakota Nation's sacred territory is being invaded and destroyed by gas and oil pipelines, which is why they are maintaining a permanent occupation to protect what is theirs.

For all of these reasons, we reiterate that it our obligation to protect life and dignity, that is, resistance and rebellion, from below and to the left, a task that can only be carried out collectively. We build rebellion from our small local assemblies that combine to form large communal assemblies, *ejidal* assemblies, *Juntas de Buen Gobierno* [Good Government Councils], and coalesce as agreements as peoples that unite us under one identity. In the process of sharing, learning, and constructing ourselves as the National Indigenous Congress, we see and feel our collective pain, discontent, and ancestral roots. In order to defend what we are, our path and learning process have been consolidated by strengthening our collective decision-making spaces, employing national and international juridical law as well as peaceful and civil resistance, and casting aside the political parties that have only brought death, corruption, and the buying off of dignity. We have made alliances with various sectors of civil society, creating our own resources in communication, community police and self-defense forces, assemblies and popular councils, and cooperatives; in the exercise and defense of traditional medicine; in the exercise and defense of traditional and ecological agriculture; in our own rituals and ceremonies to pay respect to mother earth and continue walking with and upon her, in the cultivation and defense of native seeds, and in political-cultural activities, forums, and information campaigns.

This is the power from below that has kept us alive. This is why commemorating resistance and rebellion also means ratifying our decision to continue to live, constructing hope for a future that is only possible upon the ruins of capitalism.

Given that the offensive against the people will not cease, but rather grow until it finishes off every last one of us who make up the peoples of the countryside and the city, who carry profound discontent that emerges in new, diverse, and creative forms of resistance and rebellion, this Fifth National Indigenous Congress has decided to launch a consultation in each of our communities to dismantle from below the power that is imposed on us from above and offers us nothing but death, violence, dispossession, and destruction. Given all of the above, we declare ourselves in permanent assembly as we carry out this consultation, in each of our geographies, territories, and paths, on the accord of the Fifth CNI to name an Indigenous Governing Council whose will would be manifest by an indigenous woman, a CNI delegate, as an independent candidate to the presidency of the country under the name of the National Indigenous Congress and the Zapatista Army for National Liberation in the electoral process of 2018. We confirm that our struggle is not for power, which we do not seek. Rather, we call on all of the originary peoples and civil society to organize to put a stop to this destruction and strengthen our resistances and rebellions, that is, the defense of the life of every person, family, collective, community, or *barrio*. We make a call to construct peace and justice by reweaving ourselves from below, from where we are what we are.

This is the time of dignified rebellion, the time to construct a new nation by and for everyone, to strengthen power below and to the anticapitalist left, to make those who are responsible for all of the pain of the peoples of this multi-colored Mexico pay.

Finally, we announce the creation of the official webpage of the CNI:

www.congresonacionalindigena.org

From CIDECI-UNITIERRA,

Chiapas, October 2016

For the Full Reconstitution of Our Peoples

Never Again a Mexico Without Us

National Indigenous Congress

Zapatista Army for National Liberation