



## OPEN LETTER

Soledad, 21 February 2023

Paul Caiguaray Pérez  
Vice Minister of Territorial Governance of the Presidency of Council of Ministers

Vicente Romero Fernandez  
Interior Minister

José Luis Chávez Cresta  
Defense Minister

Karina Diana Vargas Quiñones  
National Coordinating Superior Prosecutor of the  
Specialized Prosecutor's Offices in Environmental Matters

Manuel Jesús Martín Gómez De La Torre Araníbar  
Chief of the Joint Command of the Armed Forces

Federico Javier Bravo De Rueda Delgado  
General Commander of Amazonian Operations of the Peruvian Navy

Albina Ruiz Ríos  
Environment Minister

Lissette Vásquez Noblecilla  
Deputy for the Environment, Public Services and Indigenous Peoples of the  
Ombudsman's Office

Gilmer Horna Corrales  
Governor of Amazonas

Urias Sharup Yambisa  
Mayor of Santiago River

CC:  
Dr. Marcos Orellana  
UN Special Rapporteur on Toxic Substances and Human Rights

Esmeralda Arosema de Troitiño  
Special Rapporteur of the IACHR on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Rights of the Child

Subject: Request for an **urgent meeting to coordinate an operation to interdict illegal mining in the Santiago River**, Condorcanqui, Amazonas.

Dear Authorities,

I write to you Teófilo Kukush Pati, *Pamuk* (president) of the Autonomous Territorial Government of the Wampís Nation (GTANW), an institution representing 16,500 Wampís citizens settled in 85 communities (23 titled native communities and their 62 annexes) along the Kanus (Santiago, Amazonas) and Kankaim (Morona, Loreto) rivers. The purpose of this letter is to report on the terrible resurgence of **illegal mining on the Santiago River** (province of Condorcanqui, Amazonas) **and to request that an interdiction operation be carried out as soon as possible in coordination with the authorities of the GTANW**. To this end, we ask you to

**urgently convene a meeting between the GTANW, the Ministry of the Interior, the Public Ministry, the Ministry of Defense, the Navy, the Armed Forces, the OEFA, the Ombudsman's Office and the Vice-Ministry of Territorial Governance, as well as the Regional Government of Amazonas and the Mayor's Office of the Santiago River.**

According to our environmental monitoring team, and as reported by Wampís community authorities, **several groups of illegal miners are operating in the communities of San Juan, Belén, and Fortaleza, in the district of the Santiago River, province of Condorcanqui, Amazonas, with a total of at least 30 dredges** (see monitoring report - appendix 1). **These operations are causing irreversible environmental damage to our territory, as well as conflicts in the communities.**

This is not the first time that the Wampís Nation has confronted this illegal activity in conjunction with the Peruvian State. In both 2016 and 2017, the Autonomous Territorial Government of the Wampís Nation carried out interdiction operations in illegal mining hotspots with the help of law enforcement and the presence of the Public Prosecutor's Office. Unfortunately, this year the illegal activity has been resumed by unscrupulous businessmen, who have **colluded with some local authorities with the aim of carrying out gold mining in our area.**

**According to what we have been recently notified by leaders of the native community of San Rafael** by means of a communication (annex 2) dated 12 February 2023, **members of the National Police based in Santa María de Nieva are allegedly involved in the collection of bribes** to allow illegal mining enterprises to move their merchandise through that locality. In this sense, in view of such significant and worrying information, the GTANW requests that **an urgent investigation be carried out to find these bad police officers and that they be removed from their positions and sanctioned.**

We hope that you, as competent authorities, **will give priority to our request in order to eradicate in an effective and coordinated manner this illegal activity that damages our environment and health, pouring thousands of liters of mercury absorbed by fish, animals, plants and humans along the upper and lower Santiago and Marañón rivers, which generates lifelong deformities and cognitive problems** in our people and children. In addition, the presence of illegal mining **leaves our children and youth, especially girls, at the mercy of criminals who engage in kidnapping and trafficking for the sex trade.** We can no longer allow this.

We make this letter public for its impact on the country and public opinion, as well as to copy the special rapporteurs of the UN and the IACHR. We thank you in advance for your attention to our requests. Please do not hesitate to contact us at [gtawcomunicaciones@gmail.com](mailto:gtawcomunicaciones@gmail.com), and to Shapiom Noningo, Technical Secretary of the GTANW and Teófilo Kukush, Pamuk of the GTANW for any coordination you may deem appropriate.

Best regards,



P.S. Attached is Communication 005 from the San Rafael community and the GTANW Environmental Monitoring Report with photos and geo-referenced points.