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We help tribal peoples defend
their lives, protect their lands
and determine their own futures.

H.E. Mr. Roberto Jaguaribe,
Brazilian Ambassador to the UK,
Brazilian Embassy,
32 Green Street,
London
W1K 7AT

22nd August, 2011

Re: Worldwide opposition to the Belo Monte dam

Your Excellency

On Saturday 20th August 2011, people took to the streets all over Brazil, in protest against the Belo Monte mega-dam planned for the Xingu River in the Amazon.

Their voices are being echoed by demonstrators in Australia, Canada, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Iran, Indonesia, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Scotland, Spain, Taiwan, Turkey, the United States and Wales.

The Belo Monte dam involves numerous human rights and environmental violations, and faces massive opposition from the local population.

If built, the dam would devastate the land and lives of thousands of indigenous people in the Xingu region, including highly vulnerable uncontacted Indians.

The disastrous impacts Belo Monte would bring, have been recognised by technicians and specialists, as well as Brazil's Public Ministry, the Brazilian Anthropology Association, the Coordination of Indigenous Organisations of the Brazilian Amazon (Coiab), the Coordination of the Indigenous Organisations of the Amazon Basin (Coica), the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and many other organisations.

The latest in a series of complaints against the project by Brazil's Public Ministry warns that 'A considerable part of the biodiversity which composes the ecosystem known as the Big Bend of the

Xingu, will die. This human intervention will cause radical interference in the way of life of the peoples living in the area, especially indigenous peoples, who will be removed from their territory'.¹

The forced removal of indigenous peoples from their lands violates article 231 of the Brazilian Constitution, as well Brazil's Indian Statute, Convention 169 of the International Labour Organisation and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

The indigenous communities have not been consulted about the project, this also in breach of article 231 of the Constitution, ILO Convention 169, and UNDRIP.

Indigenous people of the area have held numerous protests against the project and have warned that the Xingu could become a 'bloodbath' if the dam is constructed.

Indigenous spokeswoman Sheyla Juruna has recently remarked that the indigenous people 'are not against development... but there are other ways of generating energy... We consider the river our home... If the government continues to insist on Belo Monte, there will be war'.

Survival International urges the Brazilian authorities to suspend their plans to construct this dam on the Xingu river, until indigenous communities have been properly consulted, and an alternative project which will not negatively impact their lands and livelihoods has been designed, to which they given their free, prior and informed consent.

If the construction of this dam does go ahead, thousands of people will lose their homes, their livelihoods, and possibly their lives. The indigenous communities need their land in order to survive.

Yours sincerely,



Stephen Corry
Director
Survival International

¹ 'Haverá a morte de parte considerável da biodiversidade que compõe o ecossistema conhecido como Volta Grande do Xingu. Essa intervenção humana causará radical intervenção no modo de vida dos povos que a habitam, especialmente os povos indígenas, que serão removidos de seu território'.