

### **Statement by Ayoreo organization OPIT, December 2013**

Although the law is quite sympathetic to those of us who don't have money, the authorities always favor the rich. Year after year we file complaints with the Environment Ministry, telling them about deforestation on our lands, telling them about our relatives in the forest, and that we don't want them to hand out licenses to destroy the forest, but they don't listen.

Our relatives came out of the forest in 2004 because they were under pressure from the ranchers, because they had no peace. Our forest on the land worked on by Yaguarete Pora is good land, but now the trees are being cut down. If the bulldozers start to make a lot of noise, our uncontacted relatives will be forced to hide where there isn't any food and they will suffer, they won't know where to go. It's a very worrying situation for them, and for us.

Before, when we lived in the forest we were peaceful. We didn't have the pressure of the ranchers. Today with the change in our diet, our adults die young. Before, we would reach old age. We are protecting the forests that provide for us. This way we don't need the white people's food to survive. We want to continue using the forest, and for the ranchers to stop harassing our relatives who remain there.

We don't want any more people chopping down our forest. We want the so-called 'civilized' people to leave us in peace.