

Kawahiva land demarcation, 2026

Statement from Silvano Chue, acting President of FEPOIMT (Federação dos Povos e Organizações Indígenas de Mato Grosso)

Every territory that advances in the demarcation process is a source of joy for our institution, which seeks to ensure that the rights of the Indigenous peoples of Mato Grosso state are upheld. Indigenous peoples are the true owners of these territories and should not have to endure such a long and painful wait for their land to be demarcated, as is their right. We now hope that President Lula will conclude the process by signing into law the land of our uncontacted Kawahiva neighbors.

Statement from Opi (Observatório dos Povos Indígenas Isolados)

Opi welcomes with great joy the news that another fundamental step towards protecting the uncontacted Kawahiva Indigenous people has been completed. This is a victory above all for the Indigenous movement in Brazil and Mato Grosso state, as well as for the dedicated professionals of Funai's land protection team in the area, who have tirelessly fought for this people's rights.

Statement from the Land Demarcation Department of Funai – the Brazilian government's Indigenous Affairs Department

Funai's technical teams, together with the Remote Sensing Center of the Geosciences Institute of the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG), have completed the installation of geodetic markers and the georeferencing of the boundaries of the Kawahiva do Rio Pardo Indigenous Territory, located in the northeast of Mato Grosso state on the border with Amazonas state. The territory is around 411,000 hectares in size. This stage is an important step in the land recognition process which began almost three decades ago. The presence of uncontacted Indigenous people in the region was confirmed in 1999, and in 2016 the Minister of Justice and Public Security signed the decree declaring this an Indigenous territory. Now that the physical demarcation is complete, and the borders which had been defined on paper now also present physically on the ground, the process moves to its final phase: formal approval by decree of the Presidency of the Republic, which will confer definitive legal validity upon the territory.

Physically marking the boundaries strengthens territorial monitoring and protection efforts, providing objective reference points to combat invasions and illegal activities such as wildcat mining, logging, and the expansion of cattle ranching. This measure is particularly significant given the history of conflict and the difficulty of accessing the region. The Kawahiva do Rio Pardo Indigenous Territory is home to uncontacted Indigenous groups whose physical and cultural survival depends on the complete preservation of their territory. Completing the demarcation enhances the Brazilian State's capacity to respond to threats of forced contact, violence, and the spread of disease, thereby reinforcing the policy of no contact and respect for the self-determination of uncontacted and recently contacted Indigenous peoples. Funai

reaffirms its commitment to ensure the completion of the demarcation process and to strengthen land protection measures until the area is officially signed into law.